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Thursday, 4 February 2021

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Announcement

7th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
(3 February 2021)

1. It is learnt that rumours circulated that K5,000 and K10,000 banknotes issued by the state will be demonetized.
2. Regarding the matter, the Central Bank of Myanmar has already issued an announcement (dated 3-2-2021) saying the Central Bank of Myanmar has been working hard to stabilize the financial system. All the banks have been providing proper

services in accordance with the rules and regulations, so the general public can continue using the banknotes and banking services without any worries, and all the banks have been instructed to provide regular banking services. So, the rumours are baseless.

3. Section 36 (e) of the Constitution (2008) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar says “the

Union shall not demonetize the currency legally in circulation”. So, we would like to inform the general public that they can continue using K5,000 and K10,000 banknotes without any worries and without trusting the rumours.

State Administration Council

Senior General holds meeting with members of UMFCCI, its associates



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets the UMFCCI members and associates at the President House in Nay Pyi Taw on 3 February 2021. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES**

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing chaired the meeting of State Administration Council with the members of Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and its associates yesterday.

In his opening remark at the meeting, the Senior General, in his capacity as Chairman of the State Administra-

tion Council, explained the reason of meeting with the businesspersons from the sectors of agriculture, livestock, construction, commerce and manufacturing as the Tatmadaw has taken on duties of the country due to the existing situations in the country and to bring the country into the path of democracy.

He also said that his administration had not restricted any ongoing projects during

the State of Emergency, while the total number of COVID-19 confirmed cases in the world has reached over 104 million, and Myanmar has recorded over 140,000 cases of infection and over 3,000 death tolls.

The Senior General also talked about containment measures against the pandemic and public awareness programme.

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He also reaffirmed that the Tatmadaw will never deviate from the democratic way, will not suspend ongoing projects, will continue working on international projects, will maintain international code of ethics, will adhere to the existing State policies, will apply the election laws on those who were responsible for the errors in voter list in the recent elections.

Senior General holds meeting with members of UMFCCI, its associates

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The Senior General continued to say that as per the State Constitution, the Tatmadaw will hand over the power to the government resulted from the next elections, which will be organized by the new election commission.

He also discussed the resumption of businesses that can directly benefit the grassroots to overcome their socio-economic difficulties, taking effective



Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with the UMFCCI members and associates at the President House in Nay Pyi Taw on 3 February 2021. **PHOTO: OFFICE OF COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES**

... pagodas, temples and other religious buildings would be reopened, except for the religious ceremonies, in line with COVID-19 rule, advised to reopen the factories and produce foods from agriculture and livestock sectors.

... legal actions on breaching COVID-19 rules as the travel restrictions are lifted in train, car and air transportations and other COVID-19 containment measures.

The Senior General confirmed that pagodas, temples and other religious buildings would be reopened, except for the religious ceremonies, in line with COVID-19 rule, advised to reopen the factories and produce foods from agri-

culture and livestock sectors.

He continued to say increasing export of quality products from local agriculture and livestock businesses to fulfil the market demand for food supplies in other countries as the global population has reached over 7 billion.

He also called for the resumption of garment factories, stability in banking services, reopening of domestic tours and hotels phase by phase, the

cooperation of members from UMFCCI and its associates.

Then, officials from these organizations reported on their difficulties in the businesses.

After coordinating the discussions of businesspersons, the Senior General made his concluding remark, with making pledges for providing assistance and urged them to make more efforts in their works.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

CBM issues announcement on public rumours about monetary issue

THE Central Bank of Myanmar released an announcement to wipe out rumours among the public about the monetary issue and possible closure of banks.

The announcement said that, “There were rumours that K5,000 and K10,000 banknotes would be demonetized and banks would close because of the

current situations in the country. Some people were worried because of the rumours and were reportedly withdrawing their money from the banks.

The Central Bank of Myanmar has been working hard to stabilize the financial system, and the banks have been providing proper services in accordance

with the rules and regulations.

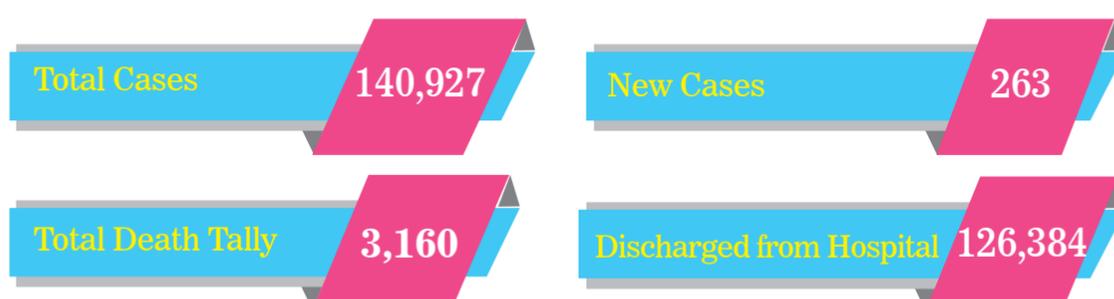
The general public can continue using the banknotes and banking services without any worries, and all the banks have been instructed to provide regular banking services.”—MNA

(Translated by MMS)

263 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 3 February, total figure rises to 140,927

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 140,927 after 263 new cases were reported on 3 February 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 140,927 confirmed cases, 3,160 died, 126,384 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 3 February 2021



Ministry of Health and Sports

Senior General holds meeting with Union Ministers, officials from Union-level organizations



State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds the meeting with Union Ministers and officials from the Union-level organizations at the President House in Nay Pyi Taw on 3 February 2021. **PHOTO: COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF DEFENCE SERVICES**

COMMANDER-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, in his capacity as Chairman of the State Administration Council, held a meeting with the Union Ministers and officials from the Union-level organizations at the President House in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

The meeting was also attended by Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, in his capacity as Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council, the council members General Mya Tun Oo, Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun, Secretary Lt-Gen Aung

Lin Dway and Joint-Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo; Union Election Commission Chairman U Thein Soe, Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Ye, Union Minister for Construction U Shwe Lay, Union Attorney-General Dr Daw Thida Oo, Union Auditor-General Dr Kan Zaw, Union Civil Services Board Chairman U Than Swe, Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Dr Maung Maung Naing and Central Bank of Myanmar Governor U Than Nyein.

In his opening speech, the Chairman of the State Administration Council explained the assignment of duties to the Union Ministers and the Union-level

organizations, the reasons for announcement on the State of Emergency on 1 February after the failed request of the Tatmadaw to solve possible voter list fraud in the previous elections despite the expectation of Tatmadaw for correct voter lists in accordance with the law; appointment of Union Ministers for further implementation of works during the state of emergency.

The Senior General continued to say that the appointment of officials to the Union-level organizations was made on the basis of their experiences and qualifications as they are believed to perform their duties righteously.

He also said to carry out

their works during the one-year period under the state of emergency.

The Senior General also reaffirmed that the Tatmadaw would not change policies of the country in foreign affairs, administration and economic sectors, as well as the ongoing political roadmap, during this period.

He also asked to do the works to remove worries and anxiety of public, continue development and infrastructural projects, address complaints in public-private projects before showing green lights for resumption, and continue other development sectors that have no complaints.

The Senior General also

discussed employment opportunities for the income of people, COVID-19 containment measures, and ensuring correct figures through the standard auditing process.

After the discussions of the Union Ministers and officials from the Union-level organizations, the Senior General delivered a closing remark, saying to continue the works of ministries for the recovery of economy impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the announcement of Central Bank of Myanmar on the rumour about demonetizing K5,000 and K10,000 banknotes and further works with the ASEAN member countries.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

MoI Union Minister inspects works of MRTV

UNION Minister for Information U Chit Naing visited the Myanmar Radio and Television (MRTV) in Tatkon Township yesterday afternoon.

The Union Minister inspected operations of Convergence News Room, MCR, broadcasting rooms of Ethnic Nationalities TV Channel, Farmers TV Channel, news production studio, Central Equipment Room (CER), MRTV Webportal, Earth Station, Radio Recording Room, and Radio Master Control Room. Direc-

tor-General of MRTV U Ye Naing and other officials explained the operations of the MRTV. The Union Minister told the MRTV officials to work hard to broadcast news accurately with any errors.—MNA

(Translated by MMS)

Union Minister U Chit Naing inspects the MRTV works in Tatkon Township in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**



MoLIP discusses future work plans



Union Minister U Myint Kyaing joins the Zoom meeting on the future work plans of the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population held a Zoom meeting on the future work plans in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Union Minister U Myint Kyaing, Permanent Secretary U Aye Lwin, Directors-General and Deputy Directors-General from the relevant departments attended the Zoom meeting in

accordance with the COVID-19 health guidelines.

The Union Minister said to implement the objectives of the ministry with the guidelines of the current government. He said the ministry has drawn up plans for activities that will bring immediate benefits to the people in addition to regular activities.

He also appreciated that the

relevant department officials could issue a certain type of for people before the last election amid the COVID-19 crisis.

He stressed to carry out systematic and careful immigration procedures at all the immigration checkpoints at international airports, ports and border crossings which have been shut down due to the COVID-19

pandemic; border crossings will only be allowed with the special permission from higher-ranking departments; special permission will be needed for the entry of foreigners into the country, instead of 14 types of visas in the past.

The repatriation programme for displaced persons from Rakhine State will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the tripartite MoU signed between the ministry, UNDP and UNHCR, along with the relevant departments in accordance with the directives of the Union Government.

Regarding the issuance of citizenship cards, he said with the guidance of the Head of the State, to the staff of the ministry to effectively carry out an operation for all the citizens living in the country and ethnic nationalities as per 1982 Citizenship Law of Myanmar to get the right to

hold a certain type of appropriate card that should be held depending on their citizenship. He also added the issuance of NV card to those living in Myanmar with no card and to conduct their citizenship verification step by step.

He added the importance of the effective act to those, who are entering the country without permission, and to take action to them in accordance with the law. He continued to pay attention to the accuracy of the census and the timely submission of the lists in carrying out the census; the need to take the work seriously by following the instructions of the higher departments as all the activities of the department are related to national security.

The attendees discussed the works of relevant states and regions, the requirement of the work plan and further activities.—MNA (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

MoHS discusses COVID-19 containment activities, vaccination programmes

THE Ministry of Health and Sports organized virtual coordination meeting to discuss COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities, vaccination programmes and further work plans yesterday.

During the meeting, Union Minister Professor Dr Thet Khaing Win discussed the need to continue the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities including vaccination programmes, and the cooperation of healthcare workers and the public in the first wave of COVID-19 while the country currently sees decline in COVID-19 cases amid, the second wave.

The people still need to be careful, although the numbers of cases decline. The preventive measures, Mask and Face Shield Campaign and Yellow Campaign, including health checks, will also be conducted to raise the public health awareness than before.

The Union Minister also appreciated the efforts of healthcare staff in COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities, other healthcare services and COVID-19 vaccination programmes.

The Union Minister emphasized the vaccination processes to continue as planned, support in a timely manner, efficient use



Union Minister Professor Dr Thet Khaing Win chairs the virtual coordination meeting on COVID responses, vaccination programmes and work plans on 3 February 2021. **PHOTO: MNA**

of budgets, systematic management of relevant departments and responsibilities for the important public health issue.

The meeting was also at-

tended by the Directors-General and Deputy Directors-General of the Ministry of Health and Sports, department heads of regions/states Public Health and Medical

Services Department, Superintendents of Central Stage Hospitals, Directors and other officials.—MNA

(Translated by KTH)



Myanmar returnees undergo immigration process at the Yangon International Airport. **PHOTO: MNA**

Myanmar nationals brought back home by relief flight

THE relief flight of Myanmar Airways International (MAI) organized by the Myanmar Embassy in Kuala Lumpur landed at Yangon International Airport bringing back a total of 173 Myanmar nationals including 42 Myanmar citizens who were convicted in Malaysia for various reasons after they were stranded in Malaysia due to the suspension of international flights

yesterday evening.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population and the Ministry of Health and Sports arranged 14-day quarantine at specific places or designated hotels, followed by the 7-day home quarantine.

The Myanmar Embassy in Kuala Lumpur is working closely with the relevant organizations in Malaysia to bring back My-

anmar citizens who have no national verification and who were in detention centres, after their citizenship has been identified in accordance with the directives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Myanmar has organized 46th relief flights for repatriation of nationals from Malaysia—MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No. (13/2021)

7th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
3 February 2021

Duty Termination

The following Deputy Mayor and Committee members of Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee are terminated from their duties.

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. U Ye Min Oo | Deputy Mayor |
| 2. U Aye Myint | Committee member (1) |
| 3. U Min Thu | Committee member (2) |
| 4. Daw Sabai Htwe | Committee member (3) |
| 5. U Min Thein | Committee member (4) |
| 6. U San Naing | Committee member (5) |
| 7. U Kyaw Zin Latt | Committee member (6) |

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No. (14/2021)

7th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
3 February 2021

The following persons are appointed as the additional members of State Administration Council in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 1. Daw Aye Nu Sein | Member |
| 2. Jeng Phang Naw Taung | Member |
| 3. U Moug Har | Member |
| 4. U Sai Lone Saing | Member |
| 5. Saw Daniel | Member |

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No. (15/2021)

7th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
3 February 2021

Appointment and Assignment of
Union Ministers

The following persons are appointed and assigned by the State Administration Council to the duties of the Union Ministers shown against each of their ministries in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1. U Tin Htut Oo | Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation |
| 2. Admiral Tin Aung San | Ministry of Transport and Communications |
| 3. Dr Pwint San | Ministry of Commerce |
| 4. U Saw Tun Aung Myint | Ministry of Ethnic Affairs |

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No. (16/2021)

7th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
3 February 2021

The Chairmen of sub-national administration councils are assigned the authority and duties of Regions/States Chief Ministers stated in the Constitution by the State Administration Council in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The sub-national administration councils are organized as follow-

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Administration Council Chairman | Chairman |
| 2. 1 Tatmadaw officer | Member |
| 3. 1 (or) 2 local representatives | Member |
| 4. Head of Region (or) State Immigration and Population Department | Member |
| 5. Head of Region (or) State Police Force | Member |
| 6. Region (or) State Administrator | Secretary |

By order
Sd/ Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Migratory birds winter in Meiktila

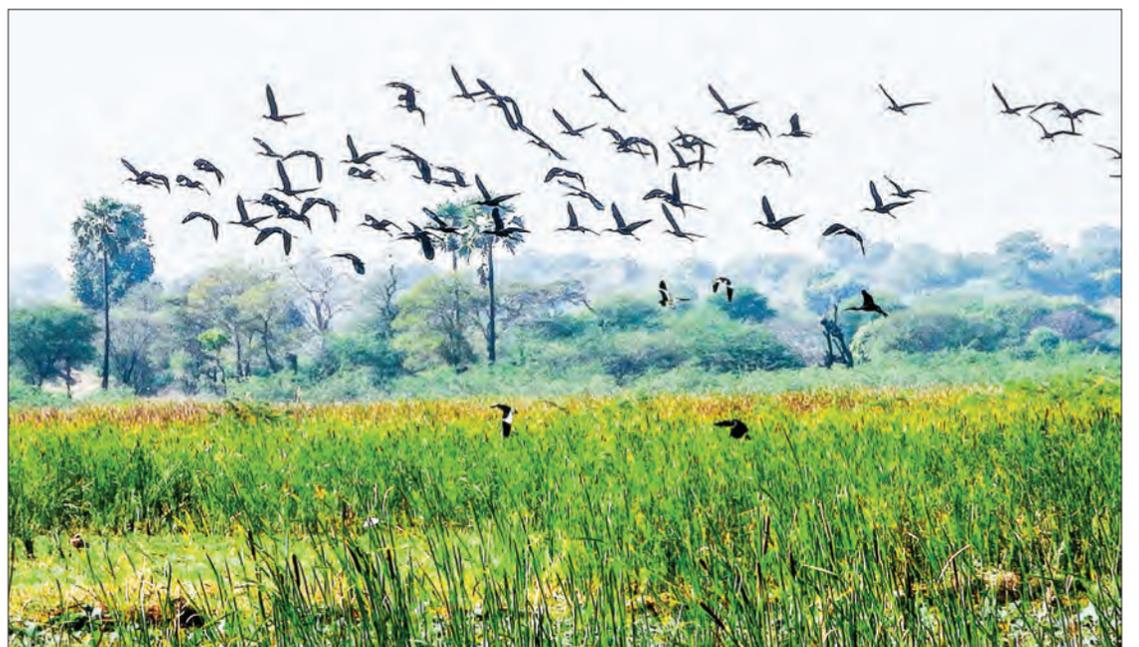
FLOCKS of migratory birds such as Golden-swan, Teal, Eurasian coot, Moorhen, Mae Nyo, and Eurasian curlew have come to the villages and lakes in Meiktila Township, Mandalay Region, to spend the winter starting from late January.

“Although it is not seen the intentional capturing and killing of wintering birds, they are being captured with nets in the northern part of Kalama Kyun village,” said Ko Myo Win Aung, an amateur bird watcher in Pauk Chaung ward, who added that he

only saw a sign forbidding the killing of the birds wintering near Lake Meiktila.

He said it is necessary to educate people not to catch migratory birds and conduct field inspections.

Among the migratory birds that winter near the Lake Meiktila every year, the rare species such as black-winged stilts also include and these wintering birds usually come to the site from early November to late February.— Chan Thar (Meiktila) (Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)



Migratory birds are seen wintering in Meiktila. PHOTO: CHAN THAR (MEIKTILA)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No. (17/2021)

7th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
3 February 2021

The State Administration Council has assigned the powers and duties of the chairmen of the Self-Administered Division/Zones to the chairmen of the Administration Committees on Self-Administered Division/Zones, in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The committees are formed as follow.

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Administration Committee Chairman | Chairman |
| 2. One Tatmadaw Officer | Member |
| 3. One local representative | Member |
| 4. Head of District Immigration and Population Department | Member |
| 5. Head of District Police Force | Member |
| 6. District Administrator | Secretary |

By order
Sd/
Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No. (18/2021)

7th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
3 February 2021

The State Administration Council has formed the District Administration Committees as follows according to Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. District Administrator | Chairman |
| 2. One Tatmadaw Officer | Member |
| 3. One local representative | Member |
| 4. Head of District Immigration and Population Department | Member |
| 5. Head of District Police Force | Secretary |

By order
Sd/
Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No. (19/2021)

7th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
3 February 2021

The State Administration Council has formed the Township Administration Committees as follows according to Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Township Administrator | Chairman |
| 2. One Tatmadaw Officer | Member |
| 3. One local representative | Member |
| 4. Head of Township Immigration and Population Department | Member |
| 5. Head of Township Police Force | Secretary |

By order
Sd/
Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No. (20/2021)

7th Waning of Pyatho 1382 ME
3 February 2021

Appointment and Duty Assignment of
Head of Service Organization

Acting Director-General for the Prison Department U Zaw Min is appointed on a probationary basis as the Director-General of that department from the day he takes the office according to Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

By order
Sd/
Aung Lin Dway
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

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Mandalay, Yankin hills can attract tourists: residents in Mandalay

RESIDENTS in Mandalay said that Mandalay Hill and Yankin Hill could attract international tourists. It is said that these mountains are full of exciting things to watch and enjoy. There are spectacular pagodas and unique natural stone statues on each hill.

Mandalay Hill, known for its abundance of pagodas and monasteries, is located to the northeast of the city centre of Mandalay.

The most impressive natural stone statue on the Mandalay Hill is a large stone elephant statue near Bo Daw Cave.

The nine caves at Yankin Hill are

fascinating.

They are natural and unique, according to visitors. There is a unique natural stone statue called Amay Yakha Ponetaw, which is located in the middle of the eastern slope of the Yankin Hill.

Residents have recommended that every visitor to Mandalay should visit the two hills. Yankin Hill and Mandalay Hill are described by tourists as the most interesting hills with natural stone statues in Mandalay.—Nway Nadi (Myitnge)

(Translated by MMS)

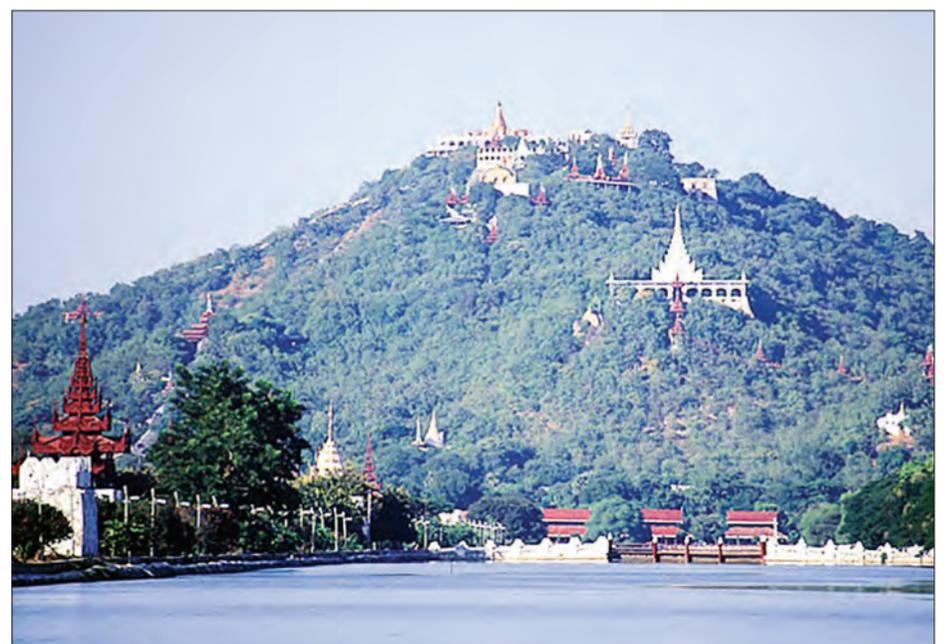


PHOTO : SUPPLIED

Black bean price on downward trend in domestic market

By Nyein Nyein

ACCORDING to the Yangon Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung commodity depot), the black bean price plunged in the domestic market.

“The black bean price is keeping its downward trend because India, the primary buyer of Myanmar pluses, controls its bean purchasing volume with their quota system. India’s purchasing system is based on the quota system. The price of beans has increased while the bean is highly demanded when India sets up the quota and issues the bean companies’ licences. Afterwards, the price of beans will plunge while the quota is almost completed. The demand has also declined,” said U Min Ko Oo Secretary of Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association (MPBSSMA).

On 1 October, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India issued a notification to purchase 150,000 tonnes of black beans



Beans and pulses are displayed at a shop in Mandalay during the coronavirus outbreak in Myanmar. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG

instead, and the import deadline is March 2021. The licence will be equally granted for India’s companies.

Although the black bean’s price hit a high of K1,152,500

per tonne at the end of October 2020 because there was a demand from India, the price fell to about K923,000 per tonne on 3 February.

Besides, Myanmar has al-

ready exported nearly 100,000 tonnes of black beans. The remaining 50,000 tonnes of beans will continuously be exported, according to MPBSSMA.

The newly-harvested black

bean started to enter the market. The black bean plantations yielded around 400,000 tonnes annually, and the bean is mainly exported to India. Similarly, about 50,000 tonnes of pigeon peas are produced yearly and exported them.

Myanmar has also produced about 50,000 tonnes of pigeon peas yearly and exported them chiefly to India.

Since 2017, India has been setting import quota on beans, including black beans and pigeon peas. Myanmar has to export black beans and pigeon peas under a quota system and limit period. Consequently, according to market observers, there is no guarantee that we could get the prevailing market price next year.

Following no assurance of black beans and pigeon peas in the markets, the association suggested on the end-October that the local farmers grow the black-eyed beans more.

(Translated by Hay Mar)

China asks Myanmar to check high level of cadmium on fish products

By Nyein Nyein

THE Department of Animal and Plant Quarantine of the General Administration of Customs of the People’s Republic of China (GACC) informed Myanmar embassy in Beijing to recheck Myanmar’s fish products exported to China as they contain the concentration of heavy metals such as high level of cadmium.

High level of cadmium is spotted in Chinese urine shrimps which two Myanmar companies export. For exports,

the food safety management system is required to check and control food safety hazards at fishery products. The legally registered two companies sent Chinese urine shrimps to China. However, the concentration of heavy metal exceeded 0.5 mg/kg criteria set by China. As a result of this, China notified Myanmar that they would recheck and strictly conduct food safety inspection at the ports. They called for a review on supply chain including catching, packing and exports concerning the

inferior quality shrimps, and better food safety management plans on fishery products including Chinese urine shrimps.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) issued guidelines to ensure food safety during the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020.

The permitted companies are advised to carry out food safety plans, follow the WHO and FAO guidelines, formulate the safety management system, and suspend the exports if any

suspicious foodborne virus or virus infection risk are found in the products. They can resume the exports once the products meet food safety criteria set by the GACC.

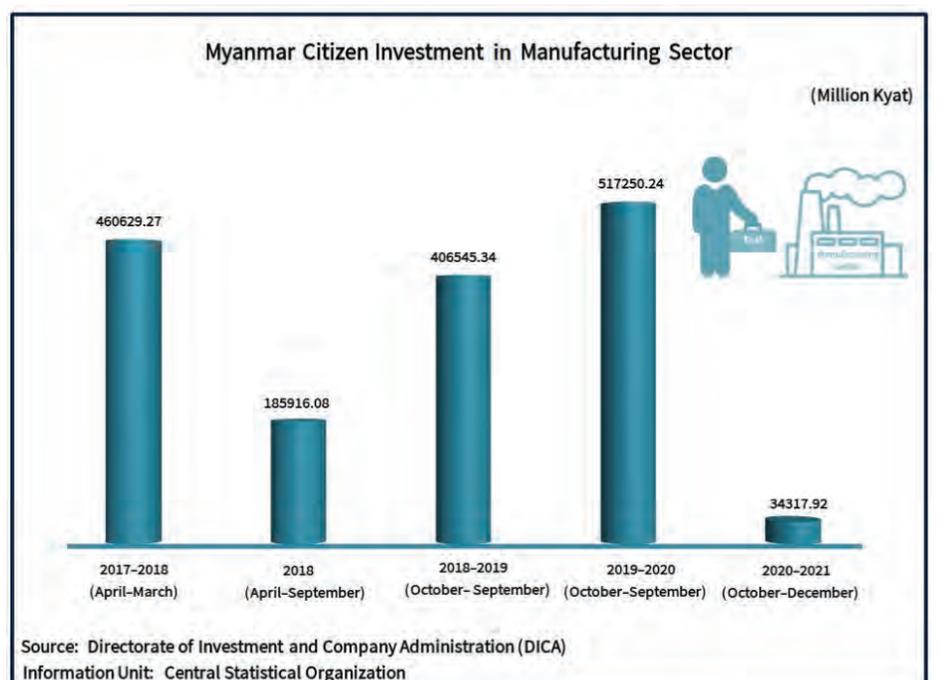
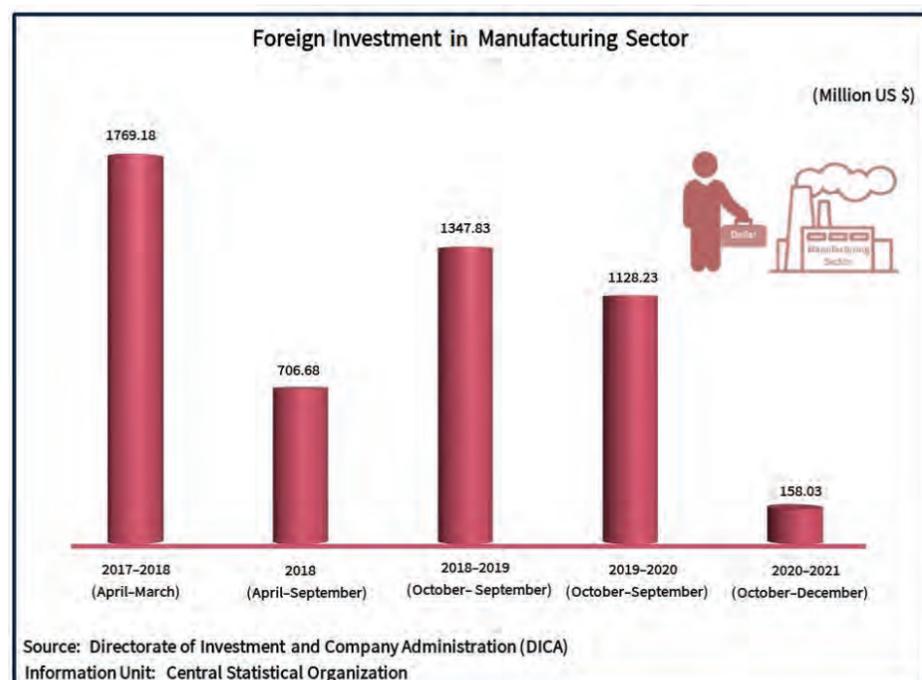
China is the second-largest buyer of Myanmar’s fishery products, accounting for US\$254 million out of overall fishery export value of \$850 million in the financial year 2019-2020.

The federation expects to reach fishery export target of US\$1 billion in the current FY 2020-2021. Nevertheless, the

fishery exports touched a low of \$297.036 million between 1 October 2020 and 22 January 2021, which plunged from \$319.659 million registered a year-ago period. The figures reflected a decrease of \$22.623 million over the Q1 of the current FY compared with the last FY2019-2020, the Ministry of Commerce’s data showed.

Myanmar’s fishery products are shipped to 45 foreign countries, and Thailand is the leading buyer.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Climate change adaptation key to avoiding major economic loss

UN Environment Programme Adaptation Gap report has called on governments across the world to significantly scale up climate adaptation measures to be able to avoid major economic damage from global warming.

Nations must put half of all global climate financing towards adaptation in the next year in order to avoid the worst impact of climate change, according to the report published on Thursday. In 2020, the hottest year on record, on par with 2016, the world experienced record-breaking hurricanes and wildfires that continue to intensify as temperatures rise.

Such a commitment would include investing in nature-based solutions to mitigate climate change, such as practices like replanting trees on degraded land, sequestering more carbon in soil through agricultural practices and protecting forests through changing logging practices.

Nearly 75% of nations have adopted some form of climate adaption. But major gaps remain in financing for developing countries, which are most vulnerable to rising temperatures, as well as projects that have notably reduced climate risk, the report said.

The UN estimated that yearly climate adaption costs could reach between \$140 billion and \$300 billion by the end of the decade and between \$280 billion and \$500 billion by 2050, and concluded that global action is lagging far behind.

And while climate adaption projects are on the rise, the ongoing surge in global carbon emissions is putting those projects in jeopardy.

Under the Paris Climate Agreement, the global pact forged five years ago among nearly 200 nations, governments are attempting to keep global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius, or 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit, compared with preindustrial levels.

The world is still on track for temperatures to rise over 3 degrees Celsius, or 5.4 degrees Fahrenheit, this century.

The report said that achieving the 2 degrees Celsius target could limit economic loss in annual growth of up to 1.6%, compared with 2.2% for warming of 3 degrees Celsius and urged nations to update their targets under the Paris accord to include new net-zero carbon goals.

The report also called for governments prioritize climate change in their Covid-19 economic recovery plans, including a shift away from fossil fuels and toward investing in green technologies and restoring ecosystems.

... climate adaption projects are on the rise, the ongoing surge in global carbon emissions is putting those projects in jeopardy.

COVID-19 : IMPACT ON GLOBAL FISHERIES SECTOR

Pandemic triggers 'widespread upheaval' in global fisheries and aquaculture

CCOVID-19 has caused "widespread upheaval" for the whole fishing and aquaculture industry around the world, the UN deputy agriculture chief said on Tuesday, launching a new report that assesses the toll the pandemic has taken on the sector.

"Production has been disrupted, supply chains have been interrupted and consumer spending restricted by various lockdowns", said Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

And as containment restraints continue to affect supply and demand, further interference may impact the sector throughout the year, according to FAO's The impact of COVID-19 on fisheries and aquaculture food systems report.

The brunt of lockdown While containment restrictions are expected to have pushed fish supply, consumption

and trade revenues for 2020 into decline, the report noted that global aquaculture production - the cultivation of all organisms including plants, and other salt-water or freshwater organisms - may also have recorded its first drop in years.

"Containment measures have provoked far-reaching changes, many of which are likely to persist in the long term", said Ms Semedo.

The report stressed every stage of the fisheries and aquaculture supply chain is susceptible to being disrupted or stopped by these restrictions.

The Fish Price Index is down for most traded species and restaurant and hotel closures in many countries have prompted falling demand for fresh fish.

"The impact has been significant in developing countries, especially those with large informal sectors, where small-scale and artisanal workers and com-



A local woman uses a net to fish in the shallow waters of the Rupununi River in Guyana. PHOTO: FAO/BRENT STIRTON

munities depend on fisheries for their food security, livelihoods," the deputy FAO chief said.

"They have borne the brunt of restrictions."

The FAO report indicated that unsold aquaculture products would increase live fish stocks, creating higher costs for feeding and more fish mor-

talities.

Frozen over fresh

And COVID-19-related restrictions on crews along with market conditions have reduced fishing, leaving a slight decline in global wild catches last year.

The coronavirus has also caused consumer preferences to shift as households stock up on

non-perishable foods, replacing the demand for fresh fish with a preference for packaged and frozen products.

Meanwhile, before the pandemic, the sector was trending upwards, with fish consumption growing significantly over the last decade to an average of more than 20 kilos per person.

Moving forward

While FAO pressed for disruptive border restriction measures on food production to be minimized for food security, the report called for sectoral and regional organizations to manage fisheries and aquaculture together during the pandemic.

COVID-19's impact on women - already vulnerable as food producers, processors and vendors - should also be considered when government's decide on support levels.

Amidst so much uncertainty, FAO reminded that the 34th session of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI 34), taking place this week, is celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries - the landmark instrument endorsed by FAO member States that has been guiding efforts towards sustainable fisheries and aquaculture around the world.

UN NEWS

VACCINE'S EFFECT ON TRANSMISSION STILL UNKNOWN: EXPERTS

Israel data shows Pfizer jab stops illness, effect on transmissions unclear

INITIAL data from Israel's coronavirus vaccination campaign shows the Pfizer/BioNTech jab protects against serious illness, but it is not yet clear whether it slows transmissions or spells progress toward achieving herd immunity, experts say.

The Jewish state is carrying out what is widely described as the world's fastest vaccination campaign per capita, watched closely by experts worldwide.

While many countries are struggling with vaccine supply, Israel has made remarkable progress since launching inoculations in December.

So far, Israel has given the first of the two recommended Pfizer jabs to roughly 35 per cent of its nine-million population.

About 1.8 million have also received the second jab, mostly those over 60.

Israel secured its substantial stock by paying above market price and by striking a data sharing agreement with Pfizer.

The deal stipulates that Israel, which has one of the world's most sophisticated medical data

systems, will share real-time information with Pfizer on the vaccine's impact, including on progress towards achieving herd immunity.

Direct vs indirect protection Ran Balicer, chairman of Israel's national expert panel on Covid-19, told AFP it was crucial to distinguish between the vaccine's two impacts.

The first is "the direct effect", of vaccinated people becoming "protected against symptomatic illness and severe disease", he said.

The second, "indirect effect" refers to the vaccine providing enough immunity to enough people that it forms an "epidemiological barrier" against transmission, he said.

Balicer, also the chief innovation officer at Clalit, Israel's largest health maintenance organization (HMO), said the data shows the vaccine reduces serious illness, but the transmission question remained open.

Gabi Barbash, a prominent public health expert currently with the Weizmann Institute of



A healthcare worker administers a COVID-19 vaccine to an Israeli woman at Clalit Health Services, in the coastal city of Tel Aviv, Jan. 3, 2021. PHOTO: AFP

Science, agreed: "We do know that vaccines are decreasing the incidence of severe disease. That's it," he told AFP.

"We do not know whether the vaccines are minimising transmission."

Phase IV

In November, Pfizer announced its Phase III trial showed 95 per cent efficacy against the virus.

Given the gravity of the pan-

demie, Pfizer received regulatory approval through an accelerated trial process, which has increased the importance of Israel's more comprehensive data.

Israel's Maccabi Institute of Innovation and Research, linked to an HMO of the same name, published a paper this week that it described as "the first and largest Phase IV study on the effectiveness of the (Pfizer) vaccine".

Clalit and Maccabi are two of Israel's four HMOs, which collectively provide healthcare to the entire population.

The HMOs are directly responsible for vaccinations and collecting data on their impact. Maccabi compared the incidence of Covid-19 in the 12 days after an individual received their first Pfizer shot against incidence 13 to 24 days after the jab.

This data showed a 51 per cent reduction in the incidence of lab confirmed infection in the latter period.

"Two weeks after the first dose you see a significant reduction in infection but it is not complete," Gabriel Chodick, co-author of the Maccabi report, told AFP.

Israel is also only testing those who present coronavirus symptoms, not a randomised sample of the entire vaccinated population.

It therefore does not have comprehensive data on the number of vaccinated people who are carrying the virus without symptoms.

Two jabs

Pfizer recommends its prod-

uct be administered in two doses, spaced three weeks apart.

Because Israel is well-stocked, it is giving the second jab in line with Pfizer's recommendations, meaning it does not have data on whether the protective effect from just one jab would increase after 24 days, in the absence of a second jab.

Maccabi has also released preliminary data on the second jab's impact. It showed that out of 248,000 people studied one week after receiving their second injection, only 66 mild coronavirus infections were registered.

While those figures point towards near total protection, Maccabi has stressed this data has not been subjected to a full scientific analysis.

During the vaccination campaign, Israel has continued to register daily caseloads above 5,000, despite a nationwide lockdown in place since December 27.

SOURCE: AFP



Union Day Objectives 74th Anniversary of Union Day - 2021

1. To work on the Union Peace Conference - 21st Century Panglong, till the success of the internal peace process is achieved.
2. Development of the socio-economic life of the ethnic nationals.
3. To work for the emergence of a constitution that is in alignment and harmony with the Democratic Federal Union.
4. All ethnic nationals to work for the preservation and protection of non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national unity, and perpetuation of national sovereignty.
5. To nurture and develop new generations endowed with high skills and capabilities imbued with strong Union spirit.

Union Day slogans for 2021 (74th Anniversary)

1. Equal opportunities and equal responsibilities, living in a peaceful, prosperous and stable Union.
2. Unity is strength, solidarity is power That is the heart of the Union.
3. Many fruits sprouting from one stem, this is our brotherhood of the Union.
4. Our Union built with brotherhood, Never forget Union day.
5. Drinking the same water, living on the same land, we are Union nationals of the same blood.



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Wednesday 3 February, 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy to cloudy over the South Bay, a few cloud over the Andaman Sea and generally fair elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 4 February, 2021: Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Eastern Shan, Kayin, Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight increase of night temperatures in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady Regions and Shan, Rakhine, Kayah States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4 February, 2021: Fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4 February, 2021: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4 February, 2021: Fair weather.

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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

IWT ensures smooth freight transport on Yangon Wahdan-Dala car ferry route

THE Inland Water Transport (Delta Division) ensures to have the smooth freight transport on Yangon Wahdan-Dala car ferry route with two car ferries between 6:30 am and 7 pm, the division stated.

During the COVID-19 containment measures, one car ferry on Yangon Wahdan-Dala route was plying to and from the ports between 6 am and 7 pm with nine rounds per day and daily transport about 250 motor vehicles. Starting from 5 January, two car ferries are providing cargo transport with 16 rounds per day. The transport capacity has increased to 500 cars and 90 tonnes of goods, said U Kyaw Htoo Aung, manager of IWT (Delta Division).—Naing Lin Kyaw (IPRD)

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)



Ferries are seen for freight transport on Yangon Wahdan-Dala route. PHOTO: NAING LIN KYAW (IPRD)

Domestic sugar price jumps due to shortage of sugar stockpile

WITH the export of Myanmar sugar, the domestic sugar price has risen on account of the shortage of sugar stockpile in the country, according to Myanmar Sugar & Cane Related Products Association.

The sugar prices have risen to around K970 per viss in mid-January, from below K900 in early December because some of the sugar consuming enterprises and domestic restaurants resumed their operation. There is also a shortage of sugar stockpile in the country.

"Sugar is exported to China in the form of liquid. The coun-

try exports sugar to Viet Nam also via sea route. Now, some of the enterprises have started operating, and the country has less stockpile. Consequently, the sugar price has climbed this time. The global surge price has gone up this year," said an official from its association.

Now, Myanmar exports the syrups to China via Muse border trade. The country has also shipped 30,000 tonnes of sugar to Viet Nam via sea route from last December 2020.

In the 2019-2020 financial year, the country permitted 11 types of enterprises to import

the sugar. Then, some 57,665 tonnes of refined sugar have been imported. Besides, the country could re-export 177,042 tonnes of sugar, according to the official statistics of the Department of Trade, the Ministry of Commerce.

In the 2020-2021FY, the sugar mill factories targeted to mill 4,213,300 tonnes of the sugar cane, according to the Agriculture Department.

Sugarcane is one of the major industrial crops cultivated in Myanmar. It is grown in more than half the world, including Asia and America, because of

its health benefits. Sugarcane contains proteins, phosphorus, iron, zinc, and potassium, and vitamins A, B-complex, and C.

Myanmar produced about 450,000 tonnes of sugar on 440,000 acres of sugarcane plantations in 2014-2015 financial year, over 390,000 tonnes on 390,000 acres in the 2015-2016FY, over 370,000 tonnes on 400,000 acres in the 2016-2017FY, over 500,000 tonnes on 400,000 acres in the 2017-2018FY, and 500,000 tonnes on nearly 500,000 acres in the 2018-2019FY.—Zin Yaw Aye

(Translated by Hay Mar)

Thai mango entering Pakokku market in bulk

THAILAND mangoes are entering Pakokku market in bulk in Pakokku Town, Magway Region, said U Tin Ko, the owner of Mya Nilar sour mango depot.

"Thailand mangoes are entering the market the whole year. Now, they are abundantly entering the market. The Thailand mango price has slightly dropped after Myanmar mango tree has blossomed. One bag of mango containing six visses costs K6,000. However, one mango bag fetched K8,000 in summer. The mango is julienned, and it is sold back at K1,700 per viss. The mango juliennes need to be mixed only with salt," Daw Kay Thi explained. During the



Thai mangoes are entering Pakokku market abundantly the whole year. PHOTO: KO HTEIN (KPD)

new harvested mango season, the mangoes are selling at a high price. After an amply harvested time, the mango price fetched only K2,000 or K2,500 per basket. The mangoes are stored as sour

mangoes in pickup season. Then, they are sold back when green mangoes are rare. Now, the sour mangos are sold for K1,400 per viss.

The taste of Thailand man-

goes is not as good as the local mangoes. But, it yields the whole year and is sold in the market, according to a sour mango maker.—Ko Htein (KPD)

(Translated by Hay Mar)

INTERNATIONAL VACCINE DISTRIBUTION

China to offer 10 mn vaccine doses to Covax

CHINA plans to provide 10 million doses of Covid-19 jabs to the WHO-backed international vaccine distribution programme Covax, Beijing said Wednesday as it seeks to reframe perceptions of its role in the pandemic.

The Covax programme, which aims to provide two billion doses of vaccine, pools funding from richer countries with the intention of ensuring poorer nations can inoculate their health workers and most vulnerable citizens, on the basis that the pandemic would remain a global threat if it was not tackled worldwide.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said Wednesday that China “decided to provide 10 million vaccine doses to Covax, primarily to meet the urgent needs of developing countries”.

The foreign ministry said

last month that three Chinese vaccine makers, Sinopharm, Sinovac and CanSino, had formally applied for inclusion in the Covax stockpile.

Wang did not say on Wednesday if the applications had been approved.

Covid-19 first emerged in the central Chinese city of Wuhan, and the country has faced criticism over its early handling of the outbreak.

Beijing has signed agreements to supply millions of doses in what analysts have called “vaccine diplomacy” to earn goodwill among poorer countries.

Meanwhile the country has ramped up a domestic vaccine campaign ahead of the Lunar New Year travel rush.

But take-up has been slower abroad for Chinese vaccines compared to jabs from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, as little



Sinovac, a Beijing-based biopharmaceutical company, is behind CoronaVac, an inactivated vaccine.

PHOTO: XINHUA

information has been published about the safety or efficacy of Chinese vaccines.

Chinese vaccine makers also have chequered reputations, after major scandals at home

involving expired or poor quality products.

SOURCE: AFP

PRODUCTION IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Kremlin to boost Sputnik V vaccine production abroad



A nurse administers the Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine at a clinic in Moscow on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP

RUSSIA is working to increase production of its Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine in foreign countries, the Kremlin said Wednesday, as

many European nations struggle to roll out their jabs.

“In the very near future there are plans to establish production in foreign countries, which will satisfy the demand from more and more countries,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

The comments come a day after The Lancet medical journal published results showing Sputnik V -- named after the Soviet-era satellite -- to be safe and 91.6 per cent effective, allaying concerns over transparency.

Russia registered the vaccine in August months ahead of Western competitors but before

large-scale clinical trials, leaving many experts wary.

Its developers later said the vaccine is over 90 per cent effective and Russia began inoculating its citizens with the jab in December. Sputnik V has been approved in more than 15 countries, including several ex-Soviet republics but also Argentina, Tunisia and Pakistan.

The Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), which helped finance Sputnik V, has said that more than 2 million people have been inoculated with the jab around the world.

SOURCE: AFP

NEW STUDY FINDS

Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine cuts virus transmission

THE Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine significantly reduces virus transmission and is highly protective after a single dose, according to an Oxford University study, which the British government said Wednesday vindicated its inoculation strategy.

“It does show the world that the Oxford jab works, it works well,” Health Secretary Matt Hancock told BBC radio, hailing the study’s findings as “good news”.

“It slows transmission by around two-thirds, so it categorically supports the strategy

that we’re undertaking,” Hancock said.

The study’s findings came amid much debate over the effectiveness of the AstraZeneca jab among the elderly.

Although the European Medicines Agency recommended it for adults of all ages last week, several countries have advised against administering the AstraZeneca jab to older people.

Germany has already said it will not advise over 65s to get it.

Italy’s medicines agency on Saturday approved the vaccine for all adults but recommend-

ed alternatives for people aged over 55.

And French President Emmanuel Macron last week said the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine was “quasi-ineffective” for those over 65.

The UK has been under lockdown since December with schools closed and no definite end-date, although a review of the situation is expected in mid-February.

The country has had 3.8 million cases and 108,013 deaths. The Oxford study, which is awaiting peer review, found that those

who had been vaccinated with a single dose of the vaccine were 67 per cent less likely to test positive with a PCR test, “suggesting the potential for a substantial reduction in transmission”.

Dosing schedule

It also provided backing for the UK’s strategy of administering as many first doses

of vaccine to high-risk groups as possible and allowing a 12-week interval before the second dose, which has been criticised by some experts.

SOURCE: AFP

LATAM

Latin America and Caribbean top 600,000 Covid-19 deaths

MORE than 600,000 lives have been lost to Covid-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean since the pandemic began, according to an AFP tally on Tuesday from official sources.

The region, which encompasses 34 countries and territories in South and Central America and the Caribbean plus Mexico, has recorded 601,256 deaths -- the second-highest number of virus fatalities after Europe.

Brazil and Mexico account for about half the region’s coronavirus deaths, which hit the grim figure of over 500,000 by the end of December and have steadily increased since.

Europe has recorded 747,887 deaths, while the toll in the United States and Canada was at least 464,204, on AFP’s count. Many Latin American countries have experienced a deadly second wave of infections since December, after a few months of slower spread.

Brazil is the country with the world’s second-highest national death toll with more than 226,300 fatalities, and Mexico is number three with at least 159,100 deaths.

SOURCE: AFP

HUMANOID ROBOT

Johannesburg hotel embraces virus-free robots

THE lobby of an upmarket hotel in Johannesburg's affluent Sandton district is eerily deserted, with not a concierge or bellhop in sight.

Jane May, who has just received her key card at the front desk, comes face-to-interface with a multi-coloured humanoid robot – a rarity in any hotel, but what is believed to be a first in Africa.

“Welcome to Hotel Sky,” the robot intones. “I am not a person, I am a virtual agent. You can ask me a question.” Three robots ride the elevators and navigate the corridors of the 453-room hotel, carrying luggage or delivering room service orders. Hotel Sky has embraced the new technology as a way to help reduce the risk of infection by Covid-19 in a country that has recorded more than 1.45 million cas-



Room service! “A lot of the guests think it’s pretty cool,” said CTRL Robotics co-founder Nikhil Ranchod. PHOTO: AFP

es and nearly 45,000 deaths. The robots were developed back in 2019 as an integral part of the hotel’s design. Then the creation turned out to be serendipitous, as the pandemic arrived even before the hotel welcomed its first guests. No one had imagined the robots would come in handy to facilitate the now much-encouraged contact-less services, the

hotel’s general manager Herman Brits told AFP. Putting on a brave face in the thick of the pandemic, the hotel opened last November even as the hospitality industry was buckling under virus restrictions and curfews. Hotel Sky bills itself as Africa’s first to employ droids, and underscores that the pandemic is ac-

celerating the drive towards automation in the continent. “They bring a totally new dimension (and) create a nice excitement,” Brits said. Robots are finding their way into new roles in rich countries, but they are rare in developing countries, where labour is cheaper. SOURCE: AFP

THINKING SMALL

Tiny houses: Turkish tourism thinks small in Covid era

GIZEM Baburhan stepped into a tiny house on wheels she rented in the Aegean vineyards and saw the future of Turkey’s coronavirus-ravaged tourism industry.

“This minimalist life offered us priceless peace,” said Baburhan. “I hope in the future, we will own a tiny house and tour the world with a home on our backs.”

The tiny house movement – a fad that gained momentum in the United States in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis – appears to have caught on in Turkey during the pandemic.

The unimposing wood and composite metal structures resemble spruced-up sheds on wheels or sawn-off trailer homes.

Yet the Turkish firms

that make them say they have barely been able to keep up with demand in the past year.

YAKO Groups chief executive Galip Olmez said he received only “sporadic orders” after introducing the concept to Turkey in 2017.

“If we compare 2020 with the previous year, the orders have increased 20 fold,” Olmez said without disclosing precise numbers.

Architect Pelin Dustegor said most of her Casa Lokomotif tiny house company’s clients were “from the tourism industry looking for camping concepts”.

“We had just under 250 orders in all of 2019 and this shot up to 4,500 a month in 2020,” Dustegor told AFP. “There has been tremendous interest.”

SOURCE: AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V EVER CHANT VOY. NO. (0228-0258N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V EVER CHANT VOY. NO. (0228-0258N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **4-2-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: **2301185**

**Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority**

Agent For:
M/S EVERGREEN MARINE (S'PORE) PTE., LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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Myanma Port Authority**

Agent For:
M/S CHUN AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS CO LTD

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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 GLOBAL MARS SHIPPING

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS MYANMA RAILWAYS INVITATION TO OPEN TENDER

1. Open Tender is invited for supply of the following item in Euro:

Sr No	Tender No	Description
1.	12(T)26/MR(ISN)	Spare Parts for CAT Engine, Alco Engine, Euro/2020-2021 DPMS (63 Items)

Closing Date & Time- 3.3.2021(Wednesday) (14:30)Hrs

2. Tender documents are available at our office starting from 4.2.2021 during office hours and for further detail please contact: Deputy General Manager Supply Department, Myanma Railways, Corner of 51th Street and Merchant Street, Botahtaung, Yangon. Phone: 95-1-291985, 291994

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SPANISH BANKING GIANT

Virus pushes Santander into massive annual loss

SPANISH banking giant Santander reported on Wednesday a net loss of over €8.7 billion for 2020 due to restructuring costs and provisions set aside to cope with the coronavirus crisis. The results were in line with forecasts for a loss of around

€8.65 billion from analysts polled by Factset.

In the fourth quarter alone, the bank achieved a profit of €277 million, well below the €526m expected by analysts.

Santander had recorded the first net loss of its history – €11.13

billion – during the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic in the second quarter of last year.

The dire outlook for the global economy forced the company to downgrade the value of several of its subsidiaries, particularly in the United

Kingdom.

In addition, Banco Santander set aside more than €12 billion in 2020 in provisions to cover the risk of unpaid loans due to the virus crisis, up 47 per cent over the previous year.

“Although the crisis

is global, our geographic and business diversification have once again served us well and underscored the strength of our team and mode,” executive chairman Ana Botin said in a statement.

Given the pandemic, she said vaccination

was “the most important economic policy for 2021. “We will not let down our guard, but I define my view as one of realistic optimism. A successful roll out of the vaccine will act as a strong catalyst for economic recovery.”

SOURCE: AFP

STRING OF RESTRICTIONS

South Africa's wine industry reels from alcohol bans



Restaurants turned to selling non-alcoholic beverages after the government banned sales of alcohol.

PHOTO: AFP

DRINKERS in South Africa may cheer the government's decision to lift the latest bar on alcohol sales, but the wine sector fears the move has come too late to save thousands of jobs.

The key industry has been badly hit by a string of booze bans, imposed to ease the number of trauma cases in hospitals burdened by coronavirus patients.

The third such restriction, imposed on December 28 as South Africa struggled with a second Covid wave, was lifted on Monday.

But the announcement will do little to raise morale.

“Wine businesses have not been able to earn any income from local wine sales for a total of 20 weeks since March 2020,” said Rico Basson, head of Vin Pro, representing 2,500 producers and other stakeholders in the wine industry.

The sector has now lost more than eight billion rand (\$530 million / 440 million euros) in direct sales, threatening the live-

hoods of 27,000 people, he said in a statement.

“While we are glad that businesses can once again earn much-needed revenue, a long and difficult road to recovery lies ahead for wine-related businesses,” he said.

“It is even too late for some businesses.”

Awash with wine

The slowdown in wine consumption has left many producers with a storage headache.

The country is awash with more than 300 million litres (79 million gallons) of surplus wine at a time when workers are already in the fields to pick the current harvest.

Many vineyards lack the space for the grapes or the money to harvest, bottle and label for the 2021 season.

“Most sellers don't have lots of space capacity in terms of tanks. And with the harvest starting now those tanks need to be ready to receive the 2021 harvest,” said Gerard Holden, owner of Holden Manz wine.

SOURCE: AFP

TRADEMARK CAUTION

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Int'l Class 42 : “Construction drafting; architectural services; architectural consultancy; engineering; surveying; land surveying; geological surveys; interior design; quality control; research in the field of building construction.”

Int'l Class 43 : “Rental of meeting rooms; cafeteria services; restaurant services; bar services; food and drink catering; rental of drinking water dispensers; rental of chairs, tables, table linen, glassware; rental of cooking apparatus; rental of lighting apparatus; rental of temporary accommodation.”



Reg. No. 4/ 215/ 2020

The above trademark is used in respect of -

Int'l Class 35 : “Retail services for foods and beverages, general merchandise and others; import-export agency services; procurement services for others [purchasing goods and services for other businesses]; professional business consultancy; providing business information; business management services within the framework of franchising; providing assistance in the field of business management within the framework of a franchise contract; providing assistance in the field of product commercialization within the framework of a franchise contract.”

Int'l Class 36 : “Real estate affairs; real estate management; real estate brokerage; rental of real estate; rental of offices [real estate]; arranging finance for construction projects; financial appraisals in responding to calls for tenders.”

Int'l Class 41 : “Education; educational and instruction services; conducting of correspondence courses; arranging and conducting of in-person educational forums; providing information in the field of education.”

Int'l Class 42 : “Construction drafting; architectural services; architectural consultancy; engineering; surveying; land surveying; geological surveys; interior design; quality control; research in the field of building construction.”

Int'l Class 43 : “Cafeteria services; restaurant services; bar services; food and drink catering; rental of drinking water dispensers; rental of chairs, tables, table linen, glassware; rental of cooking apparatus.”

Any imitation, any deceptive-similar trademark or any fraudulent action shall be dealt with the existing laws of Myanmar.

On behalf of **Fukuda and Partners Co., Ltd.**,

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Date: 4th February 2021

GOVERNMENT IN TURMOIL

Crisis-hit Italy turns to former European bank chief Draghi

ITALY'S president is expected Wednesday to ask Mario Draghi, the former head of the European Central Bank, to lead the country out of the devastating coronavirus pandemic after the coalition government collapsed.

President Sergio Mattarella called in Draghi after Italy's ruling parties failed to agree on a new government following a split last month that forced Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte to resign.

Draghi, an Italian economist credited with saving the eurozone at the height of the debt crisis in 2012, is expected to try to put to-

gether a government of national unity to navigate the still-raging pandemic.

More than 89,000 people have died since Covid-19 swept across Italy one year ago, while restrictions and the collapse of tourism have plunged the economy into recession. Meanwhile, the government has only a few weeks to come up with a credible plan to spend more than 200 billion euros (\$240 billion) in European Union recovery funds.

'Super Mario'

Conte's centre-left coalition had been in power since Septem-

ber 2019 but was fatally weakened last month when former premier Matteo Renzi withdrew his Italia Viva party in a row over the handling of the pandemic.

Conte finally resigned last week, but hoped to return with a new government comprising the populist Five Star Movement (M5S) and the centre-left Democratic Party (DP).

Mattarella gave them until Tuesday to patch things up with Renzi, but the deadline came and went -- leaving the president with what he said were only two viable options.

SOURCE: AFP



Italian economist and former head of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi is credited with saving the eurozone at the height of the debt crisis in 2012. PHOTO: POOL/AFP/FILE

INTEGRATIVE HEALTH POLICY

EU stumps up €4 billion in fight against cancer

THE European Commission on Wednesday unveiled a €4 billion plan to prevent, treat and research cancer in the EU as part of a bigger project for an integrated health policy.

Health Commissioner Stella Kyriakides, launching the "Beating Cancer Plan" on the eve of World Cancer Day, said the goal was to ensure EU citizens had the same chances of survival no matter which member state they live in.

She said it is "unacceptable that today we have different access to prevention programmes across the EU, different rates for early diagnosis, early detection, treatment and of course survival".

The plan aims to reduce smoking, alcohol consumption and pollution over the coming years and to promote a healthy lifestyle to reduce the 40% of cancer cases that are preventable.

It also sets a goal of vacci-

nating 90% of girls in the European Union against the human papillomaviruses that can cause cervical cancer.

And it will support increased screening of breast, cervical and colorectal cancers and look at extending those to prostate, lung and gastric cancers.

The European Commission said there are 2.7 million people diagnosed with cancer in the

EU, and every year around 1.3 million die of it.

Across Europe, there are 12 million cancer survivors, living with varying degrees of need.

While health is the responsibility of each of the 27 member states making up the European Union, the commission has used the coronavirus pandemic to set about taking on a greater role in coordinating health issues.

SOURCE: AFP



Health Commissioner Stella Kyriakides. PHOTO: AFP

ELECTRONICALLY TRACKED STAMPS

German stamps to get QRstyle tracking codes

GERMAN stamps will soon be kitted out with individual matrix codes to help stop letters getting lost in the mail, national postal company Deutsche Post said Tuesday.

Customers will be able to use the codes to track when a letter has arrived in the local processing centre and when it has reached its destination region, Deutsche Post said.

The codes, which are similar to QR codes, will sit alongside the traditional images in what will be

"a new generation of stamps", according to the company.

"Stamps with matrix codes make our service even more reliable -- and the stamps more interesting," said Tobias Meyer, head of the company's German post and parcel division.

The first stamps featuring the codes will be rolled out from Thursday, with more to follow later in the year.

By 2022, they will be featured on all German stamps.

However, the codes do not

allow for full parcel-style tracking and they will not tell customers whether a letter has actually been delivered.

DHL owner Deutsche Post reported record results in January as the pandemic fuels a package boom spurred by online shopping.

Revenues climbed five per cent year-on-year to 66.8 billion euros (\$80.4 billion), buoyed by strong performances from the parcels and express units.

SOURCE: AFP

NEWS

IN

BRIEF

NEO-NAZISM

Austrian rapper arrested over neo-Nazi songs: ministry

AUSTRIAN authorities said Tuesday they have arrested a rapper accused of broadcasting neo-Nazi songs, one of which was used by the man behind a deadly anti-Semitic attack in Germany.

"The suspect has been arrested on orders of the Vienna prosecutors" and transferred to prison after a search of his home, said an interior ministry statement.

Police seized a mixing desk, hard discs, weapons, a military flag from the Third Reich era and other Nazi objects during their search.

Austrian intelligence officers had been trying for months to unmask the rapper, who went by the pseudonym Mr Bond and had been posting to neo-Nazi forums since 2016.

The suspect, who comes from the southern region of Carinthia, has been detained for allegedly producing and broadcasting Nazi ideas and incitement to hatred.

"The words of his songs glorify National Socialism (Nazism) and are anti-Semitic, racist and xenophobic," said the interior ministry statement.

One of his tracks was used as the sound track during the October 2019 attack outside a synagogue in the eastern German city of Halle.

SOURCE: AFP

IMPEACHMENT CASE

Donald Trump 'singularly responsible' for riot, impeachment trial brief claims

DONALD Trump was "singularly responsible" for the deadly US Capitol riot last month and acquitting the former president could damage American democracy, lawmakers leading the impeachment case said Tuesday, a week before his Senate trial begins.

Trump became the first US president in history to be impeached twice when the House of Representatives charged him last month with inciting the mayhem inflicted by his followers when they invaded Congress on January 6. In a pre-trial brief, the House impeachment managers made their case for the Senate to convict, saying the American people should be protected "against a president who provokes violence to subvert our democracy."

Trump's impeachment was triggered by a speech he delivered to a crowd on the National Mall just before the riot, telling them that Joe Biden had stolen the presidential election and that they needed to march on Congress and show "strength".

The mob stormed the Capitol, fatally wounded one police officer, wrecked furniture and forced terrified lawmakers to hide, interrupting a ceremony to put the legal stamp on Biden's victory.

SOURCE: AFP

QUESTIONED THE SAFETY OF CORONAVIRUS VACCINES

Australia's ruling conservatives reckon with conspiracist MP



Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison summoned Sydney MP Craig Kelly after months of false claims that questioned the safety of coronavirus vaccines. PHOTO: POOL/AFP

AUSTRALIA'S conservative prime minister was forced to bring a vocal party lawmaker to task on Wednesday for spreading pandemic disinformation, after a string of comments that threatened to undermine public safety.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison summoned Sydney Member of Parliament Craig Kelly after months of false claims that questioned the safety of coronavirus vaccines, opposed lockdowns and promoted unproven treatments.

In a statement after the face-to-face, Kelly said he "agreed to support the government's vaccine rollout, which has been endorsed by medical experts".

"I believe that the spread

of misinformation can damage the success of our public health response during the pandemic," he said in a statement.

Mostly Covid-free Australia has yet to begin its vaccine rollout.

Public opinion polls show around three-in-four Australians intend to get vaccinated, but misinformation is widespread on prominent media platforms.

Kelly has routinely backed the use of Malaria drug hydroxychloroquine and headlice medication ivermectin as Covid-19 treatments and endorsed other unsubstantiated theories spreading widely in the United States.

SOURCE: AFP

NEWS
IN BRIEF

PROPAGANDA

Ukraine's Zelensky bans three pro-Russia TV channels

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky has banned three pro-Russian television channels in a move the presidency said was aimed to stave off Kremlin propaganda.

The ban came into effect in the early hours of Wednesday after Zelensky issued a decree imposing sanctions against pro-Russian lawmaker Taras Kozak and eight of his companies, including the three TV stations.

The channels – 112 Ukraina, Zik TV and NewsOne TV – are formally owned by Kozak, but are also linked to powerful MP Viktor Medvedchuk, a close ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Zelensky's decree late Tuesday did not provide grounds for the ban, but his spokeswoman described the three television channels as "a propaganda tool" and said they receive funding "from Russia".

SOURCE: AFP

PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Microsoft offers to step in if rival Google quits Australia

US technology giant Microsoft offered Wednesday to fill the void if rival Google follows through on a threat to turn off its search engine in Australia over government plans to make it pay for news content.

Microsoft president Brad Smith said in a statement that the company "fully supports" proposed legislation that would force Google and Facebook to compensate media for using their journalism. Facebook and Google have both threatened to block key services in Australia if the rules, now before parliament, become law in their current form.

But Smith said the proposal "reasonably attempts to address the bargaining power imbalance between digital platforms and Australian news businesses" and "represents a fundamental step towards a more level playing field and a fairer digital ecosystem for consumers, business, and society."

Smith said Microsoft was ready to improve its Bing search

engine, currently a minnow compared to Google's globally dominant product, and welcome Australian business advertisers to the platform "with no transfer costs".

Acknowledging Bing's underdog status, Smith said Microsoft would "invest further to ensure Bing is comparable to our competitors and we remind people that they can help, with every search, Bing gets better at finding what you are looking for".

Smith said he and Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella had discussed the proposal last week with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, who will see the offer as a big boost in his government's confrontation with Google and Facebook.

'Final offer' arbitration

Under the proposed News Media Bargaining Code, Google and Facebook would be required to negotiate payments to individual news organizations for using their content on the platforms.

If agreement cannot be reached on the size of the payments, the issue would go to so-called "final offer" arbitration where each side proposes a compensation amount and the arbiter chooses one or the other.

Australia's biggest media companies, Rupert Murdoch's News Corp and Nine Entertainment, have said they think the payments should amount to hundreds of millions of dollars

per year.

Google and Facebook, backed up by the US government and leading internet architects, have said the scheme would seriously undermine their business models and the very functioning of the internet. Facebook told a Senate inquiry into the proposed code that it would stop letting users post links to Australian news if it becomes law.

SOURCE: AFP



News organizations worldwide have seen their businesses ravaged by the loss of advertising dollars that once flowed to their newspapers but are now overwhelmingly captured by the big digital platforms. PHOTO: AFP

HERVE GOURDEL

Trial over French hiker's murder to open in Algeria

THE trial over the murder of a French mountaineer opens in Algeria this week, more than six years after he was beheaded by Islamic State group-linked militants during a hiking trip.

Herve Gourdel, 55, was abducted on September 21, 2014 while hiking in Djurdjura Na-

tional Park, whose dense forests, gorges and picturesque lakes are a draw for hikers but which has long been a sanctuary for jihadists.

Three days after he disappeared, gunmen from militant group Jund al-Khilafa published a video of his execution-style

killing.

Paris had rejected their demand to halt air strikes against IS in Iraq and Syria.

Three months later, following a massive manhunt involving thousands of soldiers, Gourdel's body was found in a booby-trapped grave.

In total, 14 people face charges over the case.

Only one is known to be in custody: suspected jihadist Abdelmalek Hamzaoui, who is to appear before a court on the outskirts of Algiers on Thursday.

SOURCE: AFP

JAILED CRITIC

Russian court jails Kremlin critic Navalny as over 1,400 protesters detained

MORE than 1,400 protesters were detained by Russian authorities during rallies supporting Alexei Navalny, a civil monitoring group said Wednesday, after the Kremlin's most prominent critic was jailed for nearly three years amid international condemnation.

The court's decision Tuesday to turn a 2014 suspended sentence into real jail time will see the 44-year-old anti-corruption campaigner -- who accuses Moscow of poisoning him last year -- serve a lengthy prison term. Britain, France, Germany, the United States and the European Union denounced the ruling and called for his immediate release, as Moscow accused the West of interfering in its affairs.

SOURCE: AFP



Myanmar MMA fighter Tial Thang to fight against Paul Lumini

By Shine Htet Zaw

ORGANIZED by ONE Championship, Unbreakable III event of ONE Championship will be held on 5 February in Singapore and will feature a bout of Myanmar's Mixed Martial Arts fighter Tial

Myanmar MMA Fighter Tial Thang is seen before a previous ONE Championship Fight. **PHOTO: TIAL THANG'S FACEBOOK PAGE**

Thang vs Indonesian fighter Paul Lumini.

Myanmar's Tial Thang also known as "Dragon Leg" started teaming up with ONE Championship in 2019 and fought two fights in a year and took consecutive victories.

In March 2019, Thierry Thang defeated Cambodian Fighter Rim Sarot in a ONE Championship event in Yangon. Again in December 2019, he also defeated South Korea's Kim Woom Kyoum in a ONE

Championship event in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia.

ONE Championship Light Heavyweight Champion, the Burmese Python Aung La N Sang is currently staying in Singapore with Tial Thang to help prepare for his bout. Tial Thang and Aung La N Sang have been in Singapore since the third week of January for the upcoming ONE Championship bout.

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Lin)

Zverev battles to ATP Cup win over Shapovalov, Italy reach semis

MELBOURNE — Alexander Zverev rallied from a set down to beat dangerous Canadian Denis Shapovalov and open his season with a fighting victory in the ATP Cup, while in-form Matteo Berrettini steered Italy into the semi-finals on Wednesday.

The seventh-ranked German had to dig deep for his 6-7 (5/7), 6-3, 7-6 (7/4) win to seal the tie, but gained valuable court time ahead of another crack at a first Grand Slam trophy at the Australian Open starting next week.

Zverev, who fell agonizingly short in the US Open final last year to Dominic Thiem, said having his brother

Mischa as team captain had helped him.

"All the players enjoy having him as captain, he's been fantastic in training as well. It's just great to have him here," he said.

Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff upset Milos Raonic 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (7/2) in the opening match and Canada are now out after a second narrow loss for Shapovalov, who pushed Novak Djokovic hard in their Group A clash on Tuesday.

Djokovic's defending champions beat Canada 2-1 in their opener on Tuesday and will play Germany on Thursday for a place in the semis.—AFP ■



Alexander Zverev of Germany plays a backhand in his Group A singles match against Denis Shapovalov of Canada during day two of the 2021 ATP Cup at Rod Laver Arena on Wednesday. **PHOTO: AFP**

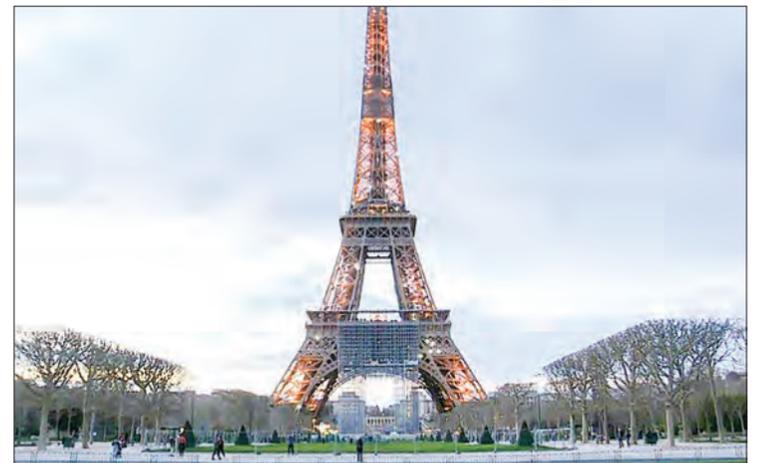
Going for gold: Eiffel Tower gets Olympic facelift

PARIS — The Eiffel Tower has embarked on the most extensive revamp of its 130-year history to look its best for the 2024 Paris Olympics, including with a paint job giving it a distinctly golden hue.

Not only will layers from the 19 previous coats of paint be removed, but the Paris icon will also lose the signature "Eiffel Tower brown" it has sported since 1968.

It will be replaced with a yellow-brown composition that Gustave Eiffel himself wanted for his monument.

"It's going to give the Eiffel Tower a bit more of a gold hue than the colour that we're used to seeing, in time for the Olympic Games," said Patrick Branco Ruivo, the CEO of the company operating the tower.



The Eiffel Tower will go for gold in terms of paint colour. **PHOTO: AFP**

The renovation job for the 324-metre (1,063-foot) tower, with its 18,000 metal pieces held together by 2.5 million rivets, is monumental, coming to an estimated 50 million euros (\$60 million).

The stripping of the old layers is made hazardous by the

presence of lead, requiring a strict health protocol for workers.

The Eiffel Tower receives a new coat of paint every seven years, as much for the protection of its metallic structure from the wind, rain, sun and pollution, as for the maintenance of its looks.—AFP ■

Champions League spot may be beyond Everton, admits Ancelotti

LIVERPOOL — Everton manager Carlo Ancelotti believes a top four finish in the Premier League this season may be beyond his team after a draw with Leicester City and a defeat by Newcastle United in their last two matches.

Everton, who led the table early in the campaign, are eighth with 33 points, six points behind fourth-placed Leicester, with two games in hand including Wednesday's trip to Leeds United. But An-

celotti suggested that being held 1-1 by Leicester and losing 2-0 at home against 16th-placed Newcastle may have hurt his team's chances of qualifying for the Champions League.

"Now it's beyond Everton, it still remains a dream for us. I think after the game against Leicester gave us an answer, the game against Newcastle gave us another answer. To fight for fourth, we have to improve," Ancelotti told reporters.—AFP ■



Everton manager Carlo Ancelotti. **PHOTO: AFP**