

NATIONAL

Pilgrims peacefully visit pagodas across nation

PAGE-2

NATIONAL

Tatmadaw arranges transport for 70 quarantine-completed fishers

PAGE-2

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Announcement of Union Election Commission 21 March 2021

1. Regarding the Multiparty General Election held on 8 November 2020, the Union Election Commission has inspected the voter lists and on the ground withdrawal/receipt/use/remaining of ballot papers of 44 townships (except Cocogyun) in the Yangon Region.
2. According to the inspection findings, the previous election commission released 6,135,581 eligible voters in 44 townships of the Yangon Region. The list of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population in November 2020 showed 3,978,934 eligible voters who had turned 18. The voter lists mentioned that there were 747,099 citizens, associate citizens, naturalized citizens, and non-identity voters, 11,070 persons repeated on the voter lists more than three times and 269,412 persons repeated on the voter lists two times.
3. Findings in the inspection were as follows:

SEE PAGE-6

Information Team of State Administration Council meets media at 3/2021 press conference

THE Information Team of the State Administration Council held a 3/2021 press conference at the Ministry of Information yesterday afternoon, and Brig-Gen Zaw Min Tun, member of the Union Election Commission and representatives of departmental information team replied to queries raised by media.

Leader of the Information Team Brig-Gen Zaw Min Tun clarified the situation of the State Administration Council to assume State duty because of voting frauds and vote-rigging in the 2020 election across the nation, neglecting the requests of the Tatmadaw to solve problems of voting frauds under the law in accord with the practice of democracy but now emphasizing negotiation, the transformation of peaceful protests to riots, then to anarchic mobs and rebellion, destruction of six public-owned offices, 30 police stations, 12 police outposts and five buildings in 30 townships in riotous rebellion, setting



Press conference of the Information Team of the State Administration Council 3/2021 is in progress in Nay Pyi Taw on 23 March 2021.

fire to schools three times, the bridge once, ATM and banks two times, communication towers, once, fire stations once, vehicles four times, houses two times, shops two times and rail

tracks two times. Destruction of railroads which play a key role in transportation, was very dangerous for the State.

In Yangon Region, 10 garment factories, two garment

machinery factories, one electronic factory, one fertilizer plant, one bag factory, one polyethylene bag factory and one polystyrene foam factory totaling 17 were set on fire from 14

to 19 March. Tens of thousands of workers and dependents became jobless. Fire trucks were violently barred not to leave the stations.

SEE PAGE-3

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL

MoHS holds meeting on opening of postgraduate medical courses

PAGE-4

NATIONAL

Four kinds of offertories, day meals donated to monasteries, nunneries, religious teaching centres

PAGE-5

NATIONAL

Venerable Sayadaws, government staff, locals receive COVID-19 vaccines

PAGE-5

NATIONAL

Detainees from Shwepyitha and Hlinethaya riots given respective sentences

PAGE-7

NATIONAL

Angry protestors attack security forces in Mandalay

PAGE-11

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

- (a) Building of a Union based on democracy and federalism in practising genuine disciplined multiparty democracy in a full fairness manner
- (B) Emphasizing of restoration of eternal peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)
- (c) Continuous practising of the “principle” of peaceful co-existence among countries by holding up the independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy

2. Economic affairs

- (a) Further development of production based on agriculture and livestock breeding through modern techniques and all-round development of other

sectors of the economy as well

- (b) Stability of market economy and inviting international investments to develop the economy of entire ethnic people
- (c) Encouragement of local businesses to create employment opportunities to be able to produce many products of the State

3. Social affairs

- (a) For ensuring of dynamism of Union spirit which is genuine patriotic spirit
- (b) Following customs and traditions of all ethnic nationalities and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national characters
- (c) Enhancement of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

Five future programmes of State Administration Council

1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted to carry out tasks that should be done, including inspection of voting lists in accordance with the law.
2. Effective measures will be taken for the prevention of current infectious COVID-19 with added momentum.
3. Efforts will be made to recover businesses that faced loss caused by COVID-19 in various ways as quickly as possible.
4. Emphasis will be placed on restoring eternal peace in the entire nation in line with agreements from the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) as much as possible.
5. When missions will be accomplished in accord with provisions of the state of emergency, a free and fair multiparty democracy election will be held in accordance with the Constitution (2008), and further tasks will be undertaken to hand over State duty to the winning party meeting the standards of democracy.

Pilgrims peacefully visit pagodas across nation



Devotees are seen worshipping at Shwedagon Pagoda.

ALTHOUGH the pagodas, including buildings or temples of other religions, were temporarily closed during the COVID-19 pandemic, all were reopened as per the COVID-19 health rules starting 8 February.

Meanwhile, the pilgrims

and visitors, including monks and nuns, visit the Shwedagon of Yangon Region, Maha Muni Pagoda of Mandalay Region and Uppatasanti Pagoda of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and other pagodas of regions and states following the COVID-19

health rules. Moreover, Islamic religious schools, Churches and Hindu temples across the nation are also reopened under the COVID-19 health rules, and the people of respective religions peacefully do their religious affairs. —MNA

Tatmadaw arranges transport for 70 quarantine-completed fishers

TATMADAW officials arranged transport for a total of 70 fishermen who have completed their quarantine period in the COVID-19 Quarantine Centre in Hline Township, Yangon Region, yesterday.

Yangon Region Administration Council Chairman U Hla Soe, Commander of the Yangon command Major General Nyunt Win Swe, Director

of the Regional Disaster Management Department U Than Soe and officials greeted them.

According to the instructions of the Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, the fishers were brought back from Andaman Island, India, by Tatmadaw navy vessels. —MNA



Returnee fishers are seen receiving treatments at the military hospital.

It is also essential to serve the country's interest without corruption

IN questioning people from the NLD, we treat them properly. Some of their revelations during the process have been announced. At the same time, there are plans to announce further revelations. Action will be taken against responsible officials at the state, region and union levels involved in corruption. It is also essential to serve the country's interest without corruption when the SAC is discharging duties.

(Excerpt from the speech to the 6/2021 meeting of the State Administration Council made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 16 March 2021)

Information Team of State Administration Council meets media at 3/2021 press conference

FROM PAGE-1

A total of five police members fell, and 163 members were injured in the violent attacks while four Tatmadaw members fell and one family member was dead. A total of 33 men and two women were killed in identifying them as informers. So, 44 persons were dead and 163 persons injured in the violent attacks. Moreover, social punishment was committed with shaving heads, hanging placards on necks and tattooing faces. Those rioters committed firing at security forces, attacking police stations and destroying evidences intentionally. Weapons and equipment used in violent attacks were found from various areas. Some persons were dead



Media persons are viewing riot equipment used in the violent attacks.

peace and tranquillity and the rule of law and incitements to cause riots. Media blacked out the events with one-sided presentations of setting fire by rioters, killing persons identified as informers in firing tyres, killing persons by breaking their eyes and torturing to kill a woman who innocently did her livelihood. The clarification was used with a Power Point presentation and video clips.

Member of the Union Election Commission U Khin Maung Oo explained tasks of the current Union Election Commission, voting frauds before and after the 2020 election, events of putting pressure to cause voting frauds, the inspection of voter lists, talks of those who saw pressure imposed for causing voting fraud in the election and those who were ordered to commit such acts with the use of video clips and evidence.

UEC member U Khin Maung Oo, Leader of Information Team of the State Administration Council Brig-Gen Zaw Min Tun and representatives of departmental information teams replied to queries raised by media.

Those attending the press conference viewed round facts about the press conference, endeavours of the current UEC, the inspection of voter lists, necessary documents, seized home-made arms and equipment.

The press conference was also attended by reporters from local news agencies, daily newspapers, local TV broadcasting stations and local-based foreign news agencies. —MNA

the law and said, "Democracy is based on the wish of the majority, but such wish must be authentic with honest politics. If the wish of the majority is not honest, it is difficult to identify such politics is of democracy". With regard to events of riotous protests, the Senior General said, "It was seen that some incite the youths to commit the acts against nationality, language, religion and culture so as to cause violence and riots and these attempts are dangerous for the State." As such, youths need to review their futures and aims and notice incitements and acts of politicians to push them into troubles.

Some media intentionally incite and publish misinformation despite having responsibilities to write news under the correct and bilateral views, avoid presentations harming State



Display panel at the press conference.

and injured in riotous attacks. Some innocent patients were dead due to a lack of opportunity to receive medical treatment because health staff did not abide by ethics.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on his tour of Myeik and Kyunsu of Taninthayi Region and Co-

cogyun in Yangon Region last week cordially met with officers, other ranks and families of local battalions and explained Tatmadaw's dutiful serving State responsibilities in accord with

MoHS holds meeting on opening of postgraduate medical courses

THE Ministry of Health and Sports held the coordination meeting on the opening of postgraduate medical courses at medical universities yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw, and Union Minister Dr Thet Khine Win addressed the meeting.

The Union Minister said medical professionals have been working for the continuous development of Myanmar's medical field. He continued as the rectors

who attended the meeting are not only medical professionals but also civil service personnel and professors, they have to obey the codes of ethics.

He also urged them to work together to guide their students based on the experience of those who have successfully attended local and international postgraduate courses so that they do not go astray and guide them to become proficient medical pro-

fessionals.

He added the opening of postgraduate medical courses in the 2021 academic year, which was postponed due to the outbreak of COVID-19 disease and coordination with the Ministry of Education for university admission as the results of the matriculation examination had been released.

He said it is necessary to compile a list of university and

scrutinize to prevent wastage of state budget regarding financial matters, teaching matters, staffing and construction issues to reopen medical universities as soon as possible.

He urged to arrange for the civil service personnel who are absent from the hospital, office or departments for various reasons to return to work, adding that special coordination is underway with relevant departments

to reward medical professionals who are working in medical universities and those involved in medical treatment activities as per their ranks starting from coming April.

The meeting was also attended by officials from the Human Resource Department of the Ministry of Health and Sports, rectors and vice-rectors from associated medical universities.—MNA

Military hospitals continue providing healthcare to civilians

MILITARY hospitals in the townships of regions and states keep providing medical treatments to the people to solve their healthcare services difficulties. A total of 89,551 outpatients and 4,002 inpatients reached these hospitals from 5 February to date.

Senior medical experts, medics and nurses have conducted 4,120 major operations and 2,193 minor operations. The senior doctors treat serious cases. These hospitals managed for the birth of 5,674 babies while bringing 5,674 pregnant women to the respective military hospitals. Of those

2259 cases are done in caesarean section and 3415 cases in ordinary delivery.

Officials from the respective commands also provided the patients with foods, and medical workers were provided with cash assistance.—MNA

A local seen receiving healthcare services provided by Tatmadaw medical corps at the public hospital in Latpadan.



Military medical corps provide healthcare in township hospitals

THE Tatmadaw medical teams comprising Tatmadaw doctors, specialists, and nurses, have been providing necessary medical treatments to the patients in military hospitals and public hospitals.

The Tatmadaw medical team continued to provide healthcare services such as surgery, dental and oral healthcare, osteoporosis, obstetrics, otorhinolaryngology, gynaecology, hypertension and heart disease to the patients in healthcare

services difficulties in Thazi Township Hospital, Hanza hospital, Yinmabin hospital, Tagaung Hospital in Thabeikyin Township, Sintgaing hospital in Kyaukse township, Yintaw hospital in Pyawbwe township, Welaung hospital in Taungtha Township, People's hospital in Kyaukpadaung Township, People's Hospital in Kyauktaga Township, Donzayit hospital in Shwegyin Township and People's hospital in Latpadan township yesterday.

Officials from respective commands also inspected the hospitals' medical services. They comforted the patients by providing food aids and necessary things. Locals are reportedly satisfied with the medical support of Tatmadaw.—MNA

Tatmadaw medical team seen providing healthcare services at the military hospital in Mawlamyine.



Security measures conducted to ensure community peace

TATMADAW, Police Force and Fire Brigade jointly conducted security measures to ensure the State's stability, security of people, the rule of law and community peace starting 14 February night.

Tatmadaw, police and fire brigade

members also jointly conduct security measures for the peaceful night and community peace in respective regions and states and keep serving security measures the whole day.—MNA

A convoy of patrol vehicles is seen serving security measures at night.

Four kinds of offertories, day meals donated to monasteries, nunneries, religious teaching centres

OFFICERS, other ranks and service personnel from Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) donate rice, cooking oil, salt, gram and other offerings as well as day meals to monasteries, nunneries and religious teaching centres for ensuring smooth arrangements for alms in townships of respective military commands. Moreover, health care services are also provided.

Today, commanders and officials offered four kinds of offerings, medical supplies for COVID-19 prevention and offertories to 13 monasteries

and Buddhist learning centres in Taunggyi, Kunhing, Monghsat, Mawlamyine, Thaton, Hlaingbwe, Hlegu, Kawhmu, Sittway, MraukU and Taungoo and day meals to 15 monasteries and nunneries in Mawlamyine, Patheingyi, Pyigyitagon and Taungoo.

Tatmadaw medical teams performed medical checkups on members of the Sangha, nuns and local people from Kounghsan, Wamhongpang and Maiknyaung monasteries in Wamhong Village of Monghsat in Shan State (East). — MNA



A monk is seen receiving offertories donated by the Tatmadaw.

Venerable Sayadaws, government staff, locals receive COVID-19 vaccines



Sayadaws are seen getting COVID vaccine jabs.

TATMADAW provides medical supplies to their relevant military commands by planes to keep launching COVID-19 vaccination programmes in each military command for venerable Sayadaws, the elderly persons at the age of over 65, departmental staff and residents.

On 22 and 23 March, the department staff and locals of Lashio and Laukkai in Northern Shan State received COVID-19 vaccines. Likewise, the venerable Sayadaws, departmental staff and residents from the townships of southern and eastern Shan State, Kayah State, Mon State, Yan-

gon Region, Ayeyawady Region, Sagaing Region and Bago Region also received the COVID-19 vaccine.

The commanders of respective region commands inspected the medical services for the local populace and paid homage to the Sayadaws.— MNA■

Briefing ceremony on strategy development for ethnic rights held

THE Ministry of Ethnic Affairs held the briefing ceremony on the development of a strategy for the rights of Myanmar's ethnic nationalities yesterday morning in accordance with the COVID-19 prevention rules.

At the ceremony, the Union Minister said his ministry would coordinate with the Ministry of Education to give priority to local people and allow them to receive higher salaries regarding the appointment of Teaching Assistants (TA) and Language Teacher (LT). He continued his ministry will coordinate with relevant ministries regarding the verification of ethnic nationality in applying for the national identity card. He added the importance of formulating and implementing necessary policies and visions in the ministry to have a strategy as a roadmap for the ministry to achieve its goals.



Union Minister U Saw Tun Aung Myint presides over the briefing ceremony on ethnic rights yesterday.

The strategic goal that is being drafted is to ensure that all ethnic groups enjoy equal citizenship rights, to have full access to constitutional rights and to Achieve Myanmar's Sus-

tainable and Balanced Development Plan in accordance with the Objectives of the Law for the Protection of the Rights of Ethnic Nationalities.

It was found that it was an

essential strategy for ethnic nationalities to enjoy their legal rights and development. It is hoped that the development gap will be narrowed as the strategic role can be implemented year by

year. In formulating the strategy, the policy of the government. The Union Minister said it also needs to be in line with the policies and goals of the State Government.

He said the government is committed to building a democratic federal union as well as national reconciliation and peace and it is well known that ethnic issues play an important role in achieving peace.

He stressed his ministry must work effectively to achieve the national goals of the Union Government, and he called for the final drafting of the strategy and its successful implementation within ten years from 2021 to 2030.

The ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs U Saw Tun Aung Myint, Deputy Minister U Zaw Aye Maung, the Permanent Secretary, Directors General and officials. — MNA■

Announcement of Union Election Commission 21 March 2021

FROM PAGE-1

Findings on township-wise voting list of Yangon Region

Sr	Township	Polling station	Township Sub-commission list	List from Immigration department	Those involved in voting list without citizenship scrutiny cards	Those involved in voter list more than three times holding one CSC	Those involved in voter list more than two times holding one CSC
1	Hlinethaya (East)	349	362,585	122,546	72,288	372	13378
2	Kyauktada	28	23,984	25,776	336		488
3	Tamway	123	127,107	97,083	2,991	109	4854
4	Mingaladon	136	288,522	150,407	27,386	790	17482
5	Lanmadaw	22	34,044	23,544	625	6	754
6	Latha	18	17,863	20,391	149		188
7	Mayangon	121	158,898	101,475	9,768	24	2078
8	Htantabin	119	140,760	70,792	20,059	291	7276
9	Insein	196	237,230	177,687	17,440	255	9054
10	Dawbon	63	70,753	58,708	7,746	39	2084
11	Hlegu	130	224,541	94,996	43,274	507	11622
12	South Okkalapa	124	136,155	136,224	5,234	74	3622
13	Kyimyindine	71	88,180	60,231	10,674	157	3900
14	Pazundaung	26	35,871	27,390	521	18	1030
15	Hline	87	141,442	100,750	6,145	126	5346
16	Kamayut	37	70,999	62,956	1,505	40	2322
17	Dagon	13	21,004	20,943	373	3	328
18	Seikkyi/Khanaungto	35	26,055	25,574	3,651	6	404
19	Thakayta	211	174,751	139,647	11,119	235	8860
20	Bahan	65	67,222	36,778	1,411	3	1302

21	Thanlyin	229	222,275	176,454	33,635	675	13,844
22	Kyauktan	192	132,208	113,651	18,017	118	4,656
23	Hmayby	175	199,474	109,910	26,280	688	13,102
24	Pabedan	26	25,408	31,449	597	12	718
25	Sangyoung	52	81,775	73,541	506	18	2,228
26	Kayan	204	128,116	141,538	25,836	154	6,024
27	Kawhmu	161	98,678	76,055	10,565	217	5,400
28	Dala	182	130,599	107,488	30,179	433	8,384
29	Yankin	53	56,028	33,383	1,934	67	1,934
30	North Okkalapa	238	273,481	127,355	23,763	837	16,828
31	Botahtaung	38	33,288	2,5327	712	6	324
32	Hlinethaya (West)	287	278,219	139,314	52,925	235	8,058
33	Kungangon	180	89,932	87,007	15,768	178	4,372
34	Taikkyi	216	216,133	190,785	41,806	199	8,020
35	Thingangyun	139	184,485	88,665	16,544	80	4,626
36	Dagon Myothit (Seikkan)	128	162,634	52,141	30,794	78	4,912
37	Dagon Myothit (East)	171	151,978	59,511	19,905	201	6,220
38	Dagon Myothit (North)	154	166,352	65,057	10,367	81	4,162
39	Twantay	384	174,441	135,079	23,372	558	12,284
40	Ahlon	28	38,460	34,375	1,337		470
41	Dagon Myothit (South)	221	299,768	130,682	47,396	485	13,086
42	Mingala Taungnyunt	77	10,4037	66,997	5,941	182	4,880
43	Shwepyitha	123	313,783	235,473	45,053	2,417	24,944
44	Thongwa	175	126,063	123,799	21,172	96	3,564
	44 townships	5,807	6,135,581	3,978,934	747,099	11,070	269,412

- The Union Election Commission has inspected the withdrawal/receipt/use/remaining numbers of ballot papers used for Pyithu Hluttaw Election of 44 townships (except Cocogyun) in Yangon Region, together with the respective township election sub-commission, head of police force, Immigration and Population and administrator according to Section 53 of the Hluttaw Election Law.
- There are a total of 5,807 polling stations in 44 townships, and 6,687,638 ballots withdrawn, 4,084,281 ballot receipts, 2,603,357 ballots in exact remaining, and 2,336,870 ballots remaining on the ground. There are differences – 357,937 missing and 91,450 extra ballots. It was found that there were township-wise missing and extra ballots as well as constituency-wise illegally-printed ballot papers.

On the ground inspections on township-wise ballot papers

Sr	Township	Total polling stations	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Kyauktada	28	26,304	15,055	11,249	11,039	306	96
2	Tamway	123	140,314	78,758	61,556	55,804	11,745	5,993
3	Mingaladon	136	294,008	162,656	131,352	114,091	21,522	4,261
4	Lanmadaw	22	38,888	19,920	18,968	17,795	1,183	10
5	Latha	18	20,483	10,930	9,553	9,389	249	85
6	Mayangon	121	178,470	111,448	67,022	66,389	633	
7	Htantabin	119	147,433	104,454	42,979	42,158	2,336	1,515
8	Insein	196	261,350	165,510	95,840	82,806	16,526	3,492
9	Dawbon	63	78,087	44,600	33,487	30,620	3,461	594
10	Hlegu	130	241,265	160,476	80,789	64,837	21,960	6,008
11	South Okkalapa	124	151,195	98,155	53,040	48,707	4,986	653
12	Kyimyindine	71	96,283	62,257	34,026	31,254	3,455	683
13	Pazundaung	26	39,987	23,001	16,986	16,161	1,378	553
14	Hline	87	149,215	91,320	57,895	53,044	7,936	3,085
15	Kamayut	37	70,490	43,992	26,498	25,487	2,816	1,805
16	Dagon	13	22,252	15,663	6,589	6,167	537	115
17	Seikkyi/Khanaungto	35	29,707	21,079	8,628	8,814	392	578
18	Thakayta	211	196,178	120,130	76,048	62,691	19,539	6,182
19	Bahan	65	72,447	42,636	29,811	21,741	9,021	951
20	Thanlyin	229	242,389	157,886	84,503	77,447	8,032	976
21	Kyauktan	192	151,468	102,221	49,247	44,118	6,511	1,382
22	Hmayby	175	211,903	149,500	62,403	61,509	5,649	4,755
23	Pabedan	26	27,549	15,590	11,959	11,782	263	86

24	Sangyoung	52	86,563	48,662	37,901	30,544	9,517	2,160
25	Kayan	204	149,266	100,499	48,767	45,437	5,807	2,477
26	Kawhmu	161	114,822	78,268	36,554	35,259	1,891	596
27	Dala	182	146,093	91,526	54,567	50,352	4,452	237
28	Yankin	53	63,689	36,704	26,985	23,111	4,224	350
29	North Okkalapa	238	297,657	177,176	120,481	107,617	27,398	14,534
30	Botahtaung	38	36,146	23,229	12,917	12,530	574	187
31	Hlinethaya (West)	287	299,006	146,322	152,684	133,672	19,012	
32	Kungyangon	180	106,208	68,993	37,215	34,055	3,679	519
33	Hlinethaya (East)	349	383,482	179,149	204,333	186,092	18,911	670
34	Taikkyi	216	241,204	171,211	69,993	61,954	8,039	
35	Thingungyun	139	203,738	127,973	75,765	74,001	1,764	
36	Dagon Myothit (Seikkan)	128	170,628	90,786	79,842	64,978	20,483	5,619
37	Dagon Myothit (East)	171	160,037	99,995	60,042	53,376	11,758	5,092
38	Dagon Myothit (North)	154	183,687	116,179	67,508	58,317	11,980	2,789
39	Twantay	384	207,880	142,047	65,833	60,000	9,614	3,781
40	Ahlon	28	40,937	26,245	14,692	13,899	1,226	433
41	Dagon Myothit (South)	221	323,286	197,719	125,567	112,448	14,539	1,420
42	Mingala Taungnyunt	77	114,327	64,410	49,917	45,927	4,811	821
43	Shwepyitha	123	326,951	182,352	144,599	123,932	26,574	5,907
44	Thongwa	175	144,366	97,599	46,767	45,519	1,248	
	44 townships	5,807	6,687,638	4,084,281	2,603,357	2,336,870	357,937	91,450

6. According to the inspection of 44 townships (except Cocogyun) in Yangon Region, the voter lists of the township election sub-commission exceeded by 2,156,647 those of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population's eligible voters who had turned 18, citizens, associate citizens, naturalized citizens, and voters under Section 6(a) of the relevant Hluttaw Election Law.
7. It was inspected that there were 747,099 non-identity voters. Though Section 15(c) of Chapter VI of the relevant Hluttaw Election Law provides, "Whoever has the right to vote in any constituency shall not be included in the voting roll of any constituency other than that of the constituency concerned at the same time", it was found that there included 11,070 repeated voters for three times and above and 269,412 for two times in the Yangon Region. Thus, the voting roll of the Yangon Region was not in conformity with the law.
8. The following are on the ground inspection findings in 44 townships (except Cocogyun) of Yangon Region:
 - (a) Though there were 4,186,853 voters and 4,084,281 ballot papers were used, 102,572 ballots were in shortage.
 - (b) There were differences between withdrawal and use of the ballot papers, and 357,937 were missing.
 - (c) There were 91,450 extra ballot papers at some polling stations.
 - (d) The ward/village-tract election sub-commissions failed to return the receipts of advance voting ballots and extra ballot papers.
 - (e) There remained ballot papers and used receipts at the hands of ward/village-tract election sub-commissions.

- (f) The ward/village-tract election sub-commissions had returned the ballots and used receipts to the township election sub-commissions only after the election.
- (g) It was found that the names of voters, the voter list, the number of polling stations, the names of ward/village-tract, and voter's signature or fingerprint were not filled in the receipts of ballot papers for advance voting.
- (h) There were massive numbers of the voting list without citizenship scrutiny cards, and they had voted only with the temporary certificate.
- (i) It was found that the collection of advance voting was not in conformity with the law.
- (j) Upon the reason for the COVID-19 health directives, collection of the voting list and advance voting were carried out at the approaching time of election by announcing new directives that were not in conformity with the law.
9. It was found that the voting list (except Cocogyun) under inspection showed there were errors that were contrary to the law. There were shortages, losses or missings and illegal extra ballot papers on the ground. Ballot papers were illegally printed as they should be done at exact numbers constituency-wise according to the law. The names of voters, signatures or fingerprints, the voter lists, the numbers of polling stations, and the names of wards/village-tracts were not filled in. It was also scrutinized that ballot papers exceeded eligible voter lists. Thus, it is announced that all these are not in conformity with the relevant Hluttaw election law and rules.

Union Election Commission

Detainees from Shwepyitha and Hlinethaya riots given respective sentences

ACCORDING to the Myanmar Police Force's statement, those arrested during the riots in Shwepyitha and Hlinethaya townships in Yangon Region were given respective sentences.

Aung Pyae Phyo, son of U Hla Myint; Sein Thaug, son of U Hla Myint; Soe Than, son of U Hla Win; Tin Tun, son of U Soe Thein; Kyaw Thet, son of U Tin Win, were respectively detained for carrying sharp knives and dangerous weapons during the riots in Hlinethaya Township happened from 14 to 18 March.

After a military tribunal investigated them, they were respectively sentenced to 3 years in prison with punitive labour due to the possession of any weapon without the right to possess it under the provisions of Section 19 (e) of the Arms Act (1878) on 19 March.

Similarly, Min Htet (a) Linn Htet Paing, son of U Than Tun and Hla Win, son of U Sein Maung, arrested for burning Solamoda garment factory on 16 March in Shwepyitha, were sentenced to 20 years in prison with labour under Section 436 of the Penal Code for committing arson.

Aung Tun (a) Sarmi, Aung Thet Paing (a) Pijay and Win Ko Ko were sentenced to 3 years in prison with labour under Section 414 of the Penal Code for buying items stolen from Myanmar Hong Bao Mechanical Electrical Engineering Co., Ltd on 14 March.

Kyaw Thein Win (a) Ko Ko Win, Thiha (a) San-shay, Yan Naing and Naing Min, who participated in the terrorist groups and incited civil service personnel to disobey the codes of conducts at work on 15, 16 and 18 March, were sentenced to 3 years in prison with labour under Section 505-A (c) of the Penal Code on 22 March.

The Martial Law was declared in Hlinethaya Township, Shwepyitha Township, Dagon Myothit (North), Dagon Myothit (South), and Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township and North Okkalapa Township in Yangon Region due to the escalating terrorist attacks on garment factories and schools in the townships.

Twenty-three types of crimes to be tried by military tribunals have been announced in the townships where the Martial Law was declared, and it is reported that effective and immediate legal action will be taken to those who commit these crimes.—MNA

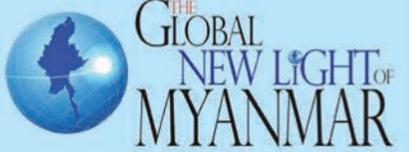
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မြန်မာ့အလင်း
Myanmar Alinn Daily
Established in 1914



ရင်္ဂါမု
The Mirror Daily
Established in 1937



THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

ဖတ်ရှုနိုင်ပါပြီ။





ဆက်သွယ် ရှာယူနိုင်ပါသည် -

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The Global New Light of Myanmar

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Success of farm mechanization key to bringing opportunities to farmers

MYANMAR is facing some challenges, including a shortage of farm labor, while making efforts for modernizing the agricultural sector. There are several ways to resolve farming issues.

Mechanized farming is one method to overcome manual labor shortage, which is a major problem in the country.

The time is ripe to transform the country's agricultural sector by switching from a traditional system to mechanized farming, as part of efforts to boost the economy.

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation has expressed its commitment to turning the country's traditional agriculture into agricultural mechanization in cooperation with related departments concerned.

The Agricultural Mechanization Department has opened frontline camps and provides ploughing services at reasonable prices, along with mechanic services for agricultural machinery owned by farmers.

With agricultural mechanization services rising, the government is encouraging existing 135 groups providing agricultural mechanization services to form a conglomerate and cooperatives. Meanwhile, the ministry has pledged to provide administration, financial management to the cooperatives to ensure they can operate in full swing.

Besides, plans are underway to conduct trainings on agricultural machine operation for those who completed the agro science institute and technical schools and the trainings will guarantee them to operate the machine in the field.

The Agricultural Mechanization Department has opened frontline camps and provides ploughing services at reasonable prices, along with mechanic services for agricultural machinery owned by farmers.

These steps are leading to the agricultural mechanization which is also an important tool in crop production. Farmers who have access to improved tools and technologies have the opportunity to shift from subsistence farming to market-oriented farming.

Theoretically, delivering mechanized solutions and providing training to farming cooperatives on equipment, business systems, and soil management can help us raise the living standards of farmers.

However, modern processing machinery and technologies are beyond our farmers' means. There are many other obstacles, including lack of storage facilities.

Modernizing the agriculture sector is the fastest way to reduce the incidence of poverty, tackle labor shortage, enhance labor capacity, and increase efficiency.

Mechanized farming can not only help resolve labor shortage by making the workers that remain much more productive, it can also ensure a stable quantity and quality of production. This means a better and more stable income for farmers.

Practising modernized farming with machinery and shifting from traditional to modern agricultural practices with the use of technology, information, and communications technology for production and marketing would ensure that a new generation returns to the farmland.

Good production would mean good income for farmers. We need to create opportunities for them.

Inequity of COVID-19 vaccines grows 'more grotesque every day' - WHO chief

THE growing gap between the number of vaccines being given in rich countries and those administered through COVAX is becoming "more grotesque every day", the head of the UN health agency said on Monday.

"In January, I said that the world was on the brink of a catastrophic moral failure unless urgent steps were taken to ensure equitable distribution of vaccines", Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) told journalists at a regular news briefing.

"We have the means to avert this failure, but it's shocking how little has been done to avert it", he added, noting that WHO has been working "day and night to find solutions to increase the production and equitable distribution of vaccines".

"False sense of security" The WHO chief pointed out that while some countries are vaccinating their entire populations, others have no shots.

"The inequitable distribution of vaccines is not just a moral

outrage, it's also economically and epidemiologically self-defeating", he said, pointing out that some nations are vaccinating low risk, younger people at the cost of "health workers, older people and other at-risk groups in other countries".

And because more transmissions mean more variants, Tedros upheld that the imbalance in jabs only provides "a false sense of security" as "the more variants that emerge, the more likely it is that they will evade vaccines".

"As long as the virus continues to circulate anywhere, people will continue to die, trade and travel will continue to be disrupted, and the economic recovery will be further delayed", he spelled out.

Last Friday, WHO hosted a meeting on enhancing genomic sequencing of the coronavirus, to better monitor its evolution in the face of the many mutations that are raising international concern.

Tedros said that while knowing when, how and where the virus is evolving, is vital informa-



The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is geared to support UN partners in ensuring fair and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines (COVAX). PHOTO: UN

tion, it is of limited use if countries do not work together to suppress transmission "everywhere at the same time".

"If countries won't share vaccines for the right reasons, we appeal to them to do it out of self-interest", he said.

AstraZeneca equity commitment

Tedros also informed the journalists that he had spoken

to vaccine manufacturers on how to ramp up production, including the CEO of an AstraZeneca, manufacturer of the Oxford University-AstraZeneca shots which were temporarily suspended by a group of countries, mainly in Europe, amid concerns over blood-clotting statistics.

Germany, France, Italy and Spain, are among those who have begun using the vaccine again

following reassurances from top regulators. On Monday, a large study in the United States, Chile and Peru, reportedly showed that the vaccine was 79% effective in preventing the illness and 100% effective against severe symptoms and hospitalization.

"These data are further evidence that the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine is safe and effective", Tedros said.

Women 'systematically excluded' from COVID response, despite being worst affected



UNFPA trains health care workers and staff of one-stop centres on crisis counselling and other services. PHOTO: UN WOMEN

NOTWITHSTANDING that women make up 70 per cent of healthcare workers globally, and have been most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, they are also being "systematically excluded" from decision-making processes aimed at ending the pandemic, including government-run task forces around the world, according to the head of UN Women.

Women have suffered the worst impacts of COVID not only on the frontlines of healthcare, but also through the loss of jobs as the informal economy shrinks; an alarming spike in domestic violence; and the unpaid care burden that threatens to push 47 million additional women into extreme poverty, said a report published on Monday by UN Women, the UN Development Programme

(UNDP) and the Gender Inequality Research Lab at the University of Pittsburgh.

The data reveals that of 225 COVID-19 task forces up and running across 137 countries, only 24 per cent of members were women.

"Women have been on the frontlines of the COVID-19 response... however, they have been systematically excluded from the decision-making processes on how

to address the impacts of the pandemic", said UNDP chief Achim Steiner.

Citing "eye-opening new data", he underscored: "Women's full and inclusive participation in public institutions is critical to ensure their needs are adequately addressed in the pivotal decisions now being made - these are choices that will determine their futures for generations to come".

Gender lens needed

For an effective COVID-19 response, policies and programmes must include a "gender lens", the UN agencies said.

Without women in decision-making roles, government measures are more likely to ignore women's needs and could further exacerbate an unequal recovery that is already threatening to reverse decades of progress on gender equality.

Against the backdrop that 32 countries have registered gender-sensitive pandemic recovery measures, UNDP and UN Women

have urged governments to safeguard women's equal participation in the COVID-19 response along with equal decision-making powers and leadership opportunities.

"It is inconceivable that we can address the most discriminatory crisis we have ever experienced without full engagement of women", said UN Women chief Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka.

"At the moment, men have given themselves the impossible task of making the right decisions about women without the benefit of women's insights. This needs to be set right without delay so we can work together on a future that is equitable, gender-responsive and greener", she added.

Economic recovery gaps

The COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker tool, which analyses government pandemic policies, has pinpointed gaps in economic recovery processes that have excluded women-specific needs.

It flagged that as of March

2021, only 13 per cent of the 2,280 COVID-19 fiscal, social protection, and labour market measures have targeted women's economic security.

And measures that have been taken - from cash transfers and food aid targeting or prioritising women - have often been small scale and temporary.

For example, one year into the pandemic, most of the cash transfer schemes lasted only 3.3 months, on average.

The UN agencies stressed that fiscal packages must include "long-term specific measures to boost women's recovery".

Expand services

Governments' gender-related COVID-19 efforts continue to focus mostly on the uptick of violence against women and girls during the pandemic, according to Tracker data - with some 64 per cent concentrating on preventing or responding with helplines, shelters and judicial actions.

SOURCE: UN News

Objectives of 76th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

FOR the Tatmadaw to join hands with the entire nation to safeguard democracy, which is the aspiration of all the nationalities of the country, from deviating from its path, in accord with the basic principles of the Constitution, while observing Our Three Main National Causes, which is the national policy;

To protect the people from all dangers including natural disasters at any time and in any situation and to provide all-round assistance for ensuring social security of the people;

To restore eternal peace based on NCA, without deviating from Our Three Main National Causes, as the cessation of armed conflicts is the principal requirement in realizing democracy;

To build a strong and compact Standard Army, which has the combat prowess and combat power, to effectively safeguard the State peace and stability and sovereignty.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 23 March 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 24 March 2021: Rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Shan (South and East), Kayah, Kayin, Mon States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy 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 day temperatures in Sagaing Region and Kachin, Shan, Chin States.

မြန်မာ့အလင်း ရှုမဝ GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

နေ့စဉ်ထုတ်ရောင်းခံသတင်းစာများကို ဖတ်ရှုလိုပါက ဖော်ပြပါ ဖုန်းနံပါတ်များသို့ ဆက်သွယ်မှာယူနိုင်ပါသည်။

ဆက်သွယ်ရန်

- မြန်မာ့အလင်း 01 9544 317, 09 4480 42214
- ရှုမဝ 01 8292 830, 09 4500 25570
- The Global New Light of Myanmar 01 860 4532, 09 9839 24991

Press release for public information

COMMITTEE Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw-CRPH illegally formed with committing high treason and the groups formed by the committee were declared as unlawful associations on 21 March 2021.

According to the report sent by a duty-conscientious person, CRPH members held an online meeting at 9 am on 22-3-2021. The decisions of the meeting were as follows:

- (1) Zaw Wai Soe must soonest send his replies to queries raised by the VOA news agency at the interview.
- (2) Htin Lin Aung must draft the proposal for NED to raise the fund.
- (3) CRPH needs to decide the soonest release of the letter for pension for the aged.
- (4) Lwin Ko Latt must release the cabinet protocol on 21-3-2021.
- (5) Kyaw Moe Tun must write the draft letter for enabling temporary vice-president Mahn Win Khaing Than to send a secret letter to the president of the United States of America.
- (6) Win Myat Aye and Zaw Wai Soe must meet with development partners.
- (7) CRPH members must hold a meeting on 22-3-2021 to discuss the issue of ICC in detail.
- (8) Htin Lin Aung, Tin Tun Naing and Kyaw Moe Tun must hold a meeting on the offshore issue.

(9) Lwin Ko Latt must be assigned to submit the charter issue in detail at the meeting before NUCC.

(10) CRPH members must hold a meeting to apply the consistently response tactic of media for the Bengali issue.

(11) Phyu Phyu Thin and Lwin Ko Latt must be assigned to seek ways and means for collecting and spending funds in Myanmar.

(12) Win Myat Aye must be assigned to release the work process of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

(13) Temporary vice-president Mahn Win Khaing Than must release a letter to thank 47 members of the Sangha from the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee for closing their offices.

Moreover, lawsuits have been filed against 15 leading members of the committee and those who accepted illegal assignments of the committee in accord with the existing laws, including high treason. Relevant courts have released warrants to arrest them.

As such, people are requested to inform nearby police stations about the above-mentioned persons, and action will be taken against those who admit those persons under the warrants to arrest.

1. U Saw Shar Phong Uwa, son of U Naw Htwel, 3/Bha-Ah-Na (C) 169831, CRPH representative member, Ywama Ward, Eindu Model Village, Hpa-an Township



2. U Zay Latt, son of U Nyunt Aung, 7/Pa-Kha-Na (C) 176215, CRPH representative member, Ward 2 of Okta Myothit, Bago



3. U Win Naing, son of U Mya Maung, 1/Ma-Ta-Ka (C) 004809, CRPH representative member, Namti, Mogaung Township



4. U Naing Htoo Aung, son of U Aye Swe, 9/Na-Hta-Ka (C) 131228, CRPH representative member, Ward 3, Natogyi Township



5. U Myo Naing, son of U San Aye, 9/Ma-Ra-Ma (C) 021317, CRPH representative member, Seiktaramahi Ward, Chanayethazan Township



6. Daw Myat Thida Tun, daughter of U Ngwe Myint, 10/Tha-Pha-Ra (C) 093046, CRPH representative member, Sathhit Ward, Thanbyu-zayat



7. Daw Phyu Phyu Thin, daughter of U Hla Tun, 12/U-Ka-Ta (C) 108850, CRPH representative member, Ward 7, South Okkalapa Township



8. U Tun Myint, son of U Tin Htut, 12/Ba-Ha-Na (C) 086035, CRPH representative member, Bo Sein Hman Ward, Bahan Township



9. U Wai Phyo Aung, son of U Tin Win, 12/Tha-Ka-Ta (C) 138269, CRPH representative member, South 4 Ward, Thakayta Township



10. Daw Zin Mar Aung, daughter of U Aung Kyi, 12/U-Ka-Ta (C) 019919, CRPH representative member, Ward 3, Yankin Township



11. U Lwin Ko Latt, son of U Hla Win, 12/Tha-La-Na (C) 008396, CRPH representative member, Thahtaykwin Village, Thanlyin Township



12. U Nay Myo (aka) U Win (aka) Myint Oo, son of U Kyi, 13/Nya-Ra-Na (C) 057829, CRPH representative member, Nandawun 6 Ward, Nyaungshwe Township



13. U Zaw Min Thein, son of U Ngwe Shein, 14/La-Ma-Na (C) 053024, CRPH representative member, Zaytalay Ward, Laymyethna Township



14. U Yi Mon (aka) Maung Tin Thit, son of U Kyaw Swe, 9/Pa-Ma-Na (C) 131895, CRPH representative member, Ward 3, Kyitaungkan, Pobbathiri Township



15. U Okkar Min, son of U Myint Soe, 6/Ma-Ma-Na (C) 114942, CRPH representative member, Theinnyinaung Road, Kanpya Ward, Myeik Township



Police seize homemade weapons

The rioters attempted to kill the security forces in some townships of regions and states. They also created weapons to use in riots. Therefore, the security forces conducted the investigation in relevant areas to take action, according to the Myanmar Police Force's statement.

According to the tip-off, the police raided the U Myint Tun workshop in Kawthoung at 3:45 pm on 22 March and found Zaw Myo (aka) Ko Ko Nge, aged 35, son of U Thein Myint, who lives in Pat Kalar of Shwe Hinthath Ward of Kawthoung, and seized harpoon, stick with pipe, knives, dagger, four-finger ring buckle, jingalis, foldable knife and gas mask.

Similarly, the security forces also arrested Than Lwin Oo (aka) Lwin Lwin, aged 40, son of U Si Kin Si, Aung Naing Soe, aged 20, son of U Kyaw Shwe, Kaung Kyaw Htet, aged 15, son of U Than Lwin, Aung Myo Oo, aged 18 son of U Khin Maung Oo, Sit Phyo Paing, aged 18, son of U Zaw Naing and Ma Juu Myat Myat Moe, aged 21, daughter of U Hla Thein at the house of Than Lwin Oo located on Paw Oo road of Aye Yeik Nyein Ward of Kawthoung at 9 am on 23 March together with harmful things such as Molotov, packages containing the bottles of petrol, diesel and engine oil, gas mask, catapults, marbles, handmade smoke bombs and so on.

Then, the security forces also arrested Aung Win Htike, aged 38, son of U Aung Zaw, Nay Lin Oo, aged 27, son of U Ba Shwe and Yin Aung, aged 30, son of U Bo Wa at the house



Rioters are arrested and riot equipment and handmade arms are seized.



Rioters are arrested and riot equipment and handmade arms are seized.



of Aung Win Htike on Paw Oo road of Aye Yeik Nyein Ward at about 11:30 am on the same day together with handmade air gun and other materials to make weapons.

The security forces also detained Kyaw Win, aged 65, son of U Tun Ya, at his house located on Paw Oo road of Aye Yeik Nyein Ward at about 12noon and Maung Maung, aged 65, son of U Ohn Kywal, at his home at about 12:50 pm together with Molotov, harpoons and other materials to create weapons.

They arrested Su Naing Myo, daughter of U Moe Thee

and Aung Zaw Myo, son of U Soe Myint in Panan Village of Kyaukse Township of Mandalay, together with gas bottles and handmade air guns on 21 March, while Zaw Moe Lwin, son of U Aung Myint Sein from Pan Taw Pin Village of Min Hla was arrested together with small weapons on 22 March, Zwe Lin Pyo (aka) Ko Zwe, son of U Myo Myint Thein from No (3) Ward of Kume Township was detained yesterday morning together with handmade air gun and iron balls, Thant Zin Aung, son of U Bo Lay Ko also arrested together with handmade smoke

bomb, hand speakers and other materials in front of Shit Myat Hnar Monastery in Sone Kone of No (4) Ward in NyaungU and Myat Noe Oo, daughter of U Ye Htay from No (2) Ward also arrested together with handmade shields at her house.

The security forces also arrested U Myo Kyi and his son U Kaung Htet Myo Kyi at their house in South Okkalapa Township of Yangon Region together with handmade sound bomb made of PVC, knife, jingalis and other materials yesterday morning.

Likewise, U Moe Kyaw Thu,

son of U Maung Bo from Hlegu Township, was also arrested with weapons including knives, spears and jingalis.

The security forces seized steel shields, scabbard and other materials to be used in riots from religious Hlaw and Twal Lat Myar Parahita's office located at the corner of Baho and Mya Thida streets in Mya Thida Ward, Pyin Ma Pin Village in Mingalardon Township yesterday.

The police will take action against those arrested together with homemade weapons. —MNA

Angry protestors attack security forces in Mandalay



Riotous protestors attack security forces.

ABOUT 150 angry protestors made roadblocks and set tires on fire on public roads on 105th street between 52nd and 53rd streets in Chanmyathazi Township of Mandalay Region yesterday evening, and the security forces removed these roadblocks due to the report.

When the security removed and dispersed the crowd in accordance with the law, the angry rioters attacked the security forces with handmade guns, sticks, knives and jingalis. Some of the members, including one official of security forces, were injured.

During that moment, there were more than 100 Tatmadaw men and about 100 police holding riot control weapons. Therefore,

such a situation can cause enormous casualties as their officer was injured.

Similarly, two police died in Dabayin, one security force member was killed in Hninsi Housing of Aungmyethazan of Mandalay, and four police members in Thanlyin Township faced tortured, and two police sergeants of Pyin Oo Lwin, one police of Mawlamyine and another five police members of Chanmyathazi also faced brutalities.

Then, one acting head of Kyauktada Township police station was also killed, one police second lieutenant died and three injured due to the shots by protestors in Bago, four military members, including officers, were

killed in Pekon, Ma Win Thandar Swe, wife of the military officer in Hlinethaya Township, was also killed. So these cases can irk the security forces. If they use their weapons carelessly due to anger, those who committed such crimes might face casualties.

But, the security forces maintained the situation as per the directives of the State Administration Council, 1956 crowd and riot manual, 2015 crowd control manual of Myanmar Police Force.

Therefore, the security forces detained 45 men participating in the riot on 105th street between 52nd and 53rd streets in Chanmyathazi Township without any injuries to conduct further investigations, it is learnt. —MNA

Paris metro operator sued over air pollution

A French air quality association has filed a complaint against the Paris metro operator accusing it of downplaying pollution risks for public transport users, who are unwittingly exposed to dangerous levels of harmful compounds.

The Respire (“Breathe”) group said it filed its suit in Paris on Monday after its own analyses at several stations, as well as pollution readings by the state-owned RATP operator, had revealed alarming levels of particle pollution in recent years.

It alleged that the RATP was refusing to provide commuters with data showing the true pollution risks, “which constitute aggravated deceit and causing unintentional injuries.”

Some four million people use the metro system each day, and the RATP employs tens of thousands of drivers and other workers.

The concentration of fine particles, which can penetrate deep into a person’s lungs, are



A French air quality association has filed a complaint against the Paris metro operator accusing it of downplaying pollution risks for public transport users, who are unwittingly exposed to dangerous levels of harmful compounds. **PHOTO: AFP**

compounded by limited ventilation as well as the braking action on the trains’ metal wheels.

“The RATP practices a sort of omerta on air pollution in the metro. It pretends there’s no problem, but it needs to tell people the truth. Its denial is a key part of the problem,” Respire’s director Olivier Blond said in a statement.

Contacted by AFP, the RATP contested the pollution

levels cited by Respire, saying the organisation used portable, non-certified measuring equipment whose readings could not be compared with its own.

It also insisted that it was investing in its ventilation systems and experimenting with air treatment technologies as well as “electronic braking” that would release fewer fine particles as trains enter stations. —AFP ■

Fire, wind and water: The new normal in a land Down Under



This latest disaster in the Windsor area in northwestern Sydney -- which hit during government-imposed travel restrictions to prevent the spread of coronavirus -- was not unexpected. **PHOTO: AFP**

SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD Rory Kirkland has lived in Australia for three years, but he has already experienced the full range of the country’s extreme weather, from searing heat to un-

precedented bushfires and now floodwaters lapping the door of his family home.

Most of the year, the Hawkesbury River meanders calmly through the sandstone

escarpment, valleys and lush farmland of Australia’s east coast before it merges with the South Pacific.

But a week-long downpour has swollen the 16-million-year-old watercourse and several nearby rivers into 13-metre (43-foot) high mud-brown torrents.

The floodwaters have been laden with leaves, branches, plastic bags, sewage, cars, shipping containers -- and at least one house.

“This is my front garden,” says a welly-clad Kirkland gesturing to a handful of treetops jutting out of what looks like a vast inland lake.

“That tree is about eight or nine-foot (three metres) tall, so you can see there is only a foot of tree left. The water has come right up.” —AFP ■

Yemen’s Socotra archipelago awaits ecotourists

WITH its lush landscape, distinctive trees, unique animals and turquoise waters home to dolphins, Yemen is hoping its Socotra archipelago will become a dream destination despite the country’s nightmarish conflict.

Lying in the Indian Ocean some 200 kilometres (120 miles) off the Yemeni coast, the four islands and two rocky islets are home to some 50,000 people and have remained relatively untouched by the war that has devastated the mainland.

While most of Yemen is embroiled in a conflict that erupted in 2014 between Huthi rebels and the government -- plus the ravages of the coronavirus pandemic -- adven-

turous travellers are showing a growing interest in visiting Socotra.

Many set off from the wealthy United Arab Emirates, which is close to the authorities that control the islands.

“Fortunately, Socotra has never been affected by the war dynamics of the Yemeni mainland,” local travel agency Welcome to Socotra told AFP.

“No tensions or fights have ever been reported, hence there is no reason for tourists to worry.”

Since flights resumed with a chartered Air Arabia aircraft once a week from Abu Dhabi, the agency has received “hundreds” of requests, it said. — AFP ■



Dragon’s blood (*Dracaena cinnabari*) trees at the top of Dixam mountain on the Yemeni island of Socotra. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

‘Catastrophic’ Australia floods prompt helicopter rescues

Helicopters and boats were deployed to rescue residents stranded by “catastrophic” floods in eastern Australia Tuesday, as authorities warned more areas were now under threat.

A relentless week-long downpour has soaked most of New South Wales, causing surging rivers to burst their banks; swallowing homes, roads, bridges and farmland.

Strained emergency services -- which just one year ago were battling drought and unprecedented bushfires -- used military aircraft and watersports equipment to access cut-off communities.

So far, around 850 people have been winched or ferried to safety, but tens of thousands have been told to flee their homes and wild weather has spread to more inland areas.

In hard-hit Windsor, near Sydney, residents traversed the murky debris-strewn torrent on jet skis and other vessels normally seen off the city’s golden beaches. —AFP ■

UK unemployment dips to 5% – official data

BRITAIN'S unemployment rate dipped to 5.0 per cent in the three months to the end of January, remaining close to five-year highs on the fallout from the coronavirus pandemic, official data showed on Tuesday.

The rate compared with 5.1 per cent in the three months to the end of December, the Office for National Statistics said in a statement.

"The UK unemployment rate, in the three months to January 2021, was estimated at 5.0 per cent, 1.1 percentage points higher than a year earlier," the ONS said.

Analysts said that while the rate had steadied thanks to the UK government's jobs support package paying the bulk of wages for millions of private-sector workers, unemployment was set to shoot higher once the taps are turned off.

"The stability of the unemployment rate at... 5.0 per cent in January highlights once again the extent to which the government's job furlough scheme has protected jobs during the pandemic," noted Ruth Gregory, senior UK economist at Capital Economics research group.—AFP ■

US new home sales plunge 18.2% in February: govt

SALES of new homes in the United States plunged in February, government data said on Tuesday, as bad winter weather chilled the hot housing market.

Sales decreased 18.2 percent from January's upwardly revised rate to a seasonally adjusted rate of 775,000 annualized, much worse than analysts had expected and the worst reading since May of last year.

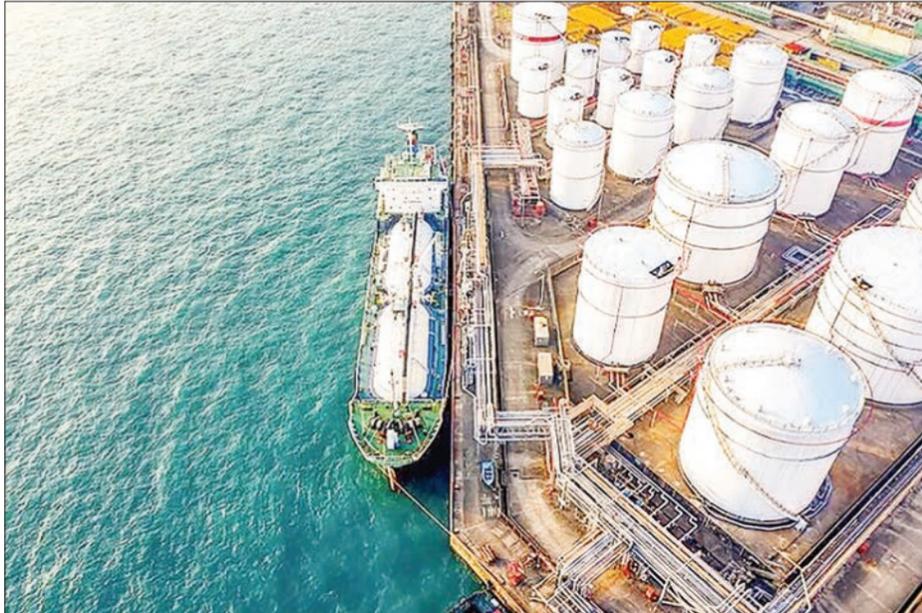
Real estate has been in high demand even as the Covid-19 pandemic harmed the wider US economy, and analysts said the sharp decline in

sales last month was partly due to tightening inventory and rising prices that kept some buyers away.

But the decline was sharpened by poor winter weather, which also caused drops in homebuilding and existing home sales.

"Winter weather probably depressed sales as sales fell sharply in all regions. We look for new home sales to moderate over the course of 2021 as high prices crimp affordability, but still look for sales to be up about four percent for the year," Nancy Vanden Houten of Oxford Economics said.—AFP ■

Oil prices slump on renewed lockdowns



Oil Storage tank in the port in Tsing Yi, Hong Kong. PHOTO: AFP

OIL prices slumped Tuesday on lower demand prospects as Europe's biggest economy Germany said it would reimpose strict coronavirus containment measures and struggles along with other EU nations to roll out vaccines.

European stock markets were mixed and US

stock indices drifted lower after sharp losses in Asia. On currency markets, the Turkish lira stabilised a day after plunging in reaction to news that President Recep Tayyip Erdogan sacked the country's market-friendly central bank chief, raising concerns about another round

of financial turbulence. Germany will meanwhile enter a strict shutdown for five days over Easter amid surging virus rates, Chancellor Angela Merkel and regional leaders agreed Tuesday.

Neighbouring France should be vaccinating "morning, noon and

evening", President Emmanuel Macron said as he tackles criticism that the Covid-19 immunisation drive has been too slow. France is facing a third wave of infections but is lagging behind many Western countries in terms of the number of people vaccinated. Events in Europe are "hurting demand projections for crude oil", noted ThinkMarkets analyst Fawad Razaqzada.

"Everything else being equal, it means that growth will be slower to pick up and inflationary pressures are likely to be weaker than previously thought." Across the Atlantic, the focus is on the first joint congressional testimony by Federal Reserve boss Jerome Powell and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, who were due Tuesday to answer questions on their policy response to the pandemic.—AFP ■

Asian markets drop as inflation spectre hangs

ASIAN markets fell on Tuesday as investors extended recent sell-offs owing to long-running fears that the expected global recovery will force central banks to wind down their easy-money programmes earlier than hoped.

While Wall Street provided a positive lead with all three main indexes posting healthy gains,

there is a reluctance on trading floors to push a year-long rally any further, while a stuttering vaccine roll-out and new lockdowns in Europe are adding to the angst.

Focus this week will be on the first joint congressional testimony by Federal Reserve boss Jerome Powell and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen,

who will answer questions on their policy response to the pandemic.

It comes as markets are rattled by a sharp rise in US Treasury yields in recent weeks that have been fuelled by bets that the forecast strong bounce in economic activity this year will fan inflation and force the bank to lift interest rates before

2024, as it has indicated.

The pair have repeatedly said they do not see the spike in inflation lasting and will maintain ultra-loose monetary policies – including record-low rates – until they have a grip on unemployment, and price rises are above two percent for an extended period.—AFP ■

Myanma Port Authority "Notice of High Tide"

Exceptionally high spring from 20.08 feet to 20.14 feet high above the chart datum are expected to occur in Yangon River during the period of March 30th to March 31st, 2020. Please be noted that it is not serious level of tide because the highest tide level have reached up to 22 feet above the chart datum in year 2014 and 2015, and this notice is normally issued whenever high tide of Yangon River is expected to reach over 20 feet high above the chart datum in order to take precautionary measures to the public living near river foreshore area of Yangon City.

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry No.3 Heavy Industrial Enterprise Invitation for Expression of Interest (EoI)

No.(7) Textile Factory (Myitha) is located near by Lan Khwa Village, beyond the Mile-Post No. (387/10) Myittha Township, Kyaukse District, Mandalay Division of Myanmar. The Government of Myanmar through the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry is willing to invite EoI proposal form interested local and international companies for yarn production and upgrading of spinning machineries for Public-Private-Partnership.

The interested companies can get these EoI form during office hours at Planning Development, No. 3 Heavy Industrial Enterprise, Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry, Office No.37, Naypyitaw and Textile Mill Branch, No. (1), Thukhawadi Street, (6) Quarter, Yankin Township, Yangon:

- (a) Available date for Eor Form - (31-3-2021) to (28-5-2021)
- (b) Deadline for submission of EoI - (31-5-2021) (16:00hr)

For further detail information, please inquiry phone no. 95-67-408185, 95-67-408156, 95-67-408338 and email: textile.planning@gmail.com during office hours.

No. 3 Heavy Industrial Enterprise
Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry

The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry No.3 Heavy Industrial Enterprise Invitation for Expression of Interest (EoI)

No.(8) Textile Factory (Pyawbwe) is located near by Pyi Tha Ya Quarter, (9) Street, Infront of Mya Kyaing Taung Pagoda, About 500.8 km (313 miles) far from Yangon, Pyawbwe Township, Yamethin District Mandalay Division of Myanmar. The Government of Myanmar through the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry is willing to invite EoI proposal form interested local and international companies for yarn production and upgrading of spinning machineries for Public-Private-Partnership.

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Israel voters take fourth shot at deciding Netanyahu's fate



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his wife Sara cast their ballots at a polling station in Jerusalem. PHOTO:AFP

ISRAELIS were voting Tuesday in their fourth election in less than two years, with the nation deeply split on whether veteran Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should remain in power.

Election workers in full Covid protective gear staffed polling stations for voters currently in quarantine – but thanks to a world-leading vaccination effort most citizens wore only face masks.

Netanyahu, 71, is Israel's longest-serving premier and its most popular politician, but his inability to unite a stable governing majority behind him has mired the country in unprecedented political gridlock.

He hopes to be rewarded by voters for the campaign that has inoculated half of Israel's roughly nine million people against the coronavirus, a pace envied by much of the world, and

for striking historic diplomatic normalization deals with several Arab states.

But while his right-wing Likud party appears set to win the most seats, Netanyahu will need coalition partners to secure a majority in the 120-seat Knesset.

That means Israel is looking at three possible outcomes: another coalition under Netanyahu who has been in power for 12 straight years, an ideologically divided government united only by its opposition to him, or a looming fifth election. As he cast his ballot in Jerusalem, Netanyahu voiced hope for an end to the gridlock, saying: "I hope this is the last election".—AFP ■

Norway vetoes sale of Rolls-Royce unit to Russian group

NORWAY said on Tuesday it would block Rolls-Royce's sale of a Norwegian engine maker to Russia over concerns that Moscow could get its hands on sensitive technology.

The Scandinavian country, a NATO member, two weeks ago asked Rolls-Royce to temporarily halt the sale of Bergen Engines while it examined the consequences a sale would have on national security.

"We now have enough information to conclude that it is absolutely necessary to prevent the sale of the company to a company controlled by a country with which we have no cooperation in

the field of security," Justice and Public Security Minister Monica Maeland said on Tuesday.

In a statement, the Norwegian government explained that "the technology used by Bergen Engines and the engines it manufactures would be of great military importance to Russia.

"It would strengthen Russia's military capacity in a way that would clearly be contrary to the best interests of the Norwegian and allied security policy," it said.

Bergen Engines, which employs 950 people, has been part of Rolls-Royce since 1999, servicing engines for Norwegian Navy



Norway, a NATO member, two weeks ago asked Rolls-Royce to temporarily halt the sale of Bergen Engines while it examined the consequences a sale would have on national security. PHOTO:AFP

vessels and, according to local media reports, for the top-secret intelligence gathering ship *Marjata*. The veto risks angering Moscow.

On March 9, when the sale was temporarily halted, the Russian embassy in Oslo criticized the "anti-Russian implications" of the decision.—AFP ■

Dozens die in migrant ship fire off Libya: charity

ROUGHLY 60 migrants are presumed dead after their boat engine caught fire off the Libyan coast during an attempted Mediterranean crossing, a rescue charity said on Tuesday.

Alarm Phone, a volunteer-run Mediterranean rescue hotline, said it had spoken to survivors of the March 18 accident in which the engine of a wooden boat carrying more than 100 people caught fire.

"Several survivors reported to Alarm Phone that there had been more victims than survivors," the group said in a statement.

Also on Tuesday, European humanitarian group SOS Mediterranee said Italy would allow 116 migrants to leave its



File photo. Rescued migrants sit aboard a Libyan coastguard vessel upon its arrival at the capital Tripoli's naval base. PHOTO:AFP

Ocean Viking ship after they were rescued in two operations last week off the coast of Libya.

"Relief on board the Ocean Viking after several days of bad

weather. The Italian authorities have allocated the port of Augusta, in Sicily, for the disembarkation of 116 rescued people," the charity wrote on

Twitter.

More than 1,200 migrants died last year trying to reach Europe by crossing the Mediterranean, according to the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Since January, 295 migrants have died or gone missing while trying to make the journey.

Alarm Phone said they were initially contacted by someone on the boat and Libyan authorities told them shortly after that 45 people had been rescued and five bodies retrieved.

But the charity said witness testimony they gathered suggested about 60 people were missing and presumed dead.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

14 jihadists sentenced to death over plot to kill Bangladesh PM

FOURTEEN jihadists were sentenced to death in Bangladesh on Tuesday for attempting to assassinate Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina more than two decades ago, a prosecutor said.

The 2000 bomb plot was one of several attempts on Hasina's life in a wave of violence by Islamic extremists who were angry at her secular stance at the time.

Since then, a major crackdown against homegrown Islamist groups has seen more than 100 extremists killed in raids by police and more than 1,000 suspected militants arrested.

A fast-track court handed down death sentences to all 14 accused -- five of them absconding -- after they were found guilty of sedition and criminal conspiracy, prosecutor Abu Abdullah Bhuiyan told AFP.

They planted two bombs in the grounds of a college where Hasina was due to address a rally. The devices were discovered and defused.—AFP ■

Ethiopia's PM Abiy admits Eritrean forces are in Tigray

ETHIOPIAN Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed admitted Tuesday that troops from neighbouring Eritrea were present in the conflict-torn Tigray region and suggested they may have been involved in abuses against civilians.

The admission comes after months of denials from Addis Ababa and Asmara, despite mounting accusations from rights groups and residents that soldiers from neighbouring Eritrea had carried out massacres in Tigray.

Abiy sent troops into the semi-autonomous region of Tigray on November 4 after he blamed the state ruling party, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), for attacks on federal army camps.—AFP ■

Five dead in stampede while mourning Tanzania's Magufuli

A woman and four children were killed in a stampede in Tanzania as crowds rushed to mourn Tanzania's late president John Magufuli at the weekend, a relative told AFP on Tuesday.

A second woman was also missing after going to Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Sunday, where tens of thousands gathered to mourn Magufuli whose sudden death after a mysterious short illness was announced last week.

"They went to bid farewell at the stadium, but it turned tragic when there was a stampede," Gerald Mtuwa, a relative of the dead woman, told AFP by phone from Dar es Salaam. The children were aged between five and 12 years old, he said. The woman killed was mother to two of them, while the other two were her nephews. Mtuwa said the family has checked



A man reads a newspaper with a headline announcing the death of Tanzania's President John Magufuli in Dar es Salaam, on March 18, 2021. PHOTO: AFP

hospitals and morgues in the financial capital for the missing woman, but she has not been found and the family fear the worst. The stampede occurred as mourners crammed the streets around the

stadium where Magufuli's casket was in state at the weekend. The government announced on March 17 that Magufuli, 61, had died from a long-running heart condition and declared 21 days of mourning.

But the announcement followed a mysterious absence of almost three weeks and questions remain over the true cause of his death, which the opposition has said was from Covid-19. —AFP ■

Banksy painting to raise millions for UK health service

A painting by UK street artist Banksy is expected to raise millions of pounds for the staff of Britain's state-run National Health Service (NHS) at auction on Tuesday.

The painting by the elusive artist, titled "Game Changer", first appeared at Southampton General Hospital on England's south coast, during the first wave of the global health crisis last May.

The black-and-white painting shows a small boy playing with a nurse

doll wearing a mask and a cape. Spiderman and Batman superhero toys lie discarded in a bin behind him.

The artist — who first emerged out of Bristol's graffiti scene in south-west England in the 1990s -- left a note with the painting thanking hospital staff for their work battling the pandemic.

"Thanks for all you're doing. I hope this brightens up the place a bit, even if it's only in black and white," he wrote. — AFP ■



The artist left a note with the painting thanking hospital staff for their work battling the pandemic. PHOTO: AFP

Mass shooting at Colorado grocery store



An ambulance leaves the parking lot of the King Soopers grocery store in Boulder, Colorado. PHOTO: AFP

A gunman killed at least 10 people including a police officer at a grocery store in Colorado on Monday, police said, in the latest shooting to hit the western state -- scene of two of the most infamous US mass murders.

The shooter is being held in custody and was injured, said Michael Dougherty, district attorney for Boulder County, located 30 miles (50 kilo-

metres) northwest of the state capital Denver.

Among those dead was "heroic" police officer Eric Talley, 51, who was the first to respond to the scene at a King Soopers supermarket, said police chief Maris Herold.

"We know of 10 fatalities at the scene, including one of our Boulder PD officers... Officer Talley responded to the scene — was first on the scene

— and he was fatally shot," said Herold. Live-streamed video earlier had showed a white middle-aged man — shirtless and seemingly covered in blood— detained by police and led from the supermarket.

The suspect in custody was the only person suffering "serious injuries at this point," said police commander Kerry Yamaguchi, without confirming that the man in the video was the suspect, or any possible motive.

President Joe Biden -- who last month called on Congress to enact "commonsense" gun law reforms -- had been briefed on the shooting, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki tweeted.

Majority leader Chuck Schumer said the Senate "must and will move forward on legislation to help stop the epidemic of gun violence." —AFP ■

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Referees prepare for FIFA Futsal World Cup 2021

REFEREES from across the globe, including ASEAN and Asian regions, are now preparing for the upcoming FIFA Futsal World Cup 2021, which is scheduled to be held from 12 September to 3 October 2021, according to the football authorities.

Special decisions for the work parts of the tourney were made by the FIFA Referee Committee Chairman Pierluigi Collina and FIFA Director of Refereeing Massimo Busacca, according to the Asian Football Confederation. Ahead of the tourney, Brian Hall, member

of FIFA's Referees Committee supervising Futsal said, "The Road to Lithuania 2021 is a first in the preparation of FIFA's best Futsal referees and speaks highly of FIFA's focus to provide the highest quality officials for their top Futsal competition".

"It highlights FIFA's commitment to providing only the best referees for the Futsal World Cup. Every effort is being made to engage the pool of referee candidates almost nine months prior to the first match. As the referees begin their journey on the Road to Lith-

uania, they will be challenged both mentally and physically, and they will need to earn the right to step on the pitch in Lithuania. The aim is to reach uniformity and consistency in their way of officiating games and in taking decisions", Brian Hall added. —GNLM ■

European teams start World Cup qualifying campaign amid COVID chaos



Kylian Mbappe and France begin their defence of the World Cup trophy against Ukraine as European qualifying begins despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic. **PHOTO: AFP**

PARIS – Holders France begin their defence of the World Cup this week as European qualifying for the 2022 finals in Qatar gets underway against a backdrop of confusion and chaos over the release of players in a worrying health context across the continent.

While this month's scheduled qualifiers in South America were called off and most matches

in Asia were postponed, players in Europe are having to work their way around travel restrictions to join up with national teams. FIFA's decision to relax rules forcing clubs to release players during an international window remains in place until the end of April, with world football's governing body unable to ignore the wider context of the COVID-19 crisis.

The consequences of that have largely been confusion and plenty of backtracking by clubs and authorities in recent days.

Winners in 2018, France host Ukraine behind closed doors on Thursday before flying 5,500 kilometres to Kazakhstan and stopping off on the way back in Sarajevo for another game against Bosnia and Herzegovina. —AFP ■

Solskjaer blames fatigue for Man Utd's FA Cup exit

LEICESTER, UNITED KINGDOM— Ole Gunnar Solskjaer defended his decision to field a weakened team as Manchester United crashed out of the FA Cup with a 3-1 quarter-final defeat at Leicester early yesterday. Solskjaer made five changes from the United side that beat AC Milan in the Europa League last-16 second leg on Thursday.

Paul Pogba was back in the starting line-up but Bruno Fernandes was left on the bench until the second half,

while Marcus Rashford was missing from the squad.

United responded to the switches with a lethargic display as they were beaten for the first time in 30 domestic away games. Mason Greenwood cancelled out Kelechi Iheanacho's opener, but second-half goals from Youri Tielemans and Iheanacho killed off United.

It leaves Solskjaer with only the Europa League left as a realistic opportunity to win the first silverware of his reign as United boss. —AFP ■



Manchester United's caretaker manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer. **PHOTO: AFP**

Del Potro targets Tokyo with fourth knee operation



Argentina's Juan Martin del Potro is to have a fourth operation on his right knee in a bid to be fit for the Tokyo Olympics. **PHOTO: AFP**

LOS ANGELES — JUAN Martin del Potro said Monday he will undergo a fourth operation on his right knee in a bid to be fit for the Olympic Games tennis tournament in Tokyo.

The 32-year-old Argentine star, winner of 22 ATP titles including the 2009 US Open championship, has not played since June 2019 after fracturing his kneecap at the Queen's Club Championships in London.

Del Potro, winner of a bronze medal at the 2012 Olympics and silver four years later in Rio, said in a statement on social media that he would undergo surgery in Chicago on Tuesday.

"I've been consulting Dr. Jorge Chahla and the news is that tomorrow I'll undergo another surgery on my knee," del Potro wrote.

"We've tried conservative therapy but the pain is still there. (Dr Chahla) knows I want to play tennis again and be able to play the Olympics, so we agreed that surgery should be done as soon as possible.

"I hope I can overcome this painful situation. I won't stop trying."

Del Potro has undergone three operations to his knee since his injury at Queen's, in June 2019, January 2020 and August 2020. —AFP ■