

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VIII, No. 172, 3rd Waxing of Thadingyut 1383 ME

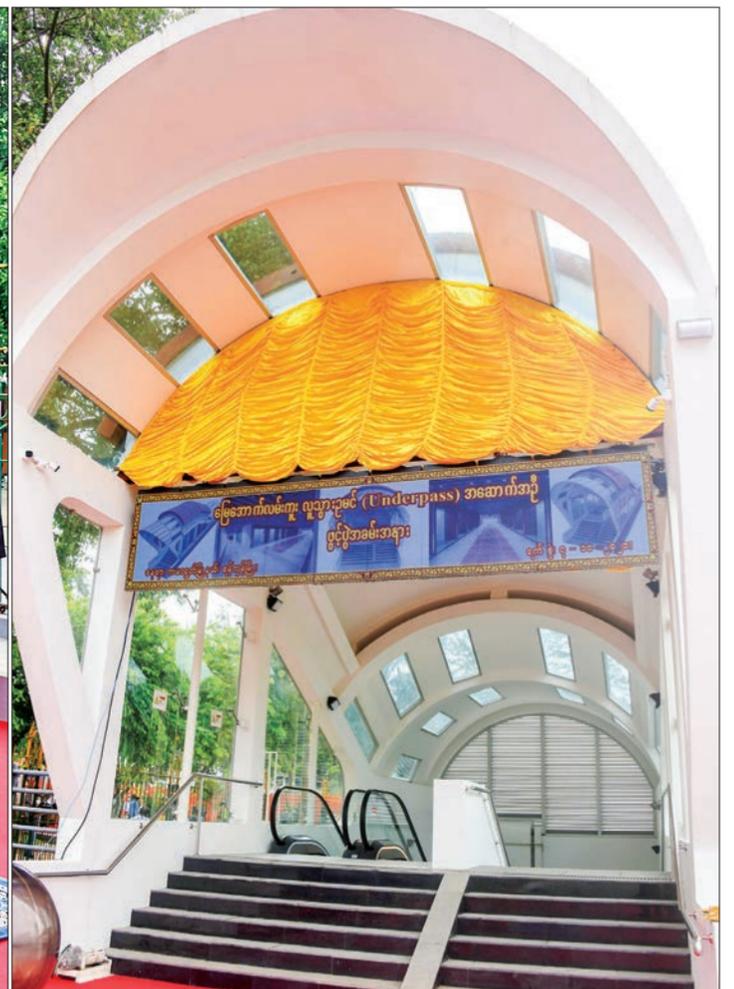
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Friday, 8 October 2021

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.

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing unveils first-ever Underpass of Myanmar



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presses the ceremonial button to open the Underpass on Pyay Road in Yangon on 7 October 2021.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday morning attended the ceremony to inaugurate the Underpass, the first facility of its kinds of Myanmar, on Pyay Road near Hanthawady Roundabout in Kamayut Township of Yangon

Region.
The Yangon City mayor reported to the Senior General on the construction of the underpass to prevent traffic congestions and minimize the traffic accidents based on the developed urban system, facilitation of escalators in the

underpass for convenience of older persons and those with disabilities, allotment of shops for creation of job opportunities and use of the underpass with neat and tidy and secure facilities in line with the city characteristics.

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..."and explained the needs of compulsorily building the double ways and underpass due to the increasing number of population and vehicles in Yangon Region as the road areas cannot be expanded, construction of the underpasses as the first step for implementation of the subway and gave instructions on future plan ..."

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State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing unveils first-ever Underpass of Myanmar

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The Yangon Region Chief Minister presented a gift to mark the opening of the underpass to the Senior General.

The Yangon Region Chief Minister, the Commander of Yangon Command and the mayor formally opened the underpass and the Senior General unveiled the entrance to the underpass.

The Senior General visited the underpass and explained the needs of compulsorily building the double ways and underpasses due to the increasing number of population and vehicles in Yangon Region as the road areas cannot be expanded, construction of the underpass as the first step for implementation of the subway and gave instructions on future plan and stressed the

need for prevention of danger of fire, emergency rescue measures and security of road users.

The Underpass where plots were allotted for 18 shops is 11 feet high and 40 feet wide, and located 15 feet and three inches in depth underground. The main underpass is 427 feet long with four exits. It can admit some 6,000 people per hour. The underpass is facilitated with three escalators and two lifts for older persons and disabled persons. The underpass is equipped with sensors and cameras for the prevention of danger of fire and emergency rescue and security measures. The newly-opened underpass is a building that much benefited the people and is an urban symbol of developing Yangon City. — MNA



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects the Underpass yesterday.

59th SEAMEO BIOTROP Governing Board Meeting held online



THE 59th SEAMEO BIOTROP Governing Board Meeting was convened online at IPB of Indonesia on 5 and 6 October, and Rector Dr Khin Maung Sint of the University of Forestry and Natural Environment of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation joined the event.

General Secretary Dr Ir Suharti of Indonesian Education, Culture, Research and Technology presided over the meeting and highlighted the prioritized education sector of the Indonesian government according to the constitution, an important role of education in addressing the challenges such as climate changes, biodiversity extinction, lowering soil quality and supports of the Indonesian

government to SEAMEO BIOTROP.

The meeting was joined by the officials of nine member countries, the deputy mayor of Bogor, representatives of embassies, partner organizations, officials of the SEAMEO Secretary Office, experts and staff of SEAMEO BIOTROP.

The meeting adopted 14 resolutions and focused on meeting minutes of former meetings, annual report (draft) and financial report of 2020-2021, budget submission for coming next three years (from 2022-2023 to 2024-2025), researches and training to be conducted in 2022, 11th five-year project of SEAMEO BIOTROP 11th five-year development plan from 2022 to 2027 and proposals to amend the constitution of SEAMEO BIOTROP.—MNA

COVID-19 vaccines delivered to Sittway, Thandwe by Tatmadaw aircraft

COVID-19 vaccines were delivered to Sittway and Thandwe townships in Rakhine State by military plane yesterday morning.

Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines, which are being stored at the expanded vaccine storage centre on Min Dhamma Road in Yangon, is being transported by Cold Chain Delivery Logistics trucks by military planes to various regions and states accordingly to the quality control standards.

On the morning of 7 October, 8,200 doses of the Sinopharm vac-

cines and 41,000 syringes were delivered to Thandwe and 11,000 doses of Sinopharm vaccines plus 59,000 syringes to Sittway were transported by military aircraft.

Authorities from each township accepted all the vaccines and they will be distributed to other townships in Rakhine State and Paletwa in Chin State, officials said.

The COVID-19 vaccines will be distributed to the public as soon as possible as per the target population groups. —Tin Htun (IPRD)/GNLM



People aspire to the democratic election

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

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

Only when the government receives full amount of taxes will it carry out development task: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the meeting with the Yangon Region Government and departmental personnel at the Yangon City Hall yesterday.

AS Yangon City stood as the capital of the country from the post-independence era to 2006, all works could be done smoothly, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday morning at the meeting with members of Yangon Region government and departmental personnel at the City Hall of Yangon.

The Chief Minister of Yangon Region reported on social, economic, health and regional development tasks in the region, levying of tax and spending, efforts for the development of the industrial sector, the opening of COVID treatment centres, supply of electricity and water, efforts for the production of domestic products as import substitute ones and Yangon City Mayor U Bo Htay on the sanitation of the city and proper flow of water in drains, and traffic rules enforcement.

The Union ministers discussed industrial development measures, economic development for rural people, issuance of citizenship scrutiny cards

under the Pan Khinn project, efforts to avoid the outages of electricity, promotion of the national health sector and sports sector.

In his address, the Senior General said that the general election is important in a democracy. Hence, it is necessary to issue CSC and ensure the correctness of household registration and population for all the people to cast votes in the coming multiparty democracy general election. Efforts must be made for the issuance of CSC to the local people in the Yangon Region.

In his address, the Senior General said Yangon Region is inhabited by more than 7.8 million of population, accounting for nearly 15 per cent of the country population. Among more than 7.8 million population, there are some 2.5 million rural people. Yangon is top in the country for the situation of learning. As Yangon City stood as the capital of the country from the post-independence era to 2006, all works could be done smoothly. As it has sound foundations, officials need to further improve the city.

Although the infection rate of COVID-19 which remarkably broke out in the third wave declines to the lowest level, it is necessary to maintain the rate. The decline of the infection rate in the Yangon Region is based

be a green city, clean city and fair city as well as a smart city based on technology only when the city reduces non-product elements.

Labour plans are being implemented in the regions

Proper ways and means must be sought from solar power of renewable energy to be generated electrify. On the other hand, electricity must be systematically used. If the people use LED bulbs which can save electricity, they can save the consumption of electricity, benefitting the State.

on the cooperation of the people. It is necessary to shape the city as a green city and a clean city by removing the garbage and growing trees. Beautifying the environment will contribute clean environs and fresh air to the health condition of the people. People need to take physical exercises to have health and fitness. As such, Yangon City will

and states to narrow the development gap between the rural and urban areas. If so, the problems of squatters can be solved. Solving the squatter problems can support the city beautifying tasks. Proper ways and means must be sought from solar power of renewable energy to be generated electrify. On the other hand, electricity must be

systematically used. If the people use LED bulbs which can save electricity, they can save the consumption of electricity, benefitting the State.

Tatmadaw agriculture and livestock farm zones in Yangon Region continuously produce vegetables, meat, fish and eggs as food supplies for the people. Relevant departments need to use the existing good foundations to develop the agriculture and livestock tasks. The cooperative system is to be implemented with the direct participation of the people, and successes in the cooperative sector can be seen in developed nations.

It can be seen that some citizens operating the businesses do not pay taxes. Only when the government receives the full amount of taxes, will it carry out the development tasks.

If the infection rate reaches the designated number, stay-at-home restrictions and other restrictions will be lifted from the townships. As such, the people need to abide by the restrictions individually and participate in building the society under the disciplines.—MNA

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects stadium, sports grounds in Yangon

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by Members of the State Administration Council General Mya Tun Oo, General Maung Maung Kyaw, Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun, U Thein Nyunt, U Khin Maung Swe, Joint-Secretary of the Council Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo, Union Ministers U Tin Htut Oo, U Hla Moe, U Aung Than Oo, Dr Charlie Than, U Khin Yi, Dr Thet Khaing Win and U Min Thein Zan, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Hla Soe, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, the Commander of the Yangon Command, Mayor and officials, inspected Aung San Stadium in Mingala Taungnyunt Township, and Kyaikkasan Sports Grounds in Tamway Township yesterday.

The Chairman of the State Administration Council the Prime Minister and party arrived firstly at Aung San Stadium and inspected for the reconstruction of the stadium, and the Union Minister for Sport and Youth Affairs and officials presented the condition.

At the meeting hall of the stadium, Union Minister U Min Thein Zan explained the facts about the stadium, its brief



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects the Aung San Stadium in Yangon on 7 October 2021.



... Aung San Stadium is 112 years old and was one of the best in South-East Asia. In upgrading the stadium, consideration must be given to holding international standard events, and it is necessary to include parking lots, overpasses and tunnels for the convenience of spectators and bus stops.

history and the damage situation of the buildings. In his response, the Chairman of the

State Administration Council said Aung San Stadium is 112 years old and was one of the

best in South-East Asia. In upgrading the stadium, consideration must be given to holding international standard events, and it is necessary to include parking lots, overpasses and tunnels for the convenience of spectators and bus stops. He instructed to provide athletes currently training at the stadium with training facilities during the construction work.

Aung San Stadium was established in 1906 and its original name was Burma Athletic Association Ground (BAA). In addition to popular domestic and international sports events, a special commemorative exhibition, the Holiday on Ice, was held in the stadium. On 17 October 1953, the original name was changed to Aung San Stadium.

On 17 October 1953, the original name was changed to Aung San Stadium.

In the evening, the Chairman of the State Administration Council, Prime Minister and party arrived at Kyaikkasan Basketball Gymnasium and Sports and Physical Education Institute (Kyaikkasan Grounds) and gave instructions on the conditions for upgrade works, the conditions required for the actual training of the athletes and the conditions for the promotion of the national sports sector.—MNA



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party pay an inspection tour of the Kyaikkasan Playground in Yangon on 7 October 2021.

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

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SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects Mother Industrial Co., Ltd in Insein Township

CHAIRMAN of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspected the factory owned by Mother Industrial Co., Ltd. in Insein Township of Yangon Region together with SAC members, Union Ministers, Region Chief Minister, Yangon Command Commander, Mayor and other officials yesterday.

First, the SAC Chairman Prime Minister and party arrived at the factory and Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than reported on the suspension of the brick factory (Danyingon) operated by No (2) Heavy Industrial Enterprise and long-term lease of factory land to Mother Industrial Co., Ltd to produce lightweight sand concrete blocks at the meeting



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects the Mother Industrial Co.,Ltd in Insein Township of Yangon Region yesterday.

and APC and the supports of the government.

In his response to the report, the SAC Chairman said the employees appointed by the Ministry of Industry must work in the respective sector following the regulations during the lease of factories. The factories will have to take approval and permission from MIC if they want to change the type of business. He also encouraged the private businesses owned by ethnic people and also urged the factories to produce sufficient materials to meet the local demand and to gain achievements.

He then inspected the product quality scrutiny processes of AAC and APC and the Managing Director explained the processes.



The Senior General looks around the factory leased by the Mother Industrial Co.,Ltd yesterday.

... the employees appointed by the Ministry of Industry must work in the respective sector following the regulations during the lease of factories. The factories will have to take approval and permission from MIC if they want to change the type of business.

hall.

Then, Managing Director U Soe Yee of the company clarified the history of the company and production of Autoclaved Aerated Concrete Block-AAC and Autoclaved Pressed Concrete Block-APC, raw material saving procedures and production processes, benefits of AAC

The Senior General also looked around the production processes of AAC and APC and quality check process in Physical Laboratory and Chemical Laboratory, and Chairman of Mother Industrial Co., Ltd U Aung Myat, Managing Director U Soe Yee and other officials explained the processes.—MNA



Union Chief Justice attends 9th Meeting of Council of ASEAN Chief Justices online

UNION Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo attended the 9th Meeting of the Council of ASEAN Chief Justices, which was organized by the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia through video conferencing yesterday morning at 8 am from the Supreme Court of the Union, Nay Pyi Taw.

At the opening ceremony of the 9th CACJ Meeting, The Hon. Muhammad Syarifuddin, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia, as the host, made his welcome speech. Then, Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo, together with the Chief Justices of ASEAN and the Heads of Delegate attended the Meeting, delivered speeches respectively. ASEAN Secretary-General Mr Lim Jock Hoi also attended and delivered his speech at the ceremony.

In the subsequent sessions



of the Meeting, the Union Chief Justice, together with the Chief Justices and Heads of Delegate,

took part in the discussions on the reports submitted by the Working Group for ASEAN Judi-

ciaries Portal (AJP), Facilitating Service of Civil Processes within ASEAN, Case Management and

Court Technology, Judicial Education and Training, Cross-Border Disputes Involving Children, ASEAN + Meetings, Study Group on Future Work of CACJ. In addition, the Union Chief Justice also presented the updated measures taken by the Myanmar Judiciary on Covid-19 Effects and Solutions since the 8th CACJ Meeting held in the previous year. And then, all the members of the CACJ attended the Meeting approved to issue the Jakarta Declaration. Also present at the Meeting together with Union Chief Justice U Htun Htun Oo were the Justices of the Supreme Court of the Union, U Myo Maung, U Kyi Thein, U Khin Maung Gyi, U Tin Hone and Daw Khin May Yee and officials concerned from the Supreme Court of the Union assigned at the Working Groups of the CACJ, as the observers. —MNA

2nd Coordination Meeting for Task Force on Humanitarian Aid Management held

THE second coordination meeting for the Task Force which is being provided by the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management – AHA Centre was held yesterday at the Ayeyawady Hall of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nay Pyi Taw.

Chairman of the Task Force and Union Minister for International Cooperation U Ko Ko Hlaing, Vice-Chairperson of the Task Force and Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Thet Thet Khine, Deputy Ministers and officials of relevant Ministries attended the meeting.

At the meeting, Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing said that ASEAN is providing humanitarian assistance to Myanmar as per the fourth point of the five aspirations agreed by ASEAN leaders.

“As a first step, medical supplies worth about US\$1.1 million

have accepted in Myanmar to fight the COVID-19 epidemic. It is being distributed to divisions and states,” the Union Minister said.

“Liquid Oxygen and hospital equipment have been handed over to major hospitals in Yangon Region. Arrangements are being made to continue donation to regions and states, including Nay Pyi Taw.

Officials from the Ministry of Health, representatives from the Myanmar Red Cross Society and Yangon-based ASEAN embassies are also assisting in the donation programmes.

In addition, the first batch of supplies will continue to arrive until the end of this year,” the Union Minister added.

The Union Minister urged members of the committee to support each other in their respective responsibilities.

Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also briefed all on



the situation of providing ASEAN humanitarian assistance to Myanmar through the AHA Centre.

Officials from the Ministry of Health discussed plans for the second round of donations,

receipt of goods, conditions of distribution and future plans.

Next, officials from the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement focused on arrangements for the second

phase of donations.

Participants of the meeting also reviewed the implementation of the decisions of the first coordination meeting and the status of implementation. — MNA

Public request by Ministry of Health

ONLY when the people cooperate will the work process achieve success in a short time for effective prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 among the people. As such, all the people are requested to abide by the following points: -

1. Stay at home as much as possible.
2. Don't accept the guests at the house. You don't visit other houses.
3. The older persons above 65 or those suffering from chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and heart must be worn masks in the house. They

4. Wear masks if you go outside without fail. Systematically wash hands. Take a six-foot distance from others. Avoid visits to the rooms where ventilation is not good.
5. Avoid the crowds.
6. If possible, go shopping once a week. Don't buy anything from the vendors who don't systematically wear masks.
7. Take care of carrying the virus to the houses whenever return home from outside. Systemati-

8. As the vaccines for your quota is the best, accept vaccinations for full time. Despite receiving the vaccination, you should abide by the protective ways.
9. Systematically cooperate in prevention, control and treatment of the disease with manpower, money, materials and expertise.

Ministry of Health (2-8-2021)

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

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

On 7 October (yesterday), anti-COVID-19 equipment, med-

ical products, including oxygen plants and concentrators, were imported by two companies using by two vehicles.

A total of 2,190 empty oxygen cylinders and two oxygen plants were imported via Chinswehaw and Myawady trading posts, seaports and Yangon International Airport.

One oxygen plant was transported to Yangon and another one to Kyondoe, respectively.

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

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



Anti-Covid devices are daily imported through land borders like Myawady (in picture).

Over 45-year-old IDPs get 2nd doses of COVID jab in Yathedaung



Inoculation is underway in Yathedaung of Rakhine State.

HEALTHCARE officials gave second doses of Sinovac COVID-19 vaccines to people over the age of 45 at IDP camps in Yathedaung Township, Rakhine State yesterday.

The vaccination was carried out at a distance of 6 feet from each other following the regulations issued by the Ministry of Health under the supervision of the COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee.

Healthcare staff and officials made records for the vaccinated people during the vaccination.

Next volunteers and

healthcare workers measured the body temperature, blood pressure and monitoring oxygen level before the vaccination.

Vaccines were given systematically to the IDPs in Yathedaung Township, and only those with normal conditions are vaccinated.

After resting for about 30 minutes after being vaccinated, people were given healthcare education and then allowed to leave, officials said.

There are five designated wards and six injection sites in Yathedaung Township.

A total of 349 people in-

cluding 146 local people aged 45 and over who have been displaced in the nine IDP camps in the Northeast Ward and 203 people aged 45 and over in West (Bengali) Village and Nyaungbingyi (Bengali) Village received the second dose of COVID-19 vaccines.

Vaccination will continue in the rest of the community starting from 8 September.

Members of the fire brigade, members of the Red Cross and volunteers are cooperating in the vaccination programme as needed, officials said. —Aung San Tun (IPRD)/GNLM

24,683 Lewe residents receive first dose of COVID vaccine

THE officials gave the first doses of vaccines (the second batch) to the elders aged between 55 and 64, the patients with chronic diseases, the people with disabilities and those working with many people in Lewe Township of Nay Pyi Taw starting 16 September, and the programmes kept going at village health departments, No 1 B.E.H.S of Lewe and station hospital yesterday.

Before the vaccination, the

health workers collected the lists and took body temperatures, blood pressure and blood oxygen. Those who received the vaccines had to stay in an observation area for 30 minutes.

A total of 24,683 people received the first doses (the second batch) of vaccines in Lewe Township until 6 October and the officials will deliver the vaccines at the respective vaccination sites. —Wai Kyi San Aung (IPRD)/GNLM



A health staff injected the first shot to a Lewe local.

1,394 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 7 October, total figure rises to 474,419

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 474,419 after 1,394 new cases were reported on 7 October 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 427,941 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 18,034 after 36 died.

Take advantages of anti-COVID-19 vaccines in reducing infection rate

DELTA variant COVID-19 has infected children in some countries in the third wave period. As vaccination is one of the most appropriate ways to protect the people against the COVID-19 pandemic, Myanmar set an aim to complete vaccination of 50 per cent population above 18 at the end of December 2021.

According to the latest information, the Sinovac vaccine made in China will be given to children safely with the least side effect and help those children mitigate severe impacts. Hence, efforts

are being made to reopen the schools for enabling the basic education students not to lose the chance of learning education for one year. As severe infection of the pandemic was high in Myanmar, schools were closed temporarily.

The Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19 is making concerted efforts for the implementation of the vaccination programme in cooperation with emergency response bodies in regions and states. Data on vaccinated people should be set records for further vaccination plans.

The infection rate of COVID-19 now reaches 7 or 8 per cent. Only when the infection rate declines to less than five per cent, will it be a proper situation to reopen the school for the safe learning of students. Hence, beyond the long October holidays, a plan is underway to fully vaccinate all the basic education students. If so, those vaccinated teachers and students can build trust at the schools.

Some persons suggested vaccines must be given to the people once six months to ease the tension of the people regarding the infection of the pandemic. As such, the government is striving to receive vaccines continuously. Moreover, the coordination is being made to manufacture the vaccine in Myanmar through the ready to fill system. In fact, nobody can predict whether the infection of the pandemic is endless or not.

As unscrupulous persons may commit attacks on those implementing the vaccination programme anyhow, the Tatmadaw and the Myanmar Police Force need to group their forces to protect the people from the programmes against the attacks. It aims to ensure the safety of the people at the vaccination centres.

Now is the best time to fully vaccinate not only children but adults across the nation to stay away from the infection of COVID-19 for overcoming the critical challenges. Let's join hands to fight against COVID-19!



Unwavering Commitment to End Terrorism in Myanmar

By Min Khant

AS the State of Emergency was declared on 1 February 2021, the Tatmadaw maintained the responsibilities of the state, not more than a two-and-half-year as per the 2008 Constitution. The primary cause of this political situation is unfair and unlawful matters and electoral fraud in the 2020 general elections. Even though the elections possibly and naturally have controversial issues, all responsible institutions, including the Union Election Commission (UEC) and the previous NLD government, have enough time and opportunities to solve the electoral and political crisis by the laws and peaceful means. Before the declaration of the State of Emergency, Tatmadaw publicly announced the possible numbers of electoral frauds and voting lists errors by highlighting the lawful and peaceful means to overcome this crisis. All the resources and crisis-management methods were at the disposal of the NLD government, its leadership, and the Hluttaw (Myanmar Parliament) which is dominated by the NLD party. Interestingly, all these opportunities and times were in vain in Myanmar's democratization process at the time of the NLD civilian government. As the NLD government tried to neglect the political crisis without solving it by peaceful and lawful means, the situation led to the declaration of the State of Emergency.

Although it reintroduces the primary cause of the current Myanmar political situation, the purpose of this article is to highlight the escalating of extremism and terrorism in Myanmar that is nothing close to the edge of the "freedom of dissent" democratic norm. If Myanmar actually wants to transit to a democratic society, this very basic ideological and cultural foundation must be built at first. Yes, without question, peaceful demonstrations also would be accepted as a part of a democratic system. Interestingly, the question of why Myanmar's peaceful demonstration changed to extremism and terrorism is deserved to observe.

By the writer's hypothesis, there are two main causes for the development of extremism and terrorism in Myanmar. The first one is external interferences. The facts and evidence show that some countries contributed to organizing NUG/PDF extremist groups. On 9 September 2021, "Newnaratif", an online journalism platform and independent media outlet, published an article "Dr Sasa Visits a Bomb-Making Class" that revealed the connection between a Minister of International Cooperation of NUG and the online bomb-making class managed by a U.S. citizen who is suspected as a CIA agent. These online classes gathered via Zoom application taught how to make hand-made bombs, weapons, including motors and cannons, firearms known as zip guns, while the trainer skillfully indoctrinated extremist ideology to Myanmar youths, so-called GenZ. He also shared e-books with attendees with titles like Ragnar's Big Book of Homemade Weapons, CIA Lock Picking, and How to Start and Train a Militia Unit.

Sasa from NUG visited the class and also gave a cheerful speech that reflects extremism and terrorism. It is strong evidence for the international community that NUG is directly related to terrorist incidents in Myanmar. The attendees innately understood that they were under the training of the CIA. It was also an origin of "vain optimism", United Nations or US forces will militarily invade Myanmar, which spread among protesters. While the information war and disinformation related to the current Myanmar political crisis are ubiquitous on the international media outlets and in the discussions of INGOs and NGOs, this kind of reality on the ground and evidence of intentionally teaching terrorism spreading like wildfire in Myanmar have not become a serious-issue in international and regional politics. Calculated silence and reticent may be the best options for politized international organizations in this context. Anyhow, along with these terrorists' online classes, Myanmar's peaceful protests have changed their methods to terrorist activities targeting innocent civilians and COVID-19 preventive measures under the banner of against military administration.

The second cause of terrorist incidents in Myanmar is the exploitation of some EAOs that have less passion with and negative attitude to Myanmar peace process, namely Kachin Independence Army (KIA), Chin National Front (CNF), Karen National Union, and its Liberation Army (KNU/KNLA), Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP), and Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS). Though some do not directly join terrorist acts, they have no central authority or loose command and control to their troops to limit their activities. Some good examples are: two out of eight captured in dead were KIA lieutenants, Tofoe and Koyie, in the case of shooting in Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay region; 144 guns and an immense amount of ammunition confiscated on Mandalay-Bamaw highway near Waryonkon Village were also supplied by KIA; the confession of NLD member Thet Htar Hnaung from Mohnyin also shows that she was cooperating with KIA for logistic supplies under the command of vice-commander of No.8 brigade.

In the Yangon region, most of the terrorists and leaders who commit explosions and killings of innocent people came from the terrorist training camps of some KNU commands. TNLA also conducted similar activities and provided guns and ammunition to the so-called PDF near Naungsoelay village in Naungcho Township. KNPP's trainees are also included out of capturing in Dagon Township. Some terrorists related to the case of explosion under bypass bridge of Thunadar Traffic in Northhokkalapa Township were trained by RCSS brigade 707. CNF, reorganized by Sasa as a PDF terrorist group, comprising Chin ethnic NLD members and civil-servants who participate in civil disobedience movement, were mainly responsible for the terrorist activities in Chin State and Sagaing Region. They terrorized the Tatmadaw units in Tedim Township, economic bank, and government offices in Hakha Township, police stations in Lonelae and Teabwal. Some members of CNF also committed crimes, including robberies in Chin State.

These EAOs exploited Myanmar youths and the internal political crisis for their political and military interest, open front line in the townships of regions and states to launch attacks against the Tatmadaw and Police posts in the states. In Myanmar, almost all EAOs are related to illegal drug production and trading and some of them also have received external supports. Since Myanmar people started to realize the real political situation, the end of these groups' exploitation became very nearer. The products of these EAOs terrorized innocent people including COVID-19 preventive measures and activities. The 26 cases are as follows-

No.	Date/Place	Case	Damages/Casualties
1	6-6-2021 Maubin Township, Ayeyawady Region	The explosion of a hand-made bomb under a vehicle parked inside the District Public Hospital.	No damage.
2	23-6-2021 Thegon Township, Bago Region	The explosion of a hand-made bomb near the COVID-19 checkpoint.	One member of the security forces was injured.
3	27-6-2021 Bogale Township, Ayeyawady Region	Torching the COVID-19 checkpoint (tent) near Tharpaung village.	The tent roof was destroyed.
4	29-6-2021 Kyaiklat Township, Ayeyawady Region	The explosion of a hand-made bomb at the COVID-19 checkpoint.	4 men and 1 woman were injured.
5	11-7-2021 Mingaladon Township, Yangon Region	Grenade attack to six Tatmadaw's vehicles transporting medical supplies for Military Hospital (2/500)	One vehicle's windshield was broken.
6	14-7-2021 Amarapura Township, Mandalay Region	In Myitnge, seven terrorists opened fire while seven members of the group, including a responsible citizen, Daw Thet Thet Cho, were distributing masks and hand gels in Myoma Market.	Daw Thet Thet Cho (Dead)
7	22-7-2021 North Okkalapa Town- ship, Yangon Region	Terrorists destroyed a copper oxygen pipe connecting to the emergency and maternity ward for COVID-19 patients in General Hospital.	A copper oxygen pipe was destroyed.
8	27-7-2021 Myitkyina - Shwebo Road Sagaing Region	A vehicle carrying COVID-19 vaccines was destroyed by an explosion at the entrance of Mawhan village near the Nansi Aung checkpoint.	Windshields were damaged and no one was injured.
9	1-8-2021 Mayangon Township, Yangon Region	Two grenades explosion at COVID-19 vaccination center.	3 civilians (injury) 1 volunteer (injury)
10	3-8-2021 Shan State (South); Pekhon Township	A remote bomb exploded at City Hall while Covid-19 vaccination was carrying on.	2 civilians (Dead) 2 policemen (Dead) 1 policeman (injury)
11	5-8-2021, YeU Town- ship, Sagaing Region	When Thaung Htay, administrator of Nyaung Ni Kan village tract, returned to YeU from Wet-Phyu village with his father after receiving the Covid-19 vaccination, about 10 terrorists stopped his motorbike and beat Thaung Htay to death.	U Thaung Htay (Dead)
12	5-8-2021 Hline Town- ship, Yangon Region	In No. (6) Ward, San Lin, and his wife, Daw Thida, residents of Ukkyin Station Road, were shot by two masked terrorists in PPE uniforms.	U San Lin (Dead) Daw Thida (Deadly injury)
13	6-8-2021 Kyaikto Township, Mon State.	A hand grenade exploded near the Kyauk Klap Bridge between Milestone No. 90/2-1 on the Yangon-Mawlamyine Old Road.	The windshield of the vehicle and two rearview mirrors were damaged. No human casualties.
14	9-8-2021 Kawlin Township Sagaing Region	Two remote mines planted by extremists exploded at the COVID-19 checkpoint at the entrance to Kawlin and were attacked by a 40mm motor from the back of the checkpoint.	1 civil-servant (injury) 3 Policemen (injury) 1 Policeman (Dead)
15	9-8-2021 Namkham Township, Shan State (North).	Two terrorists threw a handmade bomb at the COVID-19 vaccination centre in Kyarphyu Hall.	The 5"x5" concrete floor was destroyed.
16	9-8-2021 Myaing Town- ship,	At the COVID -19 checkpoint in Pike Thin village, six terrorists tied the hands of the members behind their back and Aung Zeya was shot by a gun.	U Aung Zeya (Dead)
17	15-8-2021 Pale Township, Sagaing Region	Three terrorists threw with a homemade bomb, while Myint Naing, a member of the "Saetanar" Volunteer Group, and three administrative members were discussing COVID-19 preventive measures in front of his house.	No injury

SEE PAGE-10

Myanmar Gazette

Confirmation and Appointment of Heads of Service Organization

1. The State Administration Council has confirmed Dr Khin Maung Sint, Rector of the University of Forestry and Environmental Science (Yezin) under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, after the one-year probationary period.
2. The State Administration Council has appointed U Zaw Moe Win, Pro-Rector (Admin) of Central Institute of Civil Service (Lower Myanmar) of the Union Civil Service Board, as Director-General of the Civil Service Affairs Department on probation from the date he assumes charge of his duties.



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Thursday 7 October 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 8 October, 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Mon State, fairly widespread in Bago Region and Kayin, State, scattered in (Northern and Southern)Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayah States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Mon State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (30-35) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (7 - 9) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and about (5-7) feet off and along Rakhine Coast.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of thundery activities in the Southern Myanmar areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8 October, 2021: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8 October, 2021: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 8 October, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

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**State Administration Council
Press Release**

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

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

*Information Team
State Administration Council*

THE State Administration Council will specifically ease restrictions for service personnel, intellectuals and intelligentsia, and persons from various arenas and citizens who, with worries, absconded from the country except for persons who committed murders, robberies, setting fires, mine explosions and intentional attacks on security troops, those who crowded to attack public service personnel and some people, those who destroyed government and private-owned buildings and those who are highly involved in the CDM activities by providing monetary assistance and other means.

Unwavering Commitment to End Terrorism in Myanmar

FROM PAGE-9

18	18-8-2021 Athok Township Ayeyawady Region	Terrorists opened fire on Win Naing, chairman of the Free Oxygen Distributor.	U Win Naing (Dead)
19	28-8-2021 Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay Region	A handmade bomb exploded near the COVID-19 border checkpoint.	The vehicle windshields were shattered and no one was injured.
20	6-9-2021 Papun Township Public Hospital, Kayin State	The KNLA's 5 th Brigade stormed the hospital with artillery and small arms fire.	Daw Chit May (78), a resident of Mae-Thalut village, was injured while being treated for COVID-19.
21	6-9-2-21 Ye Township, Ywabe Ward, Thiri Khettara Yadanar City Hall	Two terrorists fired two grenades at the COVID-19 vaccination site.	No dead and injury.
22	13-9-2021 Aungmyaythazan Township, Mandalay Region	On 19 th Street in Dawnabwar Ward, terrorists exploded a remote-mine in front of the COVID-19 checkpoint between 56 th and 57 th Streets.	1 Security member (Dead) 1 Volunteer (Dead) 2 civilians (injury) 2 firefighters (injury) Some security members (injury)
23	16-9-2021 Kanbalu Township, Sagaing Region	Terrorists exploded the vehicles conducting COVID-19 preventive measures by using remote mines.	The back part of the Hilux Double Cab and the front door were destroyed.
24	16-9-2021 Kalay Township, Sagaing Region	A 12-wheel truck carrying oxygen tanks for Kalay Township was exploded on the road between Kalay and Gangaw.	1 driver (Dead)
25	21-9-2021 Village No. 9, Mawtaung, Taninthayi Region	A terrorist opened fire on Village Administrator U Aye Min Ko when he served in a joint team for COVID-19 preventive measures.	U Aye Min Ko (Dead) U Myoe Zaw (Injury)

26	25-9-2021 Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Region.	A terrorist man fired a hand-made bomb at the Shwe-Kyin COVID-19 checkpoint.	Three young women were injured.
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There were 26 terrorist attacks in total, targeting the COVID-19 preventive measures and volunteers, leaving 7 civilians and civil-servants killed and 22 injured and 3 security personnel killed and 5 were injured. The facts show the evidence of NUG/PDF terrorized the civilian targets with no arms rather than security forces, while unarmed civilians and civil servants fight against the COVID-19 pandemic that is not only the local or regional issue but the global one.

During the Kinma Village incident in Pauk Township of Magway Region, PDF militants set fire to about 100 homes of innocent villagers. They were also involved in the death of, Cung Biak Hum, pastor of the Thantlang Baptist Church in Chin State. In Thantlang ward No. 1, PDF terrorists ambushed security forces, and the incident took place from 4 pm to 4:25 pm. It was 6 pm when the pastor died. Exiled media have accused the Tatmadaw of firing on him to die. Statements by the Chin Baptist Church (CBC) and the Kachin Baptist Church (KBC) on this issue are also religiously biased that need to be aware of.

Recently, the author read a report by the KIA's information officer, Naw Bu, that the Tatmadaw fired heavy artillery shells at COVID-19 camp in Mai-Sat-Pa village. It is like the thief shouted at the man. Targeted attacks on COVID-19 preventive measures and medical facilities are being carried out by PDF terrorists who have undergone terrorist training by EAOs. Where could you find such kind of terrorism all over the world? There is no reason for terrorism to survive in a civilized Myanmar society.

Therefore, I just want the people to be aware of the actions of some foreign countries and some EAOs who are deliberately leading the terrorism in Myanmar, while NUG and PDF are following this path. The NUG/PDF's atrocities such as bombing attacks to education, health, and religious sites are being bombed, killing ordinary people and monks by accusing of decoys, so-called "Dalan", are disgusting. We, the people, have to deal cautiously with the information warfare of the deported media, which are inciting terrorism on social media. This article urges the people to be aware of the facts and work together to end terrorism in Myanmar.



Rice floor price set at K540,000 for monsoon and summer 100 baskets



The basic reference price of 100 baskets of paddy, each basket weighing 46 pounds, will be K540,000 if the grains have a moisture content of 14 per cent, are free of dust, sand, gravel, and meet the set standards.

THE basic reference price for paddy will be maintained at K540,000 for 100 baskets of monsoon paddy grown in 2021 and summer paddy grown in 2022, according to an announcement released by the Committee for Farmers Rights Protection and Interests Promotion.

The basic reference price of 100 baskets of paddy, each basket weighing 46 pounds, will be K540,000 if the grains have a moisture content of 14 per cent, are free of dust, sand, gravel, and meet the set standards, the

announcement stated.

The floor price is expected to be fair and supportive of sustainable development across the whole rice supply chain and accordingly to the Law of Protection of Farmer Rights, the committee said in its statement.

The Committee has also mentioned that if the market price is above the set price, the merchants have to purchase the paddy at the prevailing market price.

Farmers who have incon-

venience selling at the basic price can contact the township agents of Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF) and MRF office's contact 012301128, 01-2301129 and 01-218266.

Nearly 18 acres are put under monsoon and summer paddy in Myanmar yearly. In the 2019-2020FY, Myanmar planted 17.31 million acres of paddy, which is the lowest year for paddy cultivation in five years, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation stated. —Moe Pyat/GNLM

Myanmar-Thai border trade up \$314 mln till 24 Sept

THE Myanmar-Thailand border trade has increased by US\$314 million and stands at \$4.2 billion between 1 October and 24 September this financial year 2020-21, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The country's export to neighbouring Thailand reached \$2.84 billion while its import shared \$1.36 billion.

During the corresponding period of the past FY2019-2020, Myanmar-Thailand border trade touched a high of \$3.88 billion.

Some border checkpoints are temporarily restricted during the pandemic period. There are seven border posts between Myanmar and Thailand, Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Hteekee, Myeik, Mawtaung and Meisei. Except for Tachilek and Myawady, the remaining border

checkpoints showed a decrease in trading this FY.

Among those trade camps along the Myanmar-Thailand border, the Myawady-Mae Sot route is the most important, carrying about 70 per cent of trade between the two countries. As of 24 September of this FY, the Myawady land border topped with \$1.9 billion of bilateral trade.

Myanmar primarily exports agriculture and livestock products, natural gas, beans, and bamboo shoots to Thailand. It imports non-alcoholic beverages, fabric and yarn, motorcycles and related parts, construction materials and food products.

Thailand is Myanmar's second-largest trade partner and third-largest foreign investor. — ACM/GNLM



The country's export to neighbouring Thailand reached \$2.84 billion while its import shared \$1.36 billion.

String bean growers get more profit this year

THE local farmers from Tabinshwehtee ward, Myinmu town, Sagaing district are growing the string bean on a manageable scale and are happy as they are getting bumper yield and good prices.

"Some seasonal fruits and vegetables are being cultivated regularly in those townships. Currently, they have grown 7,000 string bean plants per acre in their townships. It costs K800,000 per acre. After 45 days of cultivation, We yield over 250 visses of long bean," said U Than Soe, an owner of farmland.

The string bean plant is growing well in loamy soil and it could heavily yield after cultivat-

ing for 70 days. The string bean plant is a favourite plant of leaf beetles and pods. So, the growers need to take care of them and spraying the pesticide if it is necessary.

Currently, the string bean price fetched K1,000 per viss. The growers are making K3 million profit. The string beans are mainly bought by Mandalay traders.

The string bean is a necessary crop not for the housewife but for the Myanmar noodle soup (locally called Monthinga) sellers. So, the local growers are happy for making a profit by selling them. — Aung Soe Phay (Myinmu)/GNLM



Currently, the string bean price fetched K1,000 per viss. The growers are making K3 million profit. The string beans are mainly bought by Mandalay traders.

Daily newspapers available online

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

News and Periodicals Enterprise

NEWS IN BRIEF

BOJ cuts views on 5 of 9 regional economies on COVID, parts shortages

THE Bank of Japan on Thursday downgraded its economic assessments on five of the country's nine regions amid the lingering impact of the coronavirus pandemic as well as supply shortages of semiconductors and other components that have hit manufacturers.

In its quarterly Sakura report, the central bank maintained its views on the remaining four regions, including the Tokyo area. The Japanese economy remains in a "severe" situation despite its recovery as a trend, it said.

Some regions reported "a pause in signs of a pick-up due to the effects of the spread of the novel coronavirus during this summer and production cutbacks in some sectors," the BOJ said. Tohoku, Tokai, Kinki, Chugoku, Kyushu, and Okinawa are the five regions that saw their assessments cut. The views on the remaining four—Hokkaido, Hokuriku, Kanto-Koshinetsu and Shikoku—were maintained.—Kyodo News ■

Carrie Lam unveils new measures to reinforce Hong Kong's financial strengths

CHIEF Executive of China's Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Carrie Lam unveiled Wednesday an array of new measures to reinforce Hong Kong's status as a global financial hub, including improving the listing regime of the stock market and facilitating the cross-boundary flow of renminbi.

"Despite unprecedented challenges in the past two years, our financial system has remained stable and business has been vibrant," Lam said when delivering the 2021 policy address at a Legislative Council meeting.

The HKSAR government will support Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited (HKEX) in enhancing the listing regime and establishing one for special purpose acquisition companies, Lam said.—Xinhua ■

Johnson vows 'long overdue' revamp of UK's post-Brexit economy

BRITISH Prime Minister Boris Johnson rallies his Conservative party faithful on Wednesday vowing a far-reaching overhaul to wean the UK economy off cheap foreign labour after Brexit.

Shrugging off panic-buying at petrol stations, bare supermarket shelves and retailers' warnings of a bleak Christmas to come, the Tory leader says the short-term pain is worth it.

"We are dealing with the biggest underlying issues of our economy and society," he is expected to say in his conference-closing speech, according to excerpts released by the party. "The problems that no government has had the guts to tackle

before.

"Because we are embarking now on the change of direction that has been long overdue in the UK economy," Johnson will say, vowing no return to the pre-Brexit model of "uncontrolled immigration".

Instead, British businesses will have to invest in their workers and in technology to push the country "towards a high wage, high skill, high productivity economy".

But it will take time to transition, and, in the meantime, the government has grudgingly agreed to a limited number of short-term visas to lure truckers and poultry workers from Eastern Europe.



Johnson's government blames the acute labour shortages afflicting the UK economy not on its hardline approach to Brexit but on the coronavirus pandemic. PHOTO: AFP/PAUL ELLIS

The government blames the acute labour shortages afflicting the UK economy not on its hardline approach to Brexit but on the coronavirus pandemic.—AFP ■

Iran-SKorea row worsens over oil billions frozen by US sanctions



In January, Iran's Revolutionary Guards seized a South Korean-flagged tanker, the Hankuk Chemi, and held it and its captain for three months, ostensibly over alleged environmental violations. PHOTO: TASNIM NEWS AGENCY/AFP

A row between Iran and South Korea is intensifying, with Tehran threatening legal action unless Seoul releases more than \$7 billion in funds for oil shipments frozen because of US sanctions.

The Islamic republic was South Korea's third-largest Middle Eastern trade partner before the US unilaterally withdrew from a 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and world powers and reimposed crippling sanctions.

Iran had been a key oil supplier to resource-poor South Korea and in turn imported industrial equipment, household appliances and vehicle spare parts from Seoul.

"We have \$7.8 billion of our money blocked in South Korean banks," said Iranian lawmaker Alireza Salimi, who is involved with the case. South Korea took delivery of the Iranian oil "but did not pay for it", he told AFP.

"It is not a reliable trading partner and it should pay interest on the money it is improperly holding," he charged.

A foreign ministry official in Seoul told AFP that "it is difficult to confirm" the exact amount of money involved.

South Korea stopped purchasing Iranian oil after former US president Donald Trump exited the nuclear deal in 2018, reimposing the harsh sanctions and threatening to punish anyone buying crude from Iran.

That year, Iran-South Korea trade fell by half compared to 2017, when it had stood at \$12 billion, according to Iran's embassy in Seoul.—AFP ■

Google to invest \$1 billion to lift Africa internet access

GOOGLE on Wednesday said it will invest \$1 billion (€860 million) over the next five years to allow for faster and more affordable internet access and support entrepreneurship in Africa.

Internet reliability is a problem in Africa where less than a third of the continent's 1.3 billion people are connected to broadband, according to the World Bank.

But the continent, where nearly half the population is under 18, is a promising market. According to Google and Alphabet boss, Sundar Pichai "huge strides" have been made in recent years, but more work is

needed to make "internet accessible, affordable and useful for every African". The investment will support digital transformation by ensuring improved connectivity and access, he said in a statement.

The funds will, among other things, go towards infrastructure development including the Equiano subsea cable that will connect South Africa, Namibia, Nigeria and St Helena with Europe. The deal expands Google's pledge announced four years ago to train around 10 million young Africans and small-scale businesses in digital skills.

"I am of the firm belief that



Internet reliability is a problem in Africa where less than a third of people are connected to broadband. PHOTO: AFP

no one is better placed to solve Africa's biggest problems than Africa's young developers and startup founders," said Google's Africa managing director Nitin Gajria.—AFP ■

Natural gas market soars to record heights

EUROPEAN and UK gas prices surged Wednesday to record peaks, energised by fears of runaway demand in the upcoming northern hemisphere winter.

Europe's reference Dutch TTF gas price hit 162.12 euros per megawatt hour and UK prices leapt to 407.82 pence per therm in morning deals.

However, prices later reversed as supply concerns eased somewhat.

"It's panic and fear with winter just around the corner," Commerzbank analyst Carsten Fritsch told AFP.

Soaring gas prices—coupled with oil which has struck multi-year highs—have fuelled fears over spiking inflation and rocketing domestic energy bills.



Global shortages of natural gas are exacerbated by closures of coal and nuclear power stations, a lack of wind, drought and competition for supplies ahead of what is forecast to be a cold northern winter. PHOTO: AFP

Gas demand is also heightened in Asia, particularly from China, while key Russian exports are falling.

Europe to blame: Putin

However, Russian President Vladimir Putin declared Wednesday that Europe was

to blame for the current energy crisis, after the soaring gas prices spurred accusations that Moscow is withholding supplies to pressure the West.

"They've made mistakes," Putin said in a televised meeting with Russian energy officials.

He said that one of the factors influencing the prices was the termination of "long-term contracts" in favour of the spot market. Some critics have accused Moscow of intentionally limiting gas supplies to Europe in an effort to hasten the launch of Nord Stream 2, a controversial pipeline connecting Russia with Germany.

At the same time, global gas stockpiles remain worryingly low.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

GM aims to double revenues, debut mostly hands-free auto in 2023

GENERAL Motors unveiled plans Wednesday to double revenues by 2030 as it ramps up electric vehicle production, and in 2023 launch an automobile that can be operated hands-free in most situations.

Building on a series of earlier electric vehicle investment announcements, the big US automaker said it was on track to rapidly scale up its EV business, which will include a vehicle priced at \$30,000, cheaper than offerings from Tesla and other rivals.

Executives also described a series of new or expanded businesses in car insurance, digital subscriptions and government sales that will bolster the business.

"The vehicle has become a software platform," Chief Executive Mary Barra said at a briefing with reporters ahead of a two-day investor presentation. "There are so many growth opportunities we have."—AFP ■

Asia's richest man to launch 7-Eleven in India

ASIA'S richest man Mukesh Ambani is set to open India's first 7-Eleven convenience store, as his Reliance conglomerate boosts its retail presence in the vast market of 1.3 billion people.

Thursday's announcement of a franchise agreement comes two days after India's second-largest supermarket chain Future Retail terminated its 2019 deal with 7-Eleven to open 1,000 stores.

India's retail sector is dominated by family-owned "mom and pop" outlets but oil-to-telecoms conglomerate Reliance Industries added 1,500 new stores last year to make a total of nearly 13,000.

"7-Eleven is among the most iconic global brands in the

convenience retail landscape... (and) will offer Indian customers greater convenience and choices within their own neighbourhoods," said Isha Ambani, director of Reliance Retail Ventures and Mukesh's daughter.

The first store will open on Saturday in a Mumbai suburb, followed by a "rapid rollout in key neighbourhoods and commercial areas, across the Greater Mumbai cluster to start with", Reliance said.

Debt-ridden Future Retail, which owns popular brands such as Big Bazaar, said it was unable to "meet the target of opening stores and payment of franchisee fees" amid the coronavirus pandemic.

India's Supreme Court in



Asia's richest man Mukesh Ambani is set to open India's first 7-Eleven convenience store, as his Reliance conglomerate boosts its retail presence in the vast market of 1.3 billion people.

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/AFP

August blocked a \$3.4-billion deal struck by Reliance to buy Future Group's retail assets after

Amazon objected to it, claiming the deal amounted to breach of contract.—AFP ■

Amazon opens Britain's first '4-star' non-food store

AMAZON on Wednesday expanded its chain of physical shops selling non-food products to Britain, opening a new outlet southeast of London that will compete with local stores.

The US conglomerate's "4-star" store in the Bluewater shopping mall in Kent is stocked with items such as electronics, toys and books that have at least a 4-star rating from Amazon's UK customers.

The online retail giant in March launched its first non-US Amazon Fresh convenience store in London, where customers choose groceries and simply walk out, while a tracking system charges their shopping to their bank accounts.

The e-commerce company already has six such grocery stores in the UK, and 32 in the United States.

There is also one Amazon Salon in central London, which allows customers to use immersive technology to try different hair styles and colours before getting a cut.—AFP ■

Iraq, UAE sign deal on 5 solar electricity plants

POWER-SHORT Iraq inked an agreement on Wednesday for the UAE to build five solar electricity plants with a total capacity of 1,000 megawatts (MW).

Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi presided over the signing in Baghdad with renewable energy company Masdar, which is based in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates capital.

Iraq is rich in oil but its dilapidated grid battles daily blackouts.

Iraqi authorities aim to sign several similar accords by 2023 to add 7,500 MW to its grid, a senior oil and energy ministry official told AFP.

Last month, Iraq signed a



Employees walk past solar panels at the Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum Solar Park on 20 March 2017, in Dubai. - Dubai completed a solar plant big enough to power 50,000 homes as part of a plan to generate three-quarters of its energy from renewables by 2050.

PHOTO: STRINGER / AFP

multi-billion-dollar contract with France's TotalEnergies on pro-

jects including the construction of a 1,000-MW solar plant to supply

the southern region of Basra.

Iraq is the second-largest producer in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and crude accounts for more than 90 per cent of Baghdad's revenues. But the country faces a severe energy crisis and chronic power cuts that feed social discontent. Decades of conflict, poor maintenance and rampant corruption have battered Iraq's energy sector.

It currently produces 16,000 megawatts of electricity, far short of the estimated 24,000-MW needs of its fast-growing population which the UN says is expected to double by 2050.—AFP ■



Sri Lanka President Gotabaya Rajapaksa ordered a probe into his niece's overseas wealth. **PHOTO: AFP**

Sri Lanka probes president's niece over Pandora claims

SRI Lanka President Gotabaya Rajapaksa ordered a probe Wednesday into his niece's overseas wealth after she and her husband were alleged in the Pandora Papers to have millions of dollars stashed abroad.

The opposition immediately cried foul, saying that the investigation would amount to a cover-up by the Rajapaksa family which have been powerful in the island nation for decades.

Cabinet spokesman Dulles Alahapperuma said the president asked the main anti-graft body to issue a report on the assets of Nirupama Rajapaksa and her husband Thirukumar Nadesan "within one month".

Nirupama Rajapaksa, 59, was a legislator in the previous governments of another uncle, Mahinda Rajapaksa, the current prime minister, between 2004 and 2015 and was a junior minister for

five years. The couple's names were among dozens of prominent personalities worldwide featured in roughly 11.9 million documents leaked from financial services firms that managed their wealth.

The Pandora Papers were obtained by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) and released in stories by media partners including The Washington Post, the BBC and The Guardian.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Australia, PNG to end asylum seeker offshore processing

A longstanding deal that saw Australia detain asylum seekers in an offshore camp in Papua New Guinea will be scrapped, the two countries announced Wednesday.

Under Australia's hardline immigration policies, migrants attempting to reach the country by boat have for years been sent to detention centres on Papua New Guinea's Manus Island and the Pacific nation of Nauru.

On Wednesday, Australia and PNG announced their so-called "regional resettlement arrangement" would officially end on December 31.

But it does not spell an end to Canberra's much-criticised approach to migrants who arrive by sea, after Nauru last month committed to continuing to accept Australia's asylum seekers.

Manus Island was quietly emptied of detainees in late 2019 but Refugee Action Coalition says about 100 people remain in Port Moresby.

In a joint statement, Australia and PNG said that finalising their deal would realise "a long shared objective".

"From 1 January 2022, the PNG government will assume full management of regional processing services in PNG and full responsibility for those who remain," the statement said.

"PNG will provide a permanent migration pathway for those wishing to remain in PNG—including access to citizenship, long-term support, settlement packages and family reunification."—AFP ■

West pushes Russia for answers on Navalny poisoning

A group of 45 Western countries demanded at the global toxic arms watchdog on Tuesday that Russia provide urgent answers about the poisoning of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

Moscow now has 10 days to respond to the questions posed by the EU and countries including the United States, Canada and Australia, under the rules of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

Western nations say opposition leader Navalny was poisoned in Russia with the Soviet-era nerve agent Novichok in August last year. He was treated in Germany before returning to Russia, where he is now in jail.

Moscow has always denied involvement in Navalny's poisoning.

"It is essential that Russia sets out in detail the steps taken to investigate and shed light on the use of a chemical weapon on its territory," said the statement by the 45 countries.

They also asked Russia to explain why it had delayed a visit by OPCW inspectors to look into the Novichok claims.

"Russia has 10 days to answer," British delegates said in a tweet.

The US State Department said that it had concluded that agents from Russia's FSB intelligence agency had poisoned Navalny using Novichok, which it said only Russia possesses.—AFP ■

Germany's kingmaker parties tap SPD for coalition talks



Scholz and Merkel at Germany's Bundestag in August. **PHOTO: AFP**

GERMANY'S Greens and the liberal FDP party said Wednesday they had chosen to start three-way coalition talks with the centre-left Social Demo-

crats (SPD), dealing a blow to Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives.

The move puts the Social Democrats' Olaf Scholz a step

closer to the chancellery after his party came first in last month's general election with 25.7 per cent of the vote, followed by Merkel's centre-right CDU-CSU bloc at 24.1 per cent.

For either party to head the next German government it would need the support of the centre-left Greens and the pro-business Free Democrats (FDP), which placed third and fourth in the polls.

Despite leading the conservatives to their worst ever election result, beleaguered CDU leader Armin Laschet has not given up hope of replacing outgoing Merkel. But surveys suggest Germans would rather see Scholz, who is also finance minister and vice chancellor, in the top job.—AFP ■

20 killed, hundreds injured as quake rattles southern Pakistan

AT least 20 people were killed and dozens injured when a shallow earthquake hit southwestern Pakistan in the early hours of Thursday, with rescuers trying to reach coal miners reportedly trapped underground.

Many of the victims died when the roofs and walls of their mud brick houses collapsed after the 5.9 magnitude quake struck Balochistan province in darkness at around three in the morning.

It was felt across at least six cities and towns, but the worst-affected area was the remote mountainous district of Harnai, where landslides triggered by the jolt blocked some roads, hampering rescue efforts.

Authorities are also contending with phone and electricity



Many of the victims died when the roofs and walls of their mud houses collapsed after the 5.7 magnitude quake struck in darkness. **PHOTO: AFP**

outages after pylons were damaged.

"We are receiving information that 20 people have been

killed due to the earthquake," said Balochistan's home minister Mir Zia ullah Langau, adding that 100 people were injured.—AFP ■

German, Israeli presidents mark 80 years since Nazi slaughter of Jews in Ukraine

THE presidents of Germany, Israel and Ukraine on Wednesday marked 80 years since the Nazis slaughtered more than 33,000 Jews in Kiev during one of the worst single massacres of the Holocaust.

As part of the commemorative ceremonies, Ukrainian authorities also unveiled an installation created by renowned performance artist Marina Abramovic. Located at the Babi Yar memorial complex, the “Crystal Wall of Crying”—an allusion to the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem—consists of 75 large quartz crystals embedded into a 40-metre-long wall of black anthracite.

On September 29-30, 1941 more than 33,000 men, women and children, most of them Jews, were killed at the Babi Yar ravine outside Nazi-occupied Kiev, the capital of ex-Soviet Ukraine.

Babi Yar, also called Babyn Yar, was the scene of mass executions until 1943: up to 100,000 people were killed there, including Jews, Roma, and Soviet prisoners of war.

Speaking at the ceremony, German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said that the fight against anti-Semitism “must go on”. “It pains me and makes me angry that anti-Semitism is also growing stronger again in Ger-



In May the Holocaust memorial centre unveiled a symbolic wooden synagogue. PHOTO: AFP

many—especially in Germany,” he said. “The evil spirits of the past are showing themselves today in a new guise.”—AFP ■

Duterte nemesis and drug-war critic bids for Philippine president



Leni Robredo said she would ‘defeat the archaic and rotten style of politics’. PHOTO: AFP

PHILIPPINES Vice President Leni Robredo, an arch-rival of President Rodrigo Duterte and

staunch critic of his deadly drug war, said Thursday she will run for the top job, becoming the

leading opposition candidate in a crowded election field.

Robredo has been under pressure from supporters and opposition groups to join the 2022 presidential race, but she has been well behind the front runners in opinion polls.

Analysts say the even-tempered former congresswoman could struggle.

“I will fight, we will fight,” Robredo, 56, said, declaring herself a presidential candidate.

“We will defeat the archaic and rotten style of politics.”

President and vice-president are elected separately in the Philippines. Robredo quit Duterte’s cabinet less than six months after he was sworn in, after a presiden-

tial aide told her she had been barred from its meetings.

Her decision comes after her nemesis Ferdinand Marcos Jr, son and namesake of the country’s former dictator, said Tuesday he would run for the top job.

Robredo narrowly defeated Marcos Jr for the nation’s second-highest office in 2016, dealing a blow to the political aspirations of the powerful clan as they sought to rehabilitate their image.

Marcos Jr—an ally of Duterte and a defender of the narcotics crackdown that has killed thousands of people—fought a nearly five-year legal battle challenging the vote, but lost in February when the Supreme Court rejected the protest.—AFP ■

US senators on brink of stop-gap fix to US debt crisis

US senators neared agreement in the small hours of Thursday to stave off a catastrophic credit default after Democrats said they were close to accepting an offer from the Republicans to raise the debt limit for two months.

Mitch McConnell, who leads the Republican opposition in the upper chamber of Congress, floated the truce as his party was set to vote against Democratic plans to hike the nation’s borrowing cap until December 2022 - prompting hours of negotiations late into Wednesday night. “We’re making good progress. We’re not there yet, but (we) hope we can come to agreement tomorrow morn-

ing,” Schumer said after around 10 hours of talks. Republicans have pledged not to block the revised, short-term fix, allowing Democrats to “use normal procedures to pass an emergency debt limit extension at a fixed dollar amount to cover current spending levels to December,” according to McConnell’s offer.

The deal would represent the first breakthrough in a partisan staring match that risked leaving the United States unable to service its debt after the estimated deadline of 18 October, which would have shattered the US economy and led to a global recession.—AFP ■



Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell says Republicans would allow Democrats to vote for temporarily lifting the debt ceiling until December PHOTO: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

French ambassador to return to Australia after subs row

FRANCE announced Wednesday it will return its ambassador to Australia, ending a week-long diplomatic protest over Canberra’s decision to scrap a submarine contract.

Paris recalled its envoy on 17 September, enraged at Australia’s decision to tear up a landmark defence contract worth about US\$65 billion in favour of a US offer.

Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian told parliament the ambassador would now return to Canberra with “two objectives”. He said envoy Jean-Pierre Thebault would “define our relationship with Australia in the future” and “firmly defend our interests” as the two sides negotiate a settlement.

Since the contracts for the 12 French attack submarines had already been signed, the severance deal could cost Australia hundreds of millions of dollars.—AFP ■

Britain officials meet with senior Taliban in Kabul

BRITAIN officials met in Kabul with the senior Taliban figures on Tuesday to discuss humanitarian aid and safe passage for those who wish to leave Afghanistan, in the first high-level contact since the Islamists came to power in Afghanistan in mid-August.

The delegation led by Simon Gass, high representative for Afghan transition of Britain’s Prime Minister Boris Johnson, held talks with acting deputy prime ministers Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund and Mawlawi Abdul-Salam Hanafi, as well as Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, acting foreign minister, according to the British Foreign Office.

Its statement said discussed “how (Britain) could help Afghanistan to address the humanitarian crisis, the importance of preventing the country from becoming an incubator for terrorism, and the need for continued safe passage for those who want to leave the country.” The British side also raised the treatment of minorities and the rights of women and girls, it said.—AFP ■

Saudi takeover of Newcastle set to go ahead despite rights concerns

A Saudi-backed takeover of Newcastle is set to get the green light from the Premier League despite warnings from Amnesty International on Thursday that the deal represents “sports washing” of the Gulf kingdom’s human rights record.

A consortium featuring Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF), PCP Capital Partners and billionaire brothers David and Simon Reuben struck a deal worth a reported £300 million (\$408 million) to buy the club from unpopular owner Mike Ashley in April 2020.

However, the controversial takeover bid hit the rocks last year after an outcry from Qatar-based beIN Sports, a major television rights holder of the Premier League.

The broadcaster, which extended its rights to the English top-flight for the Middle East and North African region earlier this year until 2025 at a cost of \$500 million, was banned by Saudi Arabia in 2017 at the start



A Saudi-backed takeover could make Newcastle a Premier League force to contend with. **PHOTO: AFP**

of a diplomatic and transport blockade of Qatar, which ended in January.

Tensions between the states have eased significantly this year and Saudi’s ban on beIN is set to be lifted, with Riyadh also seeking to settle Qatar’s \$1 billion arbitration claim over pirate broadcasts to Saudi audiences by the BeoutQ network.

The PIF, chaired by Prince Mohammed bin Salman, widely known as MBS, is reportedly set to take an 80 per cent stake under the proposed deal.

The takeover could transform the Magpies’ fortunes—despite regular attendances of 50,000 at St. James’ Park, Newcastle have not won a major trophy since 1969.—AFP ■

Werner under pressure to maintain goal-scoring run for Germany

GERMANY can edge closer to qualifying for the 2022 World Cup by beating Romania in Hamburg on Friday with Chelsea striker Timo Werner under pressure to maintain his goal-scoring run for the national team.

The Germans have struggled to find a reliable striker since Miroslav Klose retired in 2014 after setting an all-time record of 16 goals at World Cup

finals.

“You need a killer instinct up front,” former Germany striker Mario Gomez told AFP subsidiary SID.

“If you don’t have a robust centre-forward, you have to think of other solutions,” Gomez added, “and that’s what (Germany head coach) Hansi Flick is doing.”

Werner has managed only

two goals in eight Chelsea games this season, but is on a good run for Germany having hit the net in all three September internationals.

A clinically taken close-range goal against Liechtenstein, a tap-in against Armenia, and a scrappy effort which went in off the post late on against Iceland boosted Werner’s record to 19 goals in 45 internationals.

Yet his tally of 14 goals in 60 games for Chelsea is a poor return compared to the 95 he scored in 159 matches for previous club RB Leipzig before last year’s transfer to Stamford Bridge.

Germany are on the verge of punching their ticket to next year’s World Cup in Qatar.

They are four points clear at the top of their qualifying group after winning their last three games under Flick, beating Liechtenstein, Armenia and Iceland by scoring 12 goals in the process and conceding none.—AFP ■



Timo Werner controls the ball during a Germany training session in Hamburg on Wednesday. **PHOTO: 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.

Sasnovich sets up Indian Wells clash with Raducanu

ALIAKSANDRA Sasnovich booked a clash with the WTA’s hottest star Wednesday, downing Maria Camila Osorio in straight sets to reach a second-round meeting with Emma Raducanu at Indian Wells.

Sasnovich, a 27-year-old from Belarus ranked 100th in the world, saved nine of the 10 break points she faced to emerge with the 6-0, 6-4 first-round victory and advance to a meeting with Raducanu, the British 18-year-old whose run to the US Open title last month electrified the tennis world.

Raducanu, who became the first qualifier to win a Grand Slam title, arrived at Indian Wells without a coach, having parted company with

Andrew Richardson after her victory at Flushing Meadows.

As she continues her search for a permanent coach, former pro Jeremy Bates is helping her out at Indian Wells, where Raducanu said she “can’t wait to get started” on her campaign.

Britain’s Andy Murray said it appeared Raducanu had plenty of savvy—on and off the court—to maintain her steep trajectory.

“Often what separates the elite athletes from maybe that level just below is that ability to learn quickly and process information quickly,” Murray said when quizzed about his young compatriot on Wednesday. “Not everyone can do that.—AFP ■