

# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VIII, No. 173, 4<sup>th</sup> Waxing of Thadingyut 1383 ME

www.gnlm.com.mm

Saturday, 9 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.

## Raw materials must be used in producing steel at home to meet local demand while reducing import volume of steel: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects the No 3 Steel Mill (Ywama) in Insein Township of Yangon Region on 8 October 2021.

IT is necessary to produce not only steel wares but cement used in construction sites to meet the local demand and all products must be high quality, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday afternoon inspected No 3 Steel Mill (Ywama) of Myanmar Econom-

ic Corporation and Hepatitis (B) Vaccine Factory of Pharmaceutical Factory Branch (Ywathagyi) under the Pharmaceutical Factory (Insein) in Insein Township of Yangon Region.

At No 3 Steel Mill (Ywama), officials reported to the Senior General on efforts to produce high-quality steel products,

systematic arrangement for prevention of environmental degradation, availability of raw materials, production of oxygen and revamping of the mill.

In his address, the Senior General said iron and steel products are essential for the

**SEE PAGE-3**

It is necessary to produce not only steel wares but cement used in construction sites to meet the local demand and all products must be high quality. Likewise, bolts and nuts used in the construction sites must be produced at home for serving the interests of the State.

INSIDE TODAY

**NATIONAL**

8th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Minerals (AMMin8), related meetings held online in Hanoi

**PAGE-5**

**NATIONAL**

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

**PAGE-6**

**LOCAL BUSINESS**

Improved chilli production brings happiness

**PAGE-7**



**LOCAL BUSINESS**

Myanmar rice export earns \$661.4 mln in eleven months

**PAGE-7**

## It is necessary to produce natural fertilizers

EFFORTS are being made for the production of fertilizers from domestic plants. It is necessary to produce natural fertilizers through the wastes of animal breeding farms.

*(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)*

## Heartbeat of Township Education Officer Daw Myint Aye on vaccinating 7,674 students aged over 12 against COVID-19 at schools in Thanbyuzayat Township of Mon State



"I AM DAW MYINT AYE, Thanbyuzayat Township Education Officer. I served my duties in this township on 1 June 2021. In our township, we will vaccinate a total of 7,674 students—1,690 high school students and 5,984 middle school students over the aged of 12. We will conduct vaccination at the schools with seven groups. There are 16 school families and 58 schools and so there would be 58 vaccination sites. We will vac-

Daw Myint Aye  
(Township Education Officer)

inate at the schools and so we have already collected the lists of students, designated the vaccination area and places to stay for a while after vaccination in advance under the arrangement of the respective headmasters or headmistresses. We also make preparations like cleansing the school compounds, classrooms and toilets to reopen the schools. We arrange the classroom social distancing. The township and district level officials inspected our preparations. We distributed the masks and face shields to

the students. We are ready to reopen to schools. We, teachers, received the vaccines. We are glad that the children are safe if the schools are reopened as they are vaccinated against COVID-19.

The vaccines can prevent the parents from being anxious when we reopen the schools. Therefore, I want to say thank you to all officials for conducting vaccination programmes on behalf of the Thanbyuzayat township education sector.—Thida Win (IPRD)/GNLM

## IPRD organizes 2<sup>nd</sup> mobile library for IDPs in Kyaukpyu

THE Department of Information and Public Relations (IPRD) organized the second mobile library for the people in Kyauk Talone IDP camp in Kyaukpyu Township, Rakhine State, and more people came to borrow books than the first time, according to an official from the department.

"This is the second time we launch a mobile library in this IDP camp, it is gratifying to see that more people are eager to borrow books than the first time," said Daw Khin Yu Yu Nwe, head of the Kyaukpyu District IPRD.



Book warmers are seen borrowing books from the IPRD mobile library in Kyaukpyu of Rakhine State.

There were only over 30 borrowers in the last time while more than 100 people came and borrow books this time. Officials from the IPRD conducted the mobile library field trip with over 400 books of different types, and students and the people living in the camp enthusiastically borrowed the books.

Ko Thet Naing Oo who came to borrow books said, "I am waiting since early today as I know that the mobile library will come today. I didn't know about it the first time. I came here in advance so that I can

choose the books I like to read."

"I pay my special thanks to the Department for coming and lending books to us in the camp; I hope they will do regularly; I also like to read the novels of Min Thein Kha and Min Myat Thura," he added.

A total of 1,008 people are living in the Kyauk Talone IDP camp. Officials from the Department of Information and Public Relations conducted the field trip under the COVID-19 rules and regulations and it is reported that books were lent free of charge.—July Kyel (IPRD)/GNLM

## Myanmar welcomes more returnees at border crossings



A total of 483 Myanmar nationals from abroad came back home through various land borders on 8 October, officials said.

On 8 October, 234 males and 145 females came back home from Nantaw border checkpoint, Muse, northern Shan State.

Similarly, 264 males and 219 females also returned to Myanmar via the Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge, Myawady, Kayin State, respectively.

Healthcare officials from relevant public hospitals and members of the Tatmadaw Medical Corps conducted

COVID-19 tests and provided quarantine entry documents for the returnees.

Next, officials explained instructions of the Ministry of Health to the returnees and departmental officials provided necessary assistance.

Then, the returnees were transported to their respective places by passenger bus provided by the township administration bodies.

The COVID-19 positive patients are being kept in separate areas and the necessary medical and administrative matters are being coordinated, officials said. — MNA

# Raw materials must be used in producing steel at home to meet local demand while reducing import volume of steel: Senior General

**FROM PAGE-1**

state-building tasks. Raw materials must be used in the production of steel at home to meet local demand while reducing the import volume of steel. The Senior General expressed his encouragement to the semi-government production of the State-owned and MEC industries as well as private ones.

It is necessary to produce not only steel wares but cement used in construction sites to meet the local demand and all products must be high quality. Likewise, bolts and nuts used in the construction sites must be produced at home for serving the interests of the State.

The Senior General inspected the revamping process of the mill.

At Hepatitis (B) Vaccine Factory of Pharmaceutical Factory Branch (Ywathagyi) under the Pharmaceutical Factory (Insein) in Insein Township, Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than and officials reported on the development of domestic pharmaceutical production, work process for the production of COVID-19 vaccines at home and production process of Hepatitis (B) vaccine.



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects the Pharmaceutical Branch(Ywathagyi) under the Pharmaceutical Factory (Insein) yesterday

domestic pharmaceutical production but will conduct suitable undertakings. A suitable tax rate is set for raw material importers.

Efforts must be made for the soonest production of the COVID-19 vaccine for current use and research must be done for long term production at home. It is necessary to arrange the production of COVID-19 vaccines in cooperation in medical technology with foreign countries and change the production of other drugs if necessary. Manufacturing of vaccines depending on variants of COVID-19 with farsightedness for the worst situation can reduce spending of foreign exchange without re-



Efforts must be made for the soonest production of the COVID-19 vaccine for current use and research must be done for long term production at home. It is necessary to arrange the production of COVID-19 vaccines in cooperation in medical technology with foreign countries and change the production of other drugs if necessary.

In his response, the Senior General said that pharmaceutical production should prioritize

the local demand in the market economic system. The government eases restrictions for



liance on the foreign countries.

The Senior General and party viewed the production process at the Pharmaceutical Factory.

Hepatitis (B) Factory was built in 2002 with the aim of vaccinating all infants and the construction tasks were completed in 2003. It got an FDA licence in 2005 and launched production in May 2007. At present, the factory continuously produces Hepatitis (B) vaccines. Officials hold necessary discussions to produce the COVID-19 vaccine. — MNA

## SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing chooses appropriate arms for female cadets at OTS (Hmawby), inspects agriculture and livestock tasks



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends the choice of arms ceremony for the 8<sup>th</sup> Intake of Graduate Female Cadet Course at the Defence Services (Army) Officers Training School in Hmawby in Yangon Region yesterday.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday morning attended the ceremony of choice of arms for the 8<sup>th</sup> Intake of Graduate Female Cadet Course at the Defence Services (Army) Officers Training School in Hmawby of Yangon.

The Senior General met the female cadets individually and chose the appropriate military arms of the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) depending on obedience to disciplines, their subject-wise outstanding performance, hobby and efforts.

In the afternoon, the Senior General inspected the multiple agriculture and livestock breeding farms (Danyingon) of Yangon Command.

It is necessary to seek the suggestions of the livestock breeding experts for transforming the work process into modern, systematic livestock breeding farms. A wider market and job opportunities must be created to modernize the manufacturing technologies for enhancement of the living standards of the people from the grassroots level.

At the briefing hall, the commander and officials reported to the Senior General on raising of layers and broilers, breeding of pigs, dairy cows, oxen and goats, cultivation of seasonal crops and perennial crops in the farm, use

of cow dung as natural fertilizers and sales of products in respective markets.

In his response, the Senior General said that it is necessary to undertake the welfare tasks for the Tatmadaw members and

families as well as to continue sales of surplus meat, fish, vegetables, eggs and milk to the local people for the convenience of food supplies as part of stabilizing the commodity prices in the region. In this regard, it is necessary to know the market demand in competitiveness with products of the private agriculture and livestock farms and to produce the marketable products at an appropriate rate. The Senior General stressed the need not to satisfy with the traditional livestock breeding systems, and it is necessary to seek the suggestions of the livestock breeding experts for transforming the work process into modern, systematic livestock breeding farms. A wider market and job opportunities must be created to modernize the manufacturing

technologies for enhancement of the living standards of the people from the grassroots level.

The research must be done by constantly observing the advancement of agriculture and livestock techniques through online media. Successful agriculture and livestock tasks will have to fulfil the needs of welfare for the Tatmadaw members and families.

The Senior General pointed out that the farming system must be transformed into the mechanized farming system in steps, in the long run, to have high yield, minimize loss and waste and cut the costs.

The Senior General and party viewed round fish farming tasks of fish and raising of layers in the farm and left necessary instructions. —MNA

## Cooking palm oil sold at fairer prices across Myanmar

THE Ministry of Commerce and the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association have been organizing the wholesale of oil which are imported at the CBM reference rate since 20 September. The wholesale exhibition aims to provide the public with cooking

palm oil at a fairer price, at a rate of 3,700 kyats per viss. From 20 September to date, a total of 5,974,430 visses (9,762 tonnes) of palm oil have been sold in Yangon Region, Mandalay Region, Sagaing Region, Bago Region, Magway Region and Shan State.

The Association also arranges mobile market to sell oil in the wards in Yangon, and will also do arrangements for other regions and states. The palm oil wholesalers are instructed to re-distribute the oil not more than 2 per cent of the net profit to the public.

Entrepreneurs who will distribute oil to the public can contact the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association at 09-444437295 and 04-401527049, and the Department of Consumer Affairs in Yangon Region at 01-250270 and 09-43666668.—MNA

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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



### CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

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

### ADVERTISING & MARKETING

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

marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com  
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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

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

### Write for us

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

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

# MoC Union Minister addresses Indo-ASEAN business summit & expo

UNION Minister for Commerce Dr Pwint San addressed the Indo-ASEAN Business Summit & Expo held through videoconferencing yesterday morning.

The Union Minister said ASEAN and India have been cooperating in economic and trade relations for a long time, and there is a deep relationship in trade, culture, and economy between the two parties. He added that India is the biggest trade partner not only for ASEAN but also for Myanmar. He said he believes that ASEAN-India economic cooperation will bring opportunities and success to the people of the region.

He said Myanmar will cooperate in the economy, technical

assistance, training courses and conferences under ASEAN-India FTA, as well as with other nations for the development of the MSMEs sector.

As Myanmar is forming a remedial working committee on business that may be affected by COVID-19, Myanmar want to work together with partner counties for the regional economic development, he said.

He called on cooperation to increase trade and ease non-tariff barriers which is important for trade facilitation. He said he believes that the global economic challenges facing the COVID-19 pandemic will be solved through cooperation among the countries.



The Indo-ASEAN Business Summit & Expo was also attended by the Trade and Industry Minister of India, Trade Ministers from the ASEAN countries, the Chairman and the Director-General of the Confederation of India Industry (CID). – MNA

## 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Minerals (AMMin8), related meetings held online in Hanoi

VIET Nam hosted the 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Minerals (AMMin8), the 21<sup>st</sup> Senior Officials Meeting on Minerals (ASOMM21), the 14<sup>th</sup> ASOMMM+3 Meeting, the 3<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Mineral Award and related meetings via videoconferencing on Cisco WebEx from 4 to 8 October.

A Myanmar delegation led by Director-General U Khin Latt Gyi of the Department of Mining of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation consisting of Director-General Dr Thet Tin Nyunt and other officials of the Department of Geological Survey and Mineral Exploration joined the events.

During the 8<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Min-



erals (AMMin8), Dr Tran Hong, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Viet Nam

made an opening speech.

Then, Deputy Secretary-General for ASEAN

Economic Community Mr Satvinder Singh of ASEAN Secretariat, Ministers and

Senior Officials of ASEAN member countries coordinated the meeting.

The leaders discussed the action lines, Outcome Based Strategies, Annual Milestones and Work Plans of respective ASEAN countries for ASEAN Mineral Cooperation Action Plan-AMCAP AMCAP - III, Phase 2 in detail and further collaboration with ASEAN Federation of Mining Association - AFMA, Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia- CCOP, Intergovernmental Forum-IGF in addition to ASEAN's dialogue partners China, Japan and Korea (ASEAN+3). – MNA

## Myanmar-India border trade increases in 2020-2021FY



BORDER trade between Myanmar and India hit US\$198.4 million as of 30 September in the current financial year 2020-2021, said a statistical report of Myanmar's Commerce Ministry Friday.

From India-Myanmar border trade, it earned more than \$198 million and found that it was more than \$106 million compared with the previous year.

The Myanmar-India total border trade during the period

was shared by Myanmar's export of \$196.43 million and its import of \$1.98 million.

Much of Myanmar-India cross-border trade is conducted via Trantlang and Reed land borders in Chin State and Tamu in Sagaing Region.

Trade volume via the Tamu border crossing of this FY totalled \$34.65 million, with export valued at \$33.56 million and imports \$1.09 million.

In the same period, the to-

tal trade volume via the Reed border trading post stood at \$165.19 million, with exports valued at \$164.3 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. — ACM/GNLM

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



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

On 8 October (yesterday), anti-COVID-19 equipment and medical products including oxygen plants and concentrators were imported by two companies using two vehicles.

A total of 19 tonnes of liquid oxygen carried by one bower, 2,190 empty

oxygen cylinders, and 152 oxygen concentrators for home use were imported via Chinshwehaw and Myawady trading posts, and seaports.

One oxygen bowser was transported to Yangon, officials said.

Officials from the relevant departments are cooperating to facilitate and expedite the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), including online 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](http://www.commerce.gov.mm). — MNA

## Notification of COVID Vaccination Fund Management Sub-Committee

From 4-10-2021 to 8-10-2021, local/foreign donors contributed 3.798 million Kyats to the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund Myanmar currency account OA 013733 and foreign currency account EDC 600012 opened at the Myanma Economic Bank (Nay Pyi Taw). The status of the fund account as of 1-10-2021 is as follows: -

COVID-19 Vaccination Fund OA-013733 List	
	Kyat
Account opening balance on 1-10-2021	246,072,610,503.91
Received amount of money from (+) 4-10-2021 to 8-10-2021	3,798,138.62
<b>Closed balance on 8-10-2021</b>	<b>246,076,408,642.53</b>
COVID-19 Vaccination Fund EDC 600012 List	
	USD
Account opening balance on 1-10-2021	43,762,349.53
Received amount of money from (+) 4-10-2021 to 8-10-2021	-
(-) 7-10-2021 Payment for buying medicines from Sinopharm Company of China	26,600.000.00
<b>Closed balance on 8-10-2021</b>	<b>17,162,349.53</b>

## COVID-19 vaccination continues in different regions, states



DOCTORS and nurses from public hospitals, Tatmadaw medical teams, healthcare workers and volunteers are working hard to give COVID-19 vaccines in different states and regions as the vaccination programme is one of the most important activities in the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccine is being

given daily to 16 target groups regardless of race and religion including Buddhist monks and nuns, local people over the age of 55, religious leaders, prisoners, people with disabilities, ethnic armed groups, people with chronic diseases, and people in IDP camps respectively.

Doctors and nurses from public hospitals, medical teams

from the Tatmadaw, relevant healthcare workers in collaboration with volunteers have already given COVID-19 vaccines to 471 people from Hsipaw Township, Northern Shan State, 5,530 people from eight townships in Eastern Shan State, 22,763 people from 13 townships in Mon and Kayin states, 1,853 people from Myeik and Kaleinaung townships in Taninthayi Region, 2,500 people from Yankin, North Okkalapa and Dagon Myothit Seikkan townships in Yangon Region, 23,108 people from 13 townships in Ayeyawady Region, 3,620 people from seven townships in Rakhine State and 48,903 people from seven districts in Mandalay Region, and 1,625 people from Ottwin, Monyo and Padaung townships in Bago Region. — MNA

## 15,000 people get COVID-19 jab in Myeik Township



HEALTHCARE officials gave the second batch of COVID-19 vaccines to those who have not yet been vaccinated as part of the priority programme in Myeik Township, Taninthayi yesterday.

A total of 15,000 people received the COVID-19 vaccines yesterday, officials said.

Ward and village administrators have notified the priority vaccination of giving schedule for those who have not been vac-

inated against the COVID-19 vaccines.

The vaccines were administered by five vaccination teams at No. 1 Basic Education High School, No. 3 Basic Education High School, midwifery training hall and district gymnasium yesterday.

Ward and village administrators and charity groups also assisted in the vaccination programme.

In Myeik Township, the first

batch of Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines has been given to 9,354 people in the first phase and a total of 8,507 people in the second batch.

The first dose of the vaccines (second batch) has been administered to 20,940 people in the township, and 15,000 more people will be vaccinated next as a matter of priority, according to the Department of Public Health.—Khaing Htoo (Myeik)/GNLM

## 1,466 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 8 October, total figure rises to 475,885

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 475,885 after 1,466 new cases were reported on 8 October 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 429,180 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 18,068 after 34 died.

## Improved chilli production brings happiness



A viss of chilli now costs K500. Myanmar also exports fresh chillies to China and Thailand. But the fresh chillies are mainly exported to Thailand through the Myawady border.

THE local dwellers from Myo-thit town, Magway district, are mainly engaged in the agriculture sector, growing paddy, sesame, corn, chilli and onion. The chilli growers are happy due to a bumper yield and good prices.

The chilli growers from Myo-thit township have been cultivating the land before

growing chilli plants. About a month after growing, the plants are sprayed with herbicides. The chillies are being grown using agricultural methods.

After 15 days, the chillies are transplanted to the farmlands and it is needed to put the water into the farms every five days. The chilli can be picked

up after two months of growing.

A viss of chilli now costs K500. Myanmar also exports fresh chillies to China and Thailand. But the fresh chillies are mainly exported to Thailand through the Myawady border. — Than Win Tun (IPRD)/GNLM

## Myanmar rice export earns \$661.4 mln in eleven months

MYANMAR generated US\$661.4 million income from exports of rice and broken rice in the past eight months (October-August) of the financial year 2020-2021, according to the Myanmar Customs Department.

Border trade disruption led to a sluggish market and the export price dropped. The prices of white rice varieties range from US\$340-355 per MT depending on the different varieties and quality, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF). This year, rice shipment to European countries is declining. However, Myanmar is delivering rice and broken rice to China and Bangladesh. The market cools down for now owing to the transport difficulties amid the closure of the border posts.

The prices of rice last month for Pawsan varieties moved in the ranges of K38,000-57,000 per 108-pound-bag in the domestic market, while low-quality rice fetched K22,300-28,000, MRF data showed. The price indicated a gradual increase.

Furthermore, as per the 2020 rice price data, the price of staple rice usually increases in the rainy season. Consequently, the price gain is seen as expected during the monsoon season of this year,

a trader stated. MRF and its affiliated associations sold the rice at a fairer price in Yangon Region, starting from 14 September 2021.

Myanmar set the rice export target at only 2 million tonnes in the current FY as summer paddy growing acreage drops as per MRF. Weather changes affected irrigation water resource availa-

bility in agriculture. Consequently, the export figures showed a drop of 300,000 tonnes of rice in exports this year.

Myanmar generated over \$800 million from rice exports in the previous FY2019-2020 ended 30 September, with an estimated volume of over 2.5 million tonnes. —KK/GNLM



Myanmar generated over \$800 million from rice exports in the previous FY2019-2020 ended 30 September, with an estimated volume of over 2.5 million tonnes.

## Muse border trade decreases by \$1 bln as of 24 Sept

THE value of trade between Myanmar and China via the Muse land border as of 24 September 2021 showed a drastic drop of US\$1 billion since October 2020 owing to the border trade suspension, as per the Ministry of Commerce. The value of the Muse border trade touched a low of US\$3.8 billion in the financial year 2020-2021 amid the political changes and the COVID-19 impacts. The figures plummeted from \$4.82 billion recorded in the year-ago period, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

As of 24 September 2021, Myanmar's exports to China through the Muse land border were valued at \$2.64 billion, while imports are worth \$1.157 billion. The trade showed a slump in both exports and imports. China has closed down the border posts (Kyinsankyawt, Wamting) from 8 July 2021 following the COVID-19 cases in Myanmar. On 30 March, Mang Wein, which is a major border crossing between Muse and Kyalgaung areas, was suspended owing to the COVID-19 cases. On 1 April, Nantaw and Sinphyu border posts suspended their operations.

As a result of this, the border trade between Myanmar and China was completely halted. The closure of the Sino-Myanmar border trade resulted in job losses of about 400,000-600,000 workers engaged in the Muse border post. Furthermore, the short-haul trucks from Muse to China were also affected by this consequence. Additionally, traders from the Muse border post were also battered by trade suspension, stopping the tax revenue.

Nonetheless, China will give the green light to the items stockpiled at the warehouses and checkpoint of Kyalgaung, China to be imported into Myanmar soon, in line with the standard operating procedures (SOPs). Myanmar exports agricultural products, including rice, beans and corn, and fishery products such as crab, prawn, etc. Furthermore, Myanmar's natural gas export to China is also conducted through the Muse-Ruili border. The raw CMP materials, electrical appliances and consumer goods are imported into the country. —KK/GNLM



As of 24 September 2021, Myanmar's exports to China through the Muse land border were valued at \$2.64 billion, while imports are worth \$1.157 billion.

## Total border trade value exceeds \$9.7 bln this FY

THE total border trade value at 18 border trade camps exceeded US\$9.7 billion this 2020-21 financial year (FY), according to the Ministry of Commerce. During the period, the country's export via land borders amounted to \$6.49 billion, while its import shared \$3.2 billion. From 1 October to 24 September of the 2020-21FY, the total border trade value amounted to \$9.69 billion, down \$832 million compared with the same period last year.

The country conducts border trade with neighbouring China through Muse, Lwejel, Kampaiti, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung with Thailand via Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Meisei checkpoints, with Bangladesh via Sittway and Maungtaw and with India through Tamu and Reed border crossings, respectively. Muse trade camp in the Myanmar-China border reached \$3.8 billion, down \$1.02 billion compared with the same period last year. Myanmar mainly exports agricultural products, animal products, as well as forest products, minerals, fishery products and manufactured goods, among other things, while capital goods, raw industrial materials and consumer products are imported into the country. —ACM/GNLM

# Provide warm care and sympathy to older persons

**T**HE numbers of older persons above 60 years are growing across the world as well as in Myanmar day by day. Most of the older persons are expecting sympathy as well as warm care to be provided by new generations.

The long longevity is acceptable for the aged if they are sure to have assistance from providers. Otherwise, the needy aged persons do not dare to face the consequence of the long longevity for various reasons on the deficiency of aid.

Myanmar starts the aged care activity in 1915 with the establishment of homes for the aged. So far, more than 70 homes for the aged established by various charity organizations scatter in various parts of the nation to provide care to over 3,000 older persons.

Generally, the homes for the aged admit the older persons above 60 regardless of race and religion and provide care to them. The supervisory bodies of respective homes emphasize the basic needs of the older persons such as food, clothing and accommodation as well as health care services for the aged.

So far, the Department of Social Welfare has recognized 58 homes for the aged: one in Kachin State, two in Kayah State, one in Chin State, two in Sagaing Region, two in Taninthayi Region, nine in Bago Region, five in Magway Region, nine in Mandalay Region, three in Mon State, two in Rakhine State, 11 in Yangon Region, four in Shan State, six in Ayeyawady Region and one in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area.

The Institute of Social Welfare conducts the aged care course with attendance of caregivers, home wardens and volunteers serving at the homes in regions and states, aimed at systematically providing care to the aged at the homes for the aged by spending the State budget.

The UN Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 1997/18 dated 21 July 1997 to celebrate the International Year of Older Persons in all global countries every year with the approval of the 52nd Session of the UN General Assembly and the 35th Session of the Commission for Social Development.

As such, new generations who would come out more and more need to give warm care and sympathy to the older persons for enjoying the peace and tranquillity of their lives on the remaining sunset days.

# Seek the best way to overcome challenges of COVID-19

By Aung Kyaw Thant

**N**OWADAYS, the advancement of the science and technology sector is gaining momentum day by day. Thanks to scientists and researchers in respective arenas, the new oral drug Molnupiravir for COVID-19 which can be used in the treatment of various diseases has emerged in the United States of America recently. The pharmaceutical company Merck mentioned that the newly-emerged drug would reduce the chance the newly-infected patients would be hospitalized by 50 per cent.

Before the oral drug Molnupiravir, the global countries had been relying on the injections only. Anthony Fauci, the chief medical advisor to President Joe Biden, told reporters: "The data are impressive," and highlighted that the trial results showed there were no deaths among patients who received the drug compared to eight deaths in the placebo group.

### If the dreams come true

As the oral drug, Molnupiravir has emerged, more kinds of oral drugs are expected to come out one after another as medical professionals are focusing on research of oral drugs on tests. If the dreams come true, the global peoples will have the chance to enjoy happiness along with their lives while keeping in touch with the pandemic COVID-19.

Practically, not only Myanmar but also other global countries are still using the vaccines against COVID-19 in various forms. These vaccines are highly reliable for potency to fight against the pandemic, leaving drops of the infection rate as well as mortality rate day after day.

The government of Myanmar set an aim to ensure 50 per cent coverage of vaccination against COVID-19 in the entire nation by the end of 2021. To meet the goal, the government has been making arrangements to purchase anti-COVID-19 vaccines from neighbouring countries such as China and India, and Russia.

### Vaccination to prioritized groups

So far, 14 million units of Sinopharm and Sinovac have arrived in Myanmar. Most of these vaccines have been allocated to regions and states in order to vaccinate the prioritized groups such as health staff, volunteers, older persons above 60 and religious persons.

Moreover, local authorities arrange the vaccination for the people including



Above 18-year-olds are receiving the first shots of COVID vaccine in Yenangyaung Township.

internally displaced persons at their camps mostly in Kachin and Rakhine States. In addition, some local people from far-flung areas of the country and border areas have been given vaccines for the first time. Relevant ministries carried out arrangements for providing vaccines to their staff and families. Likewise, private companies and business firms implement job plans for their employees. Furthermore, inmates and prisoners from jails have also get vaccinated under the plan of prioritized groups.

In this regard, health staff at different levels and volunteers performed vaccination tasks with earnest efforts for ensuring the decline of the infection rate of the pandemic in the nation as quickly as possible. They use their strengths in injecting the vaccines into the people in all parts of the nation without any complaints. It is because they are happy involuntary measures.

### Spending foreign exchange on import of medicines

Businesspersons import a large volume of medicines and medical equipment such as liquid oxygen, oxygen cylinders, oxygen concentrators, oxygen plants, masks, gloves and suits of personal protective equipment spending a large sum of foreign exchange under the permission of the relevant ministries.

Despite trying to exercise thrift, the

government allows flowing out of the foreign exchange for the import of medical equipment and medicines. On the other hand, the relevant ministries are trying hard to manufacture the vaccines and medicines to battle the COVID-19. Traditional medicine practitioners are striving for producing vaccines and medicines by conducting research works. The Head of State also gave guidance to manufacture the vaccines to be used in treating the patients with the positive result of COVID-19 with the use of herbal plants.

### Efforts to reopen schools for students

Medical specialists and technicians in different fields are making concerted efforts to plunging the infection rate into the most appropriate rate which must be less than five per cent on a daily basis. It is because the government arranges to reopen schools beyond the long October holidays if the infection rate is resting assured for the health of the children.

Before the third wave of the pandemic, the government managed to open basic education schools including private schools and monastic education schools for the students and parents not to lose the rights of learning. If they lose the rights of learning, the age of students and grade of learning will not be in balance. If so, students might be disappointed to attend the classes. Hence, the government made efforts for students

not to lose the chance of learning.

Unfortunately, the outbreak of COVID-19 in the third wave pulled up the infection rate as well as the death rate in Myanmar. It was regrettable that thousands of people were infected and hundreds of people died during the high tempo period in July and August 2021 on a daily basis. Hence, the authorities sought the best way and mean to solve the problems by vaccinating the prioritized groups in time.

Currently, the government arranges the vaccination for children above 12 with the use of Sinovac produced by China. The authorities concerned make preparations to inject the Sinovac into the children above 12 not only at the basic education schools but in civilian residences. The plan does not discriminate against the youths in various arenas.

### The victory of the entire people, health staff, volunteers

Thanks to their efforts, the infection rate of the disease is gradually down day by day. Likewise, the death rate is also declining with less than 50 persons a day. In fact, it was the victory of all the entire people in addition to health staff, volunteers and local authorities. The acts of the people who abided by restrictions of COVID-19 issued by the Ministry of Health were the effective tools to fight against the COVID-19.

Those people kept their minds in patience in the situation of stay-at-home

programmes which restricted the people from travelling from one place to another not to spread the COVID-19 virus. The helpful acts of the people are one of the factors to secure victory in reducing the infection rate of the disease.

### Seek ways to live with the pandemic in new normal

In fact, as the COVID-19 pandemic will not totally disappear from the world, all the global peoples including Myanmar nationals need to try hard to live together with the pandemic in the new normal situation. That is why all the people need to seek the best ways how to live together with the virus infection of the pandemic along with their life without suffering from severe impacts of the disease. It is important that the infection rate of the pandemic must decline day by day to reach less than five per cent per day.

If so, the people from the townships involved in the stay-at-home programmes have been lifted from the restrictions one after another. Schools at different levels can be reopened for grasping the learning opportunities. Factories and workplaces can be run with the full strength of staff and employees so as to operate production.

Consequently, if the production rate of factories and industries increases, the export volume of products will be larger in the international market as well as prices of commodities will be down in the domestic market. If so, larger exportation can earn income not only for the businesspersons but for the government. If the GDP of the nation resurges, the country will develop as well as forex rate of Myanmar currency will go up again. As such, the entire people will have the improvement of socio-economic status.

All in all, the health restriction for the pandemic issued by the Ministry of Health such as often washing hands, wearing masks and face shields and avoiding crowds and public places are still important for daily life. All the global peoples welcome the production of new oral drugs as well as vaccines which benefit the people anyhow. In the future, the dreams which newly-produced oral drugs and vaccines would be highly potent in thoroughly battling the pandemic would come true for the global peoples to be fully healthy and fit for their whole lives.



## Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 8 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 9 October, 2021:** Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Taninthayi Region, fairly widespread in Bago Region and Chin, Kayin, Mon States, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Upper Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Yangon, Ayeyawady Regions and Southern Shan, Rakhine, Kayah States and isolated in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Taninthayi Region. 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 (8 - 10) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and about (5-7) feet off and along Rakhine Coast.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Increase of rain in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Kayin, Mon States.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 9 October, 2021:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 9 October, 2021:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 9 October, 2021:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

**WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND:** Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon Region and scattered in Mandalay Region.

### EARTHQUAKE NEWS

(Issued at 01:20 hour M.S.T.)

A moderate earthquake of magnitude (5.6) Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar (about (16) miles southwest of Kani), latitude 22.26°N, longitude 94.68°E, depth (100) kilometers, about (74) miles east-southeast of Haka seismological observatory was recorded at (00) hr (58) min (04) sec M.S.T on 8 October, 2021.

## Print With Us

The Global New Light of Myanmar

**PLEASE CALL**

**01 860 4530**

Advertise with us/ Hot Line : 09974424848

## In Egypt's Red Sea, corals fade as oceans warm

STANDING on a boat bobbing gently in the Red Sea, Egyptian diving instructor Mohamed Abdelaziz looks on as tourists snorkel amid the brilliantly coloured corals, a natural wonder now under threat from climate change.

"If they disappear, we'll disappear with them," he says of the vibrant corals on the reef, a species-rich ecosystem just below the turquoise waters that is beloved by diving enthusiasts worldwide.

Coral reefs—often dubbed the "rainforests of the oceans" for their rich biodiversity—are under threat everywhere as rising sea temperatures and acidification cause catastrophic "bleaching" events. Along with pollution and dynamite fishing, global warming wiped out 14 per cent of the world's coral reefs between 2009 and 2018, says a new survey by the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, the biggest ever carried out.

Some studies have suggested that many species of coral in the Red Sea—which is also bordered by the Saudi peninsula, Sudan and Eritrea—are unusually heat-resistant, but local professionals say they have already witnessed the damage.

"We can see the effects of global warming before our eyes," said Islam Mohsen, 37, another local diving instructor at the resort town of Sharm El-Sheikh.

"We can see the coral discolouring and turning white."

Coral reefs cover only a tiny fraction — 0.2 per cent — of the ocean floor, but they are home to at least a quarter of all marine animals and plants.— AFP ■



Tourists snorkel in the Red Sea above a coral reef near Egypt's Red Sea resort city of Sharm El-Sheikh at the southern tip of the Sinai peninsula. PHOTO: AFP

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### India's study reveals main air pollution sources in central Himalaya

INDIA'S federal ministry of science and technology Thursday said a study has shown mineral dust, biomass burning, secondary sulfate, secondary nitrate from northwest India and Pakistan, polluted cities like Delhi, the Thar Desert, and the Arabian Sea area.

And also, the long-range transported marine mixed aerosols are the main sources of aerosols in the central Himalayan region.

"This dust transport and forest fires are the main sources of total suspended particles (TSP), particularly in pre-monsoon period (March-May) when TSP concentration peaks in the region," the ministry quoting the study said. According to the ministry, the study on source apportionment of atmospheric pollution, which elucidates the atmospheric chemistry, emission source origins, and transport pathways of aerosol over the central Himalayan region, will help in the assessment of contributions and temporal variability of sources that influence the area through regional transport as well as climate impacts assessment.—Xinhua ■

### The count is in, Australia's Bird of the Year crowned

AFTER almost two weeks of daily voting and eliminations from a shortlist of 50 of Australia's most iconic and beloved birds, the superb fairywren was named Australia's Bird of the Year on Friday.

The small bird accrued a whopping 13,998 votes in its final tally.

The male fairywren has a rich blue and black plumage above its throat while females are largely brown with a red-orange area around their eyes and are a familiar sight in Australia's urban parks and gardens. The tawny frogmouth won the second place with 13,332 votes while the Gang-gang cockatoo in third place had 12,836 votes. Birdlife Australia said this year a total of 450,000 votes were counted over the course of the competition.—Xinhua ■

## Pacific's urgent call to climate action as crunch talks loom



The COP26 summit will bring together representatives from 196 countries and the European Union for the biggest climate conference since landmark talks in Paris in 2015. PHOTO: AFP

PACIFIC island leaders have urged industrialised nations to bring plans for real action, not good intentions, to upcoming

climate talks, painting a grim picture of the environmental horrors they face.

Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama said low-lying Pacific states were bearing the brunt of global warming's impact and their voices must be heard at UN-brokered climate negotiations in Glasgow next month.

"For our sake and all of humanity's, small island developing states will use the full measure of our moral authority against major emitters who refuse to arrive in Glasgow with strong commitments," he told an EU-backed virtual summit late Thursday.

The summit, known as

COP26, will bring together representatives from 196 countries and the European Union for the biggest climate conference since landmark talks in Paris in 2015.

Bainimarama said it must result in solid commitments to swiftly meet the ambitious goal set in Paris of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared with pre-industrial levels. The Fijian leader also demanded the phasing out of fossil fuels as quickly as possible, saying Glasgow could not end in "a litany of good intentions". "The consequences of inaction are unthinkable," he said.—AFP ■

## Extreme drought in Brazil triggers fatal sand storms

UNUSUALLY powerful sandstorms have left at least six people dead in Sao Paulo in recent weeks, local media said, as southeastern Brazil grapples with severe drought.

Scenes of huge orange dust clouds rumbling across the countryside—with winds of up to 100 kilometres (62 miles) an hour—have been seen at least three times since the end of September, terrifying residents in urban and rural areas of Sao Paulo and

Minas Gerais states.

The six people killed in Sao Paulo were victims of falling trees and houses and other direct consequences of the storms, local media reported.

"In some ways, they're a common occurrence, but not of this magnitude that we've seen in 2021," meteorologist Estael Sias of the Brazilian weather channel Metsul told AFP of the storms.

"It's the result of a long pe-



A massive dust storm is seen engulfing the neighbourhood of Nossa Senhora do Carmo at the city of Frutal, Minas Gerais state, Brazil, on 26 September 2021. PHOTO: AFP

riod of a lack of rain, high temperature and low humidity," she explained.

After the dry season, rain arrives, usually accompanied by wind storms.—AFP ■

## UK cuts 47 countries from Covid travel 'red list'

THE UK government on Thursday announced a dramatic reduction to its coronavirus travel "red list", scrapping bans on foreigners travelling to England from 47 countries.

Under the new rules that come into effect from 0300 GMT on Monday 11 October, only seven countries -- Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela —will remain under the restrictions. Removal from the "red list" for the 47 countries and territories, including Brazil, Mexico and South Africa, means passengers will no longer be required to enter hotel quarantine.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said the move was pos-

sible because of "the increased vaccination efforts around the globe". The government also announced it was extending inbound vaccinated arrivals to a further 37 countries and territories including India and Turkey.

The new rules mean fully vaccinated individuals entering England from the 37 locations will be exempt from quarantine, a pre-departure test and a day-eight post-arrival test. British and Irish nationals and those living in the UK are allowed to travel from red list countries, but must quarantine in a hotel for 10 days on arrival.

The UK government in London sets health and transport policy for England only. The devolved



Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said the move was possible because of "the increased vaccination efforts around the globe". **PHOTO: UNSPLASH/AFP**

parliaments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland set the Cov-

id travel policies for their regions. They have largely followed

previous rule changes for England.—AFP ■

## 'Beach' coworking spaces the new craze in Sao Paulo



After 18 months of being locked up by coronavirus pandemic restrictions, Brazil's largest city Sao Paulo is breathing again, thanks in part to open-air coworking spaces **PHOTO: AFP**

AFTER 18 months of being locked up by coronavirus pandemic restrictions, Brazil's largest city Sao Paulo is breathing again, thanks in part to open-air coworking spaces.

Once the domain of internet startups, these coworking businesses have branched out to a wider client base while also moving from offices to rooftops and terraces.

"Forty per cent of businesses in GoWork are conventional: lawyers, consultants, auditors," said Fernando Bottura, the young owner of GoWork, one of

the first coworking businesses in Sao Paulo that now owns 14 premises covering 32,000 square meters.

"We've had a 300 per cent increase in requests for estimates from traditional big businesses (since 2019) like fertilizer and plastic industry companies," said Bottura, dressed in jeans and sneakers.

There are now around 200 coworking spaces in Sao Paulo, "more and more outside with rooftops," said Bottura.

"It no longer makes sense for anyone to rent an office."

In Brazil as a whole, coworking spaces increased six-fold between 2015 and 2019 to almost 1,500.

In the metropolis of 12 million people, "beaches" with parasols are set up on rooftops and terraces, sometimes right next to cafes and even sports courts.

"We take great care of employees' well-being. We know that employees that work in good spirits develop a lot," said 38-year-old Renan Camargo, an online trader using the GoWork space on the city's prestigious Paulista Avenue.—AFP ■

## Canada mandates Covid vaccines for travellers, federal workers

CANADA'S federal bureaucrats, police and soldiers, as well as domestic air and rail travellers will soon need to be fully vaccinated against Covid-19, officials announced Wednesday.

The mandatory vaccine policy proposed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during a recent election campaign covers an estimated 300,000 government employees.

Some medical exemptions will be allowed, but others will be put on administrative leave without pay if not vaccinated by month's end.

All air and rail travelers 12 years or older in Canada will also be required to be fully vaccinated by the end of November.

"These responsible, practical, and tough actions... will protect Canadians, prevent our healthcare systems from being overwhelmed, allow our children to continue to go to school (and) accelerate our economic recovery," Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland told a news conference.

It will also ensure that "a minority of people (opposed to Covid-19 jabs) cannot sabotage Canada's economic recovery," she said.

More than 82 per cent of Canadians 12 years and over are fully vaccinated and 88 per cent have received at least one dose, according to the Covid-19 Vaccination Tracker website.—AFP ■

## Sweden halts use of Moderna vaccine for young adults

SWEDEN'S Public Health Agency on Wednesday recommended a temporary halt to the use of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine among young adults, citing concerns over rare side effects to the heart.

It said the pause should initially be in force until December 1, explaining that it had received evidence of an increased risk of side effects such as inflammation of the heart muscle (myocarditis) and inflammation of the pericardium (pericarditis).

"The Public Health Agency has decided to pause the use of Moderna's vaccine Spikevax, for everyone born 1991 and after, for cautionary reasons," the agency said in a statement, adding that



In this file photo taken on 24 December 2020 a person unpacks a special refrigerated box of Moderna Covid-19 at the East Boston Neighbourhood Health Centre (EBNHC) in Boston, Massachusetts on 24 December 2020. **PHOTO: JOSEPH PREZIOSO / AFP**

those groups should instead receive the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine.

According to the agency, the risk seemed especially tied to

the second dose of the Moderna vaccine and was more prevalent among young men and boys, and in the weeks just following the second jab.—AFP ■

## US Senate green-lights stop-gap deal to avert debt default

THE US Senate voted Thursday to stave off a credit default that would have sparked a recession and roiled world markets as Democrats and Republicans agreed to a stop-gap fix to raise the nation's debt limit.

The breakthrough -- which temporarily defers the crisis by adding another \$480 billion to the allowable debt total—came with an estimated 11 days to go until the country would no longer have been able to borrow money or pay off loans for the first time in its history.

Chuck Schumer, who leads the Democrats in the Senate, announced the breakthrough deal after fractious negotiations in Congress going into the early hours of the morning.

“Republicans played a dangerous and risky partisan game, and I am glad that their brinkmanship did not work,” he said on the Senate floor.

Republican Senate Minority leader Mitch McConnell offered the deal Wednesday as his party was set to vote against House-passed Democratic plans for a

hike in the nation's borrowing cap of more than a year.

Rather than solving the crisis, the new arrangement kicks the can down the road to coincide with another major funding deadline—a shutdown that would kick in from 3 December when the government's coffers theoretically run out, closing federal services and properties.

“What is needed now is a long-term solution so we don't go through this risky drama every few months,” Schumer added.



US Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer announced a breakthrough agreement on averting a credit default after hours of negotiations in Congress. Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer arrives at the US Capitol on 29 September 2021. **PHOTO: KEVIN DIETSCH / AFP**

Democratic House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer said Thursday night that his chamber will vote on the debt ceiling bill and send it to President Joe Biden's desk next Tuesday.—AFP ■

## Hold-outs Ireland, Estonia sign up to global tax reform deal



Ireland said removing 'at least' from in front of 15 per cent in the deal gave greater certainty that the rate will not ratchet higher in the future. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE Irish and Estonian governments on Thursday agreed to sign up to a 15 per cent global minimum tax rate on multinational firms, leaving only Hungary as the last hold-out against the far-reaching deal.

The reform is aimed at stopping international corporations slashing tax bills by registering

in nations with low rates.

“The government has now approved my recommendation that Ireland joins the international consensus,” Irish Finance Minister Paschal Donohoe said.

“I'm absolutely satisfied that our interests are better served within the agreement,” he added.

Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas said that joining the reform would ensure “we have the best chance of ensuring that Estonia's business environment and tax policy continue to work in the interests of a better future for all of us”.

Finance ministers from wealthy G7 nations in June endorsed a global minimum corporate tax rate of at least 15 per cent, reached in the framework of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

It was approved by the G20 in July and has so far been signed by more than 130 countries, except for Hungary.

Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto said earlier this week that there was a “chance” that his country could agree to it as long as the reform “does not damage the Hungarian economy or put Hungarian jobs in danger”.—AFP ■

## Chinese central bank boss vows to further fintech crackdown

CHINA will strengthen supervision of the online payments industry and continue its anti-monopoly crackdown, the governor of the central bank said, indicating Beijing will press ahead with a regulatory crackdown on the country's technology giants.

Authorities have for about a year targeted a range of home-grown tech behemoths, including e-commerce titan Alibaba and food delivery giant Meituan,

for alleged monopolistic practices and aggressive harvesting of consumer data.

The drive is part of a wider policy by the government to tighten its grip on the world's number two economy, including targeting private education, property and casinos.

“We will continue to cooperate with anti-monopoly authorities to curb monopolies and actively deal with algorithm

discrimination and other new forms of anti-competition behaviours,” People's Bank of China governor Yi Gang said Thursday in a keynote speech at a Bank for International Settlements conference on regulating the sector.

He added that the central bank will strengthen supervision of the payments industry and ask all financial services companies to be licenced.—AFP ■

## Brazil first post-pandemic oil auction finds few buyers

BRAZIL'S oil auction ended in disappointment on Thursday, with the government selling offshore drilling rights in only five out of 92 blocks on offer.

The dismal results reflected the weakened state of the oil industry during the Covid-19 pandemic as well as environmental concerns, according to experts.

The auction brought in just 37.14 million reais (\$6.7 million) compared to the \$2 billion raised at the previous auction held in October 2019, before the pandemic started.

Crucially, in a win for environmental activists, no offers were made for the blocks in the northeastern Potiguar Bay, which is close to the Fernando de Noronha and Rocas Atoll archipelagos, the former a UNESCO World Heritage site and the latter a biological reserve.

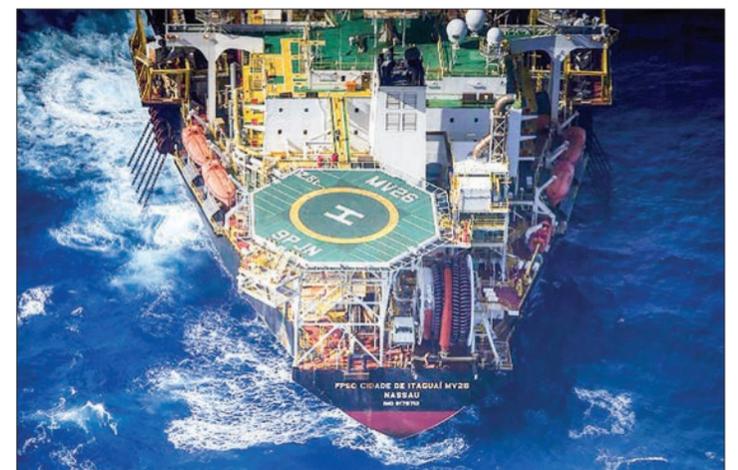
Around 50 protesters demonstrated in front of a hotel in Rio de Janeiro where the auction took place, notably

against the projects' risks to traditional fishing.

One demonstrator carried an iconic AFP photograph of an oil-stained Brazilian boy following an oil spill off the coast of northeast Brazil in 2019.

All the five blocks were bought by Royal Dutch Shell. They are located in the southeastern Santos Bay, close to the oil-rich pre-salt layer on Brazil's coast. Brazil's state oil company Petrobras, usually very active at auctions, made no bids.

Rodolfo Saboia, the director of the National Oil Agency, which organized the auction, insisted the result was “positive” given how hard the industry has been hit by the coronavirus pandemic. “We cannot call it a failure, we couldn't expect all the blocks to find a buyer,” he said. But Fernanda Delgado, a researcher at the Getulio Vargas Foundation, told AFP that “everyone expected there to be interest in more areas.”—AFP ■



Aerial view of a Floating Production Storage and Offloading Vessel (FPSO) oil platform, operating at Santos basin exploration unit of Pre-Salt off the coast of Brazil **PHOTO: MAURO PIMENTEL / AFP**

## Lao capital station of China-Laos Railway makes debut

THE China-Laos railway station in the Lao capital Vientiane made its debut on Wednesday.

The Vientiane Station, the largest and most important station of the China-Laos railway, is built by China Railway Construction Group Co., Ltd.. The station will consist of three platforms with five track lines and two additional platforms

with two lines reserved. With a construction area of 14,543 square metres, the station can accommodate a maximum 2,500 passengers, according to the Laos-China Railway Co., Ltd., a Vientiane-based joint venture in charge of the railway's construction and operation.

The Vientiane Station, reflecting the design concept of "the city of sand-

dalwood (Vientiane), the friendship between China and Laos", has deeply integrated the cultural traditions of the two countries.

The station's main building takes the Chinese traditional ancient architecture stretch ratio as the benchmark, and combines the environmental characteristics of Vientiane with the Chinese classic architecture's door style.

The facade extracts the image elements of tropical rainforest trees, and installs eight branches shaped eaves and columns with undecorated steel structure to support the station hall roof. When the sun shines on the station, it looks like many trees casting shadows on the facade, which fully highlights the elegance of "the city of sandalwood".—Xinhua ■



Photo taken on 6 Oct 2021 shows an exterior view of the Vientiane Station in Vientiane, Laos. The Vientiane Station, the largest and most important station of the China-Laos railway, is built by China Railway Construction Group Co., Ltd. (CRCG). The station will consist of three platforms with five track lines and two additional platforms with two lines reserved. PHOTO: CRCG/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA

## Samsung forecasts near-30% jump in Q3 operating profit

SOUTH Korean tech giant Samsung Electronics defied the global supply chain challenges to forecast a near-30-per-cent jump in third-quarter operating profits on Friday.

The world's biggest smartphone maker said it expected its operating profits to reach around 15.8 trillion won (\$13.3 billion) in a regulatory filing, up 27.9 per cent year-on-year.

The company is the flagship subsidiary of the giant Samsung group, by far the largest of the fam-



South Korean tech giant Samsung Electronics, the world's biggest smartphone maker, said it expected its operating profits to reach around 15.8 trillion won (\$13.3 billion) in a regulatory filing, up 27.9 per cent year-on-year.

PHOTO: AFP

ily-controlled empires dominate business in South Korea, the world's

12th largest economy. The conglomerate's overall turnover is equivalent to a fifth of the country's gross domestic product.

Samsung Electronics estimated sales for the July-September period at 73 trillion won, up 9.0 per cent year-on-year – a record for any quarter, a spokeswoman told AFP.

The coronavirus has wreaked havoc on the world economy, with lockdowns and travel bans imposed around the globe for many months.—AFP ■

## China fines food delivery giant Meituan for monopolistic behaviour

CHINA has fined food delivery giant Meituan 3.4 billion yuan (\$527 million) for monopolistic practices and ordered it to undertake a "comprehensive rectification", the market watchdog said Friday.

Authorities have launched a crackdown on a range of homegrown tech behemoths—including Meituan, ride-hailing giant Didi Chuxing and e-commerce titan Alibaba—for alleged monopolistic behaviours and aggressive harvesting of consumer data.

Meituan has been under fire since market regulators launched an investigation into the group in April, with particular scrutiny paid to the working conditions of its millions of delivery drivers, who are often employed as third-party contractors without legal protections or worker benefits.—AFP ■



Meituan, one of China's biggest food delivery firms, has been under fire, with particular scrutiny paid to the working conditions of its millions of delivery drivers.

PHOTO: AFP

## Nestle to trial plant-based eggs and shrimp

NESTLE is offering plant-based alternatives to eggs and shrimp as the Swiss food giant expands its menu in the growing vegan market, the company said

Thursday.

Nestle, owner of everything from chocolate to coffee and baby food brands, has for several years been reorganising

its activities to focus more on health and wellness.

The Swiss company has among other things been making a major push in vegetarian and

vegan products. Its latest offerings are the "vEGGie" and "Vrimp". The egg substitute is made from soy protein and omega-3 fatty acids.—AFP ■

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NEGAR VOY.NO. (SCY1106)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NEGAR VOY. NO. (SCY1106)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **9-10-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department  
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:  
**M/S LAND AND SEA INTERMODAL LOGISTICS  
SDN BHD LINE**

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ALLIANCE

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ALLIANCE VOY.NO. (V.08/21)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **9-10-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIPL** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301928

Shipping Agency Department  
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:  
**M/S UNI SPRING LOGISTICS HOLDINGS PTE  
LTD**

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V DEWI SARASWATI

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V DEWI SARASWATI VOY.NO. (DS 07L-2021)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **11-10-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **IBTT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301928

Shipping Agency Department  
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:  
**M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES (S'PORE) PTE LTD**

# US nuclear sub damaged in underwater collision

A US nuclear submarine was damaged after hitting an unidentified object while operating underwater in Asia, the US Navy said Thursday.

The USS Connecticut, a nuclear-powered fast-attack submarine, “struck an object while submerged on the afternoon of 2 Oct, while operating in international waters in the Indo-Pacific region,” the navy said in a statement.

It said there were no life-threatening injuries, but USNI News, a site specializing in navy news, reported that about a dozen sailors were hurt “with moderate to minor injuries.”

USNI News also said the submarine was operating in the South China Sea, where the US Navy has sought to challenge China’s disputed territorial claims on small islands, reefs and outcrops.



The Seawolf-class attack submarine USS Connecticut collided with an unknown object in the South China Sea. **PHOTO: US INDO-PACIFIC COMMAND/AFP**

The navy said the extent of the damage is being examined and the incident investigated.

“The submarine remains in

a safe and stable condition. USS Connecticut’s nuclear propulsion plant and spaces were not affected and remain fully operational,”

it said.

USNI News said the vessel is now headed to the US base at Guam.—AFP ■

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Peru president names woman environmentalist as new PM

PERUVIAN President Pedro Castillo accepted the resignation of his prime minister Wednesday and replaced him with a female environmental activist.

Under Peruvian law, the prime minister’s resignation automatically triggered that of the entire cabinet.

Hours later, Castillo swore in environmental and human rights activist Mirtha Vasquez, 46, as his new prime minister in a move seen as a sop to the moderate wing of the informal leftist coalition that supports him.

Castillo gave no reasons for replacing Guido Bellido as premier, who was a more hardline leftist. Bellido’s resignation letter said he was acting at Castillo’s “request.” The leftist president, who used to be a rural school teacher, called for “unity” from Peru’s economic, political and social sectors to “achieve common objectives” such as reactivating the economy.

Castillo’s July appointment of electronic engineer Bellido, a political novice, was controversial from the start.—AFP ■

### Trump tries to block testimony on 6 January uprising: media

FORMER president Donald Trump has told four former senior aides not to comply with a congressional probe into the 6 January attack on Congress, US media reported Thursday.

Politico and The Washington Post both reported that ex-advisors Mark Meadows, Kash Patel, Dan Scavino and Steve Bannon were told not to cooperate with the formal House investigation into the riot by Trump supporters, which critics have labelled an outright insurrection.

The reports came hours after the release of a damning Senate report detailing Trump’s efforts to subvert the Justice Department and overturn his November election loss to Joe Biden.

Trump’s lawyers argued in a letter to the four that his communications and records are protected from disclosure by executive privilege and attorney-client privilege.—AFP ■

# More than 100 Haitians repatriated from Mexico

MORE than 100 Haitians flew home on a repatriation flight from Mexico, the country’s migration department said, as part of an agreement to address the rise in migration on the US border.

Authorities carried out “the return of migrants from Haiti, in compliance with human rights and in agreement with consular authorities of that country”, the National Migration Institute said Wednesday.

The 129 Haitians departed from Tapachula, Chiapas to the International Airport of Port-au-Prince, the statement added.

It was the second flight following an agreement between

the two countries to begin the “voluntary” assisted returns from Mexico.

Thousands of undocumented migrants -- many of them Haitians who had been living in South America -- have arrived in recent weeks hoping to enter the United States.

After being turned away at the US border, many are seeking to stay as refugees there, rather than return to their poverty-stricken country.

Jose Miguel Vivanco, Human Rights Watch executive director for Americas, tweeted a video that he purported to show a man fleeing Mexican immigration agents as he queued to board a plane to Haiti.



The 129 Haitians departed from Tapachula, Chiapas to the International Airport of Port-au-Prince. **PHOTO: INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE MIGRACIÓN (INM)/AFP**

“Is this what the Mexican government is calling ‘voluntary’ returns?” he tweeted.

The Mexican government

did not refer to the second flight as voluntary in its statement, unlike the September repatriation.—AFP ■

# Germany puts 100-year-old on trial for Nazi crimes



People lay wreaths in front of a sculpture by German Waldemar Grzimek at the “Station Z” memorial site at the former Sachsenhausen concentration camp to commemorate the anniversary of the camp’s liberation in April 1945, in Oranienburg, north of Berlin, on 18 April 2021. — The camp was liberated by Soviet troops on 22 April 1945.

**PHOTO: SOEREN STACHE / POOL / AFP**

A 100-year-old former concentration camp guard became the oldest person yet to be tried for Nazi-era crimes in Germany as he went before the court on Thursday charged with complicity in mass murder.

The suspect, Josef Schuetz, stands accused of “knowingly and willingly” assisting in the murder of 3,518 prisoners at the Sachsenhausen camp in Oranienburg, north of Berlin, between 1942 and 1945.

Allegations against him include aiding and abetting the “execution by firing squad of So-

viet prisoners of war in 1942” and the murder of prisoners “using the poisonous gas Zyklon B”.

More than seven decades after World War II, German prosecutors are racing to bring the last surviving Nazi perpetrators to justice, and have in recent years increasingly focused attention on lower-ranking Nazi staff.

The case comes a week after a 96-year-old German woman, who was a secretary in a Nazi death camp, dramatically fled before the start of her trial, but was caught several hours later.—AFP ■

## Kishida vows economic growth, redistribution in 1st policy speech

JAPAN'S new Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Friday vowed to implement a "new capitalism" to put the world's third-largest economy on a growth track and redistribute the fruits of that success to build up a stronger middle class in his first policy speech since taking office.

Addressing the lower house of parliament, he also promised to bolster the government's response to COV-

ID-19 while laying out plans for a sweeping review of security strategy to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific in the face of an increasingly assertive China.

"Only when we properly distribute the fruits of growth will we be able to realize more growth," Kishida said, arguing that neoliberal policies had created a "deep rift between the haves and the have-nots."

As part of his strategy to

spark economic growth, the prime minister said his government will invest in cutting-edge fields such as artificial intelligence and seek legislation to prevent the leakage of technology to overseas competitors.

Signalling a continuation of "Abenomics", pursued by former prime ministers Shinzo Abe and Yoshihide Suga, Kishida vowed to ward off deflation through drastic monetary easing and fiscal spending.

But his comments on redistribution appeared aimed at addressing criticisms that Abe's signature policy mix had boosted corporate earnings and stock prices but failed to trickle down to the middle class.

Kishida, who took office Monday after being named leader of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, promised to implement tax incentives for companies that raise wages.—Kyodo News ■



Prime Minister Fumio Kishida addresses the House of Representatives at the parliament in Tokyo on 8 Oct 2021, delivering his first policy speech since taking office.

PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

## Germany's Laschet signals readiness to step down as CDU chief



The leader of Germany's conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party Armin Laschet leaves the stage after giving a statement in Berlin on 7 October 2021. PHOTO: AFP

THE beleaguered chief of Angela Merkel's CDU party signalled Thursday that he was ready to step aside as leader of the conservatives, after an election debacle that left them on the brink of opposition.

Armin Laschet, 60, has been under intense pressure to quit after he led the conservatives to its worst election re-

sult since World War II, coming in after the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD).

A day after kingmaker parties Greens and the liberal FDP decided to seek a coalition with the Social Democrats, putting SPD Finance Minister Olaf Scholz a step closer to the chancellery, Laschet said the leadership of his conservative

party needed an overhaul -- his job included.

"We will quickly tackle the personnel question of the CDU—from the chairperson through the party's leadership to the federal executive committee," he told journalists, saying that he will propose a date for a party congress to settle these issues.

Nevertheless, Laschet insisted that a coalition led by his Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and Bavarian sister party CSU can still be a viable option if ongoing talks led by rivals SPD were to fail.

Following first exploratory talks on Thursday, however, the SPD, Greens and FDP said they will press on with another round from Monday.

"I sensed from the talks that we can achieve something together," said SPD general secretary Lars Klingbeil.

For Laschet's Bavarian ally, CSU chief Markus Soeder, it was time for the conservatives to move on.—AFP ■

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Iraqis head to early vote with little hope for change

Iraqis go to the polls Sunday for parliamentary elections, two years after a wave of anti-government protests swept the war-scarred country, but analysts say the vote is unlikely to deliver major change.

Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi's political future hangs in the balance, with few observers willing to predict who will come out on top after the lengthy backroom haggling that usually follows Iraqi elections.

A new single-member constituency system for electing Iraq's 329 lawmakers is supposed to boost independents versus the traditional political blocs that are largely centred on religious, ethnic and clan affiliations.—AFP ■

#### Czech PM, named in Pandora probe, leads polls ahead of vote

A populist billionaire at odds with the European Union who featured in the Pandora Papers is the narrow favourite in Czech elections starting on Friday that promise a tight result.

Prime Minister Andrej Babis will seek a second straight victory for his populist ANO political party despite his lukewarm handling of the Covid-19 pandemic and his clash with the law.

The 67-year-old food, chemicals and media mogul is facing police charges over an EU subsidy fraud and the bloc's dismay over his conflict of interest as a businessman and a politician.

Last weekend, the Pandora Papers investigation showed he had used money from his offshore firms to finance the purchase of property in southern France in 2009, including a chateau.—AFP ■

## US, Mexico seek to revamp fight against drug cartels

THE United States and Mexico are set to discuss an overhaul of their joint fight against drug cartels during a visit by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Friday.

President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has said Mexico no longer wants helicopter gunships and other weapons to combat drug traffickers, urging the United States to invest in regional economic development instead.

Ahead of Blinken's visit, his

first to Mexico as the top US diplomat, Washington indicated that it was ready to revamp a 13-year-old programme called the Merida Initiative that provided US military firepower, technical support and security training.

"We believe we are due for an updated look at our bilateral security cooperation," State Department spokesman Ned Price told reporters.

He said Washington wanted to see the "significant gains" made by the Merida Initiative

"preserved, that that cooperation is deepened and that we have an updated approach that accounts for the threats of today".

The Mexican government has gone further, calling for an end to the Merida Initiative.

"We don't want it to be like it was before when they brought us a helicopter gunship and a photo was taken of the US ambassador with the president," Lopez Obrador said in June.—AFP ■



Mexico says it no longer wants helicopter gunships and other weapons from the United States to fight drug cartels, calling for a new approach. PHOTO: AFP

## Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

### 1. Political affairs

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

### 2. Economic affairs

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

### 3. Social affairs

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

## I'll be back stronger than ever: ONE star Martin Nguyen

ONE CHAMPIONSHIP former featherweight and lightweight Champion Martin Nguyen, who is also a best friend of ONE star Aung La N Sang has said that he will be back with all of his strength to occupy his titles again, according to an interview with the ONE Championship.

"Through the highest of highs and lowest of lows. I have the best FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND FANS SUPPORT any human can ever ask for. Thank you everyone for reaching out. I'll be back stronger than ever," Martin Nguyen said. Martin Nguen came into the martial arts world at the age of 21 in a bid to pick up a new hobby and discovered a life-changing experience.

"Martin has never looked back, winning two amateur mixed martial arts tournaments before deciding to make his professional debut in 2012. He quickly took the featherweight division by storm, winning an eight-man tournament to be crowned Australia's BRACE Featherweight Champion. After that achievement, Nguyen signed for ONE Championship in 2014," ONE Championship officials said.

Six stunning finishes later, Martin stood as the first-ever



ONE Championship star Aung La N Sang (left) is seen together with Martin Nguyen as they are best friends as well. **PHOTO: AUNG LA N SANG'S FB**

two-division titleholder in ONE Championship history, having knocked out both Marat Gafurov and Eduard Folleyang to stand as the very best featherweight and lightweight martial artist in ONE Championship history. Currently, Martin is taking his special training together with Myanmar sports icon Aung La N Sang in a training camp in the USA. —GNLM

## Relentless Australia target Japan next after making World Cup history

AUSTRALIA coach Graham Arnold says his only focus is next week's clash with Japan after the Socceroos became the first team to win 11 games in a row in the same World Cup qualifying campaign.

They achieved the historic feat by beating Oman 3-1 in Qatar on Thursday, with Awer Mabil, Martin Boyle and Mitch Duke getting on the scoresheet. The victory ensured Australia top Group B on goal difference from Saudi Arabia in the third and final round of Asian World Cup qualifying for Qatar, having coasted through the previous rounds with eight straight wins. In the process, they edged past Germany, Spain and Mexico, who each won 10 in a row on their paths to the World Cups in Russia 2018, South Africa 2010 and Germany 2006 respectively.



Australia have won a record 11 World Cup qualifying games in a row. **PHOTO: AFP**

Australia's streak, which stretches back to September 2019, is all the more impressive given every game bar one has been away from home due to Covid-19. While praising his charges, Arnold stressed the job of booking their place at next

year's World Cup still wasn't done and making history could wait. "It's something we'll probably reflect on in the future and what a great feat it has been, especially playing 10 out of 11 games away from home," he said.—AFP ■

## Japan skipper Yoshida accuses Saudi fans of 'discriminatory gestures'

MAYA Yoshida confronted Saudi Arabia fans and later accused them of making "discriminatory gestures" after defeat left Japan in danger of missing the World Cup for the first time since 1994.

Japan's captain had angry words with a section of the home fans after the qualifying defeat in Jeddah on Thursday, after they were seen taunting him during a post-match interview. Mobile phone footage showed the Sampdoria defender marching towards the fence separating the supporters from the pitch, jabbing his finger and remonstrating with them. He then strode off after being restrained by Japanese officials, but later returned to explain his reaction to reporters.

"There were discriminatory gestures," the 33-year-old

was quoted as saying by Japanese media, without expanding on what the gestures were.

"It's difficult to accept. It happened in the last qualifiers as well. It's very disappointing." The result left Japan with just three points from three games in Group B, having started the campaign with a shock home loss to Oman and a narrow away win over China. The four-time Asian champions, who have appeared at the past six World Cups, now face a must-win home clash with high-flying Australia on Tuesday. Fans took to social media to call for manager Hajime Moriyasu to be fired, and newspaper columnists were also scathing in their verdict, with Japan's hopes of reaching the Qatar 2022 World Cup in peril.—AFP ■