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Tatmadaw Hluttaw reps tested for COVID-19 ahead of parliament

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Press briefing held on completion of 19th UPDJC

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Union-level Peace Dialogue Joint Committee holds meeting two days ahead of Union Peace Conference



State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi speaks during the UPDJC meeting on preparations for 21st Century Panglong Conference at the Ruby Hall of Myanmar International Convention Centre-I in Nay Pyi Taw on 17 August 2020. PHOTO: MNA

THE Union-level Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) held the 19th meeting yesterday to discuss preparations for the 21st-Century Panglong Conference which is scheduled for 19 August. State Counsellor Daw Aung

San Suu Kyi, in her capacity as the Chairperson of the Union-level Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC), delivered a speech at the meeting at the Ruby Hall of Myanmar International Convention Centre-I yesterday. (The Speech of State Coun-

sellor is covered on page 4). UPDJC Vice-Chairperson Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong UPDJC Vice-Chairperson Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong said that despite the COVID-19 crisis, the meeting was held be-

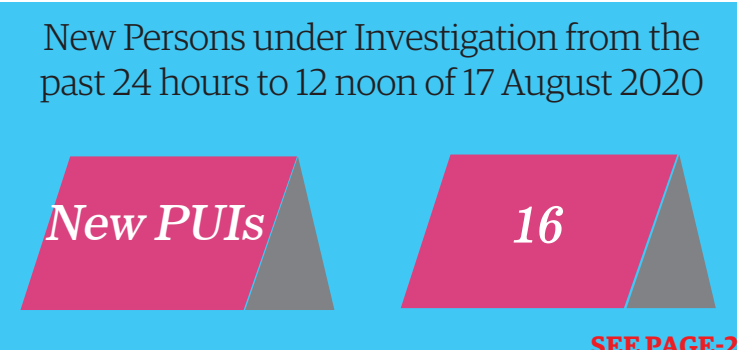
cause peace is significant for the country. He said that primary duty of UPDJC is to supervise political dialogues at various levels in accordance with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, and the main objective of the political dialogues is to build a union

based on democracy and federal system. He stressed that it is the responsibility of the UPDJC to formulate necessary democratic principles and federal principles to form a Democratic Federal Union.

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One new case of COVID-19 in Myanmar reported on 17 August, total figure reaches 376

Updated at 8 pm, 17 August 2020



SEE PAGE-2

"People are the key"

Union Supreme Court sits on appeal cases

THE Union Supreme Court passed judgements on six special civil appeal cases and heard six special civil appeal cases yesterday.

Chief Justice of the Union U Htun Htun Oo and Union Supreme Court Judges U Mya Han and U Myo Win led the judgements at Union Supreme Court room number 1. —MNA ■

4th session of Union Peace Conference opening ceremony to be broadcast live

OPENING ceremony of the 4th session of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong will be held at Myanmar International Convention Centre II (MICC-II) in Nay Pyi Taw on 19 August morning. From 9:45 am on that day, the opening ceremony will be broadcast live by MRTV, MITV, MNTV, Channel 9, Up to Date, One News, MWD, MWD (Variety), DVB, Mizzima, YTV, Myanma Radio, Myanmar State Counsellor Office Facebook page, NRPC Facebook page, MOI Facebook page, MRTV Facebook page, Myanmar Digital News Facebook page, and Skynet DTH Facebook page. —MNA (Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

Section 59 (g) in Hluttaw Election Law

IN accordance with section 59 (g) of the Hluttaw Election Law, no one is allowed to vote more than once in any election for a Hluttaw constituency in which he or she has the right to vote. Anyone who is found guilty of or abetting this act shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year, or with fine not exceeding K100,000 (one hundred thousand Kyats), or with both.



Union Minister for Information meets representatives from music industry

UNION Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint held a meeting with the representatives from Myanmar Music Association, Myanmar Performance Rights Organization, and Myanmar Music Production Organization at the MRTV office in Yangon yesterday.

The Union Minister first delivered the opening speech at the meeting, followed by discussions of Chairman U Tin Oo Lay, Vice-Chairman (1) U Lwin Myint, Vice-Chairman (3) U Soe Moe, General Secretary U Zaw Htoo Aung and Treasurer U Maung Maung Htaik of Myanmar Music Association, Chairman U Myint Moh Aung of Myanmar Performance Rights Organization, and Chairman U Ko Ko Lwin of Myanmar Music Production Organization about the organizational guidelines for



Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint speaks at the meeting with representatives from Myanmar Music Association, Myanmar Performance Rights Organization, and Myanmar Music Production Organization at the MRTV office in Yangon on 17 August 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

Myanmar Music Association, copyright issues, office space for temporary CMOs, and distribution of music albums. MRTV Director-General U Ye Naing made additional comments, and the Union Minister concluded the meeting with his closing speech.

The meeting was attended by officials from the Ministry of Information, Vice-Chairman (2) Daw L Khun Yi, Joint Secretary (2) U Hla Aye, Joint Secretary (3) U Min Zaw, and Manager U Nyunt Hlaing Hlaing from Myanmar Music Association.

In the afternoon, the Union Minister visited the Copy Rights and Registration Division under the IPRD in Win Gabar Street, Bahan Township, and met with its staff. He instructed them on media literacy and ethics, copyrights on literary works, and the development of new media.

The Union Minister also inspected the building slated for the committee on forming the Collective Management Organizations for Copyright in the compound of Copy Rights and Registration Division. —MNA ■ (Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

One new case of COVID-19 in Myanmar reported on 17 August, total figure reaches 376

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases reached 376 after 1 new case was reported on 17 August according to Ministry of Health and Sports. The case No. 376 returned from Singapore. Out of the 376 confirmed cases, six died, 331 have recovered, 321 have been discharged from hospitals and 16 were held under investigation.—MNA ■

FROM PAGE-1

One new COVID-19 case on 17 August 2020: updated at 8 pm

Case No	Age	Gender	Address	Contact with positive patient	Overseas travel history	Hospital for medical treatment	Lab result	Remark
376	37	Male	Yesagyo Township, Magway Region	No	Yes, Singapore	Waibargi Specialist Hospital,	Positive	Held under quarantine (Mingaladon Township)

Ministry of Health and Sports

Elections are the foundation of democracy.

2020 MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY GENERAL ELECTION



Who is eligible to vote?

- irrespective of sex or religion
- those who are 18 years of age on the date of the election
- citizens, associate citizens, and those who have permission to become naturalized citizens, who do not contravene the provisions of the Hluttaw Election Law
- a person whose name has been included in the voting list of the respective constituency

Who is ineligible to vote?

- a member of a religious order
- person serving a prison sentence
- person adjudged to be of unsound mind as provided for in the relevant law
- person who has not yet been discharged as an insolvent
- person prohibited by the Election Law
- foreigner or person who has assumed foreign citizenship

2020

General Election
Sunday, 8 November 2020

DAYS

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Union-level Peace Dialogue Joint Committee holds meeting ...

FROM PAGE-1

He said that peace would be achieved and the 70-year armed conflict of Myanmar will end if a Democratic Federal Union can be built. He also pointed out that there were frequent obstacles in the ongoing political dialogue.

He believes peace will finally win, and overcome the worries, said Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong. He also called on all the participants to exert significant efforts to make peace with great determination.

UPDJC Vice-Chairperson U Thu Wai

UPDJC Vice-Chairperson U Thu Wai expressed thanks to the officials from the sides of the government and the EAOs for explanations about extraordinary situations related to peacemaking.

U Thu Wai urged all the participants to be united to get good results in making peace. He said that all of them have a big ambition to achieve lasting peace and to develop a democratic culture, so all must have the spirit of self-sacrifice and take risks. He highlighted that trying to establish nationwide peace is “exceptional work”. He said he wants all participants to be “exceptional men”, and urged the attendees to be proud of the Union.

The meeting then approved the dates for the peace conference and number of representatives who will attend, substituting UPDJC members, explained and put on record decisions made at the 9th JICM, and approved the content of Part III of the Union Accord including the NCA implementation framework, the table for progressive processes and



Union-level Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) discusses preparations for the 21st Century Panglong Conference at the Ruby Hall of Myanmar International Convention Centre-I on 17 August 2020. PHOTO: MNA

implementation steps beyond 2020, and the guiding principles for establishing a Union based on democracy and federalism.

The meeting also discussed the implementation process of sections 8, 11 and 12-(a) of the NCA which is included in the first section of Part III of the Union Accord, submitting reports from UPDJC and JMC to the peace conference, the daily programme and programme for the first day of the peace conference, conference moderators, dividing duties for the peace conference, and the list of rules for representatives to observe during the conference, among other general matters.

The Vice-Chairperson of the UPDJC, U Thu Wai, then delivered the closing speech. He said this UPDJC meeting was calm and admirable, and the State Counsellor’s address was supportive of the peace everyone is hoping. He said the comments from Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong were comprehensive and

filled with real advice for the Union and ethnic nationals.

U Thu Wai said he was pleased that the Union Peace Conference would be happening and the Union Government and all stakeholders were striving their best to achieve the peace that all the people of the nation had been waiting for a long time. He said we are now another step closer to the goal of national reconciliation and peace, but the peace process is still fraught with challenges at this time. He said everyone implementing the peace process have to accomplish more than doing the right or good thing as they require the approval of all stakeholders. He said they also need to possess honesty and the skill to explain things straightforwardly as we all work together towards peace.

UPDJC Vice-Chairperson Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong delivered a speech where he said this meeting was a success as it produced 9 points of agreement

and one matter put on record. He noted that former President U Thein Sein sent the invitation for peace back in 2011 and they accepted it after much deliberation. He said the Chin National Front was participating in this peace conference as they had decided to do so on November 2011. He said they had never wielded weapons and honestly prefer resolving political issues with political approaches. He said meeting face-to-face to address the nation’s issue is better than going to armed conflict.

UPDJC Vice-Chairperson Dr Tin Myo Win’s speech

UPDJC Vice-Chairperson Dr Tin Myo Win delivered an address where he said they unanimously approved of the 9 points of agreement at this UPDJC meeting. He said this is an example of the UPDJC’s resolve as it is tasked with the primary duty of ensuring the peace conference is successfully held from

19 to 21 August.

Dr Tin Myo Win said he first wants to talk about the political dialogue they have been working hard on. He said political dialogue is vital for ending armed conflict and achieving peace and national reconciliation. He said while the tripartite members of the UPDJC have held heated discussion from 2016 to now, there has been no loss of trust or respect as they are all working towards understanding and achieving peace.

He said the UPDJC has more to do to achieve national reconciliation and peace as the prolonged armed conflicts can make it harder to have detailed negotiations. He said armed conflicts would go down as more opportunities for political dialogue presents itself. He noted that the EAOs who have not arrived at the political dialogue would be further persuaded if the UPDJC produces more results.

SEE PAGE-4

Speech of State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in her capacity as the Chairperson of the Union-level Peace Dialogue Joint Committee at 19th meeting of UPDJC

Welcome and greet all the distinguished delegates who have come to attend this meeting. I extend Metta for your well-being and happiness.

From the time our Union Government was entrusted with the duty of government by the people, we have designated national reconciliation and peace as a priority and worked on this process. All of us, members of the UPDJC, have had several meetings and in order to solve our political problems, we formulated the “Framework for Political Dialogue” and have conducted different levels of political dialogues. Although the NCA (Nationwide Cease-fire Agreement) could not be amended, changed or inserted with supplements, we were able to make amendments to the Framework for Political Dialogue which came into being for the purpose of conducting political dialogues emerging out of the NCA. Based on the practical situations, we made changes to the Framework for Political Dialogue which was easy to amend and easy to change.

The first point I wish to talk about at today’s meeting is the role of the UPDJC. Our UPDJC, which has the duty to manage and guide the different levels of political dialogues, has been performing important historic tasks. Although we have the primary task of conducting political dialogues, we also had to consider the problems of ending armed conflicts that emerged together with political problems as well as national reconciliation. The success of the political dialogues which fall under the domain of the UPDJC depend on a large extent on the leaders and representatives of the various groups within the UPDJC. When you come to the political dialogues for negotiations, you need to participate in real negotiations. If people cling firmly to their own policies and beliefs without any “give and take” or compromise, the true essence of the UPDJC would be brought to nought. It is natural for representatives of different groups to have different opinions, different points of view and different aspirations. That is the reason why armed conflicts have emerged from different political beliefs leading to the perpetuation of this prolonged cycle of woe and misery.

In our efforts to find a solution to our political problems, we need to have the ability to conduct our negotiations based on patience, forbearance, and mutual trust. It is also important to understand, know and feel from the heart and share the suspicions, mistrusts and pains which have taken root as a result of long years of different political beliefs. The main point is that the delegates who are participating in political negotiations should be able to look towards the interest of the whole Union, the interests of all ethnic nationals, and the interests of future generations. In conducting negotiations, just as it is necessary to be able to have a spirit of give and take and exercise flexibility, it is also very important to have an indomitable spirit, courage and firm determination as we march towards the Democratic Federal Union.

The second point is the goal of our Union. The NLD has already confirmed that only a federal Union could ensure peace. Building a Democratic Federal Union has been a common goal for the Union. Both democratic reform and development of the federal system are the long term processes of future generations. The realistic situation for the country is that the development of the Union could be successful; only the state could build peace.

I, here, want to point out some controversies over the samples and norms of democracy, federal system and so on. The root cause of debates about the terms and meanings is the need for building trust with each other. It is seen as the need for mutual trust instead of a political issue. Doubt, mistrusts and disputes among the opponent groups over 70 years must be reduced for building trust. We need to emphasize mutual understanding among the groups in building trusts. Creating a shared understanding and building trust is more complicated than talking about them. It is essential to share other’s feelings for making understanding and building trust; only then the root cause of conflicts would be realized.

The third point is the future of the Union. There are many issues to be addressed Myanmar where armed conflicts have erupted since the country regained its independence. It is crucial to list the order of priority in solving a more extensive range of political problems. The expected Union would have standard models; however, choosing a suitable approach to shape the Union would be pragmatic and strategically correct.

The Part III of Union Accord will be signed at the 4th session of 21st Century Panglong which will lead to the emergence of the Union expected by the national people for many years together with development, national reconciliation, peace, democratic reform and federalism. The Accord could initiate a process to solve chronic political problems of the country; the Accord would become the historical document for national reconciliation, peace and building a Democratic Federal Union.

In conclusion, I would like to focus on the successful holding of 21st Century Panglong Conference, which will be held amid control and response measures against COVID-19. It is widely known that our country could control and respond to the pandemic, although the country is not a wealthy nation. This outcome was resulted from constricting control guidelines and active cooperation of people in these measures. While the status the pandemic is changing in the world, second and third waves of this viral disease show that a constant vigilance should be maintained all the times.

Reducing in percentages of representatives from each stakeholder groups and tightening healthcare measures will be carried out at the 21st Century Panglong Conference. I sincerely request the members of UPDJC, representatives for the Conference and the leaders of stakeholders to understand these situations. It is well appreciated for your full participation in these measures. I conclude my speech with my wishes to all the members of UPDJC for free of all diseases, including the pandemic, and perform the duties for building a Democratic Federal Union healthily and happily.

Thank You.

Union-level Peace Dialogue Joint Committee holds meeting ...

FROM PAGE-3

He added that the second he wants to talk about is the national reconciliation and peace process they are working on. He said the peace process is more than stopping armed conflicts as it also involves peace-building, state-building and nation-building in the long run. He said the peace process they are working on today is not a zero-result process nor is it solely for the benefit of those participating in the discussions or armed conflicts. He said the peace process is for the future of the entire nation.

Dr Tin Myo Win said the UPDJC had held 14 meetings since 2016 and the Union Peace Conference is about to organize its Fourth Session and sign Part III of the Union Accord after reaching 51 basic principles of the Parts I and II. He said

the Part III they approved of at this meeting includes 15 points related to the implementation framework of the NCA, five basic guiding principles for establishing a Democratic Federal Union, and a table detailing the processes of implementation beyond the year 2020. He said the formation of a guiding implementation process that can be utilized by the next government administration after the 2020 General Elections is an essential milestone in the nation’s path towards peace.

He then concluded his speech by expressing his gratitude to all the people, leaders, and UPDJC members who worked tirelessly to achieve these unique results for the nation.

Earlier in the day before the meeting, State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi conferred

peace-building and peace-keeping awards and certificates of honour to the representatives from the government, Hluttaws, Defence Services, EAOs and political parties who worked through the UPDJC from 2016 to 2020 in political negotiations towards national reconciliation and peace, essential for establishing a Democratic Federal Union.

At the meeting, the side of the government, Hluttaw and Tatmadaw were represented by UPDJC Vice-Chairpersons Union Minister U Kyaw Tint Swe, Dr Tin Myo Win (Union Peace Commission Chairperson), and Attorney-General of the Union U Tun Tun Oo; Union Minister U Min Thu, UPDJC members Union Minister U Thant Sin Maung, U Thein Swe, Dr Win Myat Aye, Nai Thet Lwin; Peace Commission Secretary Retired

Lieutenant General Khin Zaw Oo, Lieutenant General Tin Maung Win, Major-General San Myint, Major-General Soe Naing Oo, and Brigadier-General Ye Yint Win from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army); Pyithu Hluttaw MPs Khun Maung Thaung and U Pyone Cho (a) U Htay Win Aung; Peace Commission advisory board members U Hla Maung Shwe, and Director-General U Zaw Htay of the Ministry of the Office of the State Counsellor.

The side of EAOs was represented by UPDJC Vice-Chairperson Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong (CNF), Sao Sai Ngern (RCSS), U Myo Win (ABSDF), Saw Mra Yarzar Linn (ALP), Pado Saw Tar Doh Hmu (KNU), Khun Myint Tun (PNLO), Saw Sein Win (DKBA), Saw Kyaw Nyunt (KNU/KNLA PC), Nai Aung Min (NMSP), Kya Salmon

(LDU), Mi Sue Pwint (ABSDF), Salai Htalaw Hei (CNF), Dr Sai Oo (RCSS), Saw Samit Dunn (DKBA), Khaing Lynn Khaing (ALP), and Pado Saw L Kalusay (KNU).

The side of the political parties was represented by UPDJC Vice-Chairperson U Thu Wai (Democratic Party (Myanmar)), U Naing Ngan Lin (NLD), U Myint Soe (USDP), Sai Kyaw Nyunt (SNLD), Tar Hla Pe (Ta’ang (Palaung)), U Thein Tun (NUP), U Aung Kyi Nyunt (NLD), Dr Aung Myat Oo (USDP), U Oo Hla Saw (ANP), Khun Tun Shwe (PNLO), U Zam Zamone (Zomi Democracy Party), U Shwe Min (Lisu National Development Party), Dr Tu Ja (Kachin State People’s Party), Nai Tala Nyi (Mon Union Party), Daw Yin Yin May (Kokang Democracy and Unity Party), and Saw Tun Aung Myint (Kayin People’s Party).—MNA

The qualifications of Myanmar workers are also very important.

For foreign investments to come in, it is very important for our country to be able to show that we have the potential to develop from all sides. The qualifications of Myanmar workers are also very important. The majority of Myanmar workers who went to work in Thailand are mostly in fisheries-related enterprises. During the COVID period, Myanmar workers in the 100,000s returned home from Thailand. To this date, more than a thousand are coming back; there could be difficulties for Myanmar migrant workers to return to Thailand; they have qualifications; it would be beneficial for all if personal requirements and State requirements could be looked into and harmonized.

(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's discussions livestock and fisheries sector with stakeholders on 7 July 2020.)



MoI conducts research methodology, public relations, information management course

THE Ministry of Information is conducting the fifth course on research methodology, public relations and information management at the Max Hotel in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning. Deputy Minister U Aung Hla Tun made an opening remark on the course, saying which 'is essential' for civil service staff at any level and department to have developing knowledge. Amidst the increasing momentum of Fourth Industrial Revolution (or Industry 4.0) of digital technology, people have largely relied on online platform for access to information, entertainment programmes and communications, he added. The number of Facebook user in Myanmar

has skyrocketed from 22 million at the end of January to over 28 million after 6 months. He also suggested the trainees to apply the knowledge from the course into the changing technologies for their departments and the country and to share with their colleagues. Dr Tin Maung Maung Than, the academic advisor to the Panna Institute, and Dr Thomas Knirsch, the representative at the KAS Myanmar office, explained the course, and objectives and activities of the KAS. The five-day course is attended by 30 officers and other ranks from Union-level organizations and the ministries. The MoI will conduct two such courses this year. —MNA *(Translated by Aung Khin)*



Deputy Minister for Information U Aung Hla Tun delivers speech at the opening ceremony of research methodology, public relations and information management training programme at Hotel Max in Nay Pyi Taw on 17 August 2020. PHOTO: MNA

Tatmadaw Hluttaw reps tested for COVID-19 ahead of parliament

TATMADAW Hluttaw representatives who will be attending the 17th regular session of the Second Pyidaungsu, Pyithu and Amyotha Hluttaws on 19 August underwent medical tests and swab samples taken for COVID-19 at the Transit Centre in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, according to the

Tatmadaw True News Information Team. The lab samples of 166 Tatmadaw Hluttaw representatives were then sent to the Defence Services Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw where they were tested with the Cobas 6800 machine. —MNA *(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)*

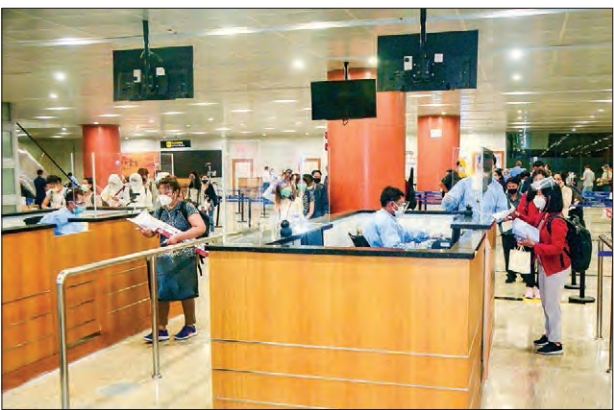


A health worker wearing PPE takes a nasal swab from a Tatmadaw Hluttaw representative for COVID-19 test at the Transit Centre in Nay Pyi Taw on 17 August. PHOTO: MNA

53 Myanmar nationals stranded in Thailand fly back home by relief flight

A relief flight by Myanmar National Airlines bringing back 53 Myanmar nationals stranded in Thailand landed at the Yangon International Airport last night. As they arrived in the airport, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Yangon Region government arranged proper medical checkups and 21-day quarantine for them. To bring back Myanmar nationals stranded in foreign nations by relief flights and chartered flights in accordance with the instructions from Na-

tional-Level Central Committee on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cooperated with the relevant ministries and Myanmar embassies from respective nations, and a total of 7 relief flights from Thailand have landed at Myanmar to date.—MNA *(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)*



Myanmar citizens returned from Thailand are seen at the Yangon International Airport on 17 August. PHOTO: MNA

Press briefing held on completion of 19th UPDJC

DIRECTOR-GENERAL U Zaw Htay of the Ministry of Office of State Counsellor, New Mon State Party (NMSP) central executive member Nai Aung Ma Ngay, and Sai Kyaw Nyunt, Joint-Secretary of the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD), held a press conference on the 19th meeting of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) at Myanmar International Convention Center-I in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

U Zaw Htay first said this meeting produced 9 points of agreement and a topic put on record. He said they discussed the days the peace conference will be held, number of representatives attending, placing full responsibility on UPDJC members according to its rules and regulations, and putting the decisions made at the 9th JCM on the UPDJC's record.

The Director-General said they also discussed the three sections to Part III of the Union Accord which will be submitted to the peace conference. He said they reached an agree-



U Zaw Htay, Nai Aung Ma Ngay, and Sai Kyaw Nyunt are holding press briefing after 19th meeting of UPDJC on 17 August. PHOTO: HTIKE GYI

ment on the role of political parties outlined in the first section of Part III in addition to the reports from UPDJC and JMC that will be submitted.

They also approved of the moderating group for the peace conference, distribution of duties during the conference, and rules for representatives to follow during the conference.

Nai Aung Ma Ngay said this UPDJC meeting discussed

the programme of the upcoming Union Peace Conference and the content of the Union Accord.

He said they also changed the assigned duties of representatives from ethnic armed organizations and divided overall duties for the peace conference. He said they reached 9 points of agreement and put one matter on record.

U Sai Kyaw Nyunt who said

the political parties did something unique at this meeting. He said the agreements chosen to be added into the Union Accord in this session of the peace conference were written for both sides of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) but that made it look like political parties were left out. He said there wasn't enough time to recall the JICM to address this issue but the content in

the Union Accord may take a different form later on. He said they thus decided to adopt a model where the government, Hluttaw and Tatmadaw as one group, EAOs as another group and political parties as one group will handle the implementation of UPDJC-related agreements.

U Zaw Htay, Nai Aung Ma Ngay and Sai Kyaw Nyunt responded to questions from journalists present.

After the press conference, U Zaw Htay went to the Nay Pyi Taw City Development Committee Guesthouse and explained the programme, rules for representatives to follow, and the formation of the next part of the Union Accord to Pyithu and Amyotha Hluttaw representatives who will be attending the Fourth Session of the Union Peace Conference – 21st Century Panglong. Peace Commission member U Hla Maung Shwe also explained the daily programmes of the peace conference to the Hluttaw representatives.—Myo Han Soe

(Translated by Zaw Htet Oo)

3 relief flights to fly between Yangon and Tokyo

THE All Nippon Airways will arrange three relief flights between Yangon and Tokyo.

The flights will leave Narita for Yangon on 27 August, 3 September and 10 September, while the return flights will be on the respective following days by NH-814 departing Yangon at 21:45 hrs and landing on Narita at 07:00 hrs next days.

In these flights, apart from Japanese nationals, Myanmar nationals who want to leave Japan and holds a valid re-entry permit (including Special re-entry permit) can take aboard.

The Japanese embassy in Yangon has noticed that Single Entry and Multiple Entry Visas for Border Control Meas-

ures are suspended until the end of August.

If the suspension is kept extended until the end of September, those who intend to go to Japan with visas issued by the Embassy of Japan cannot take these flights.

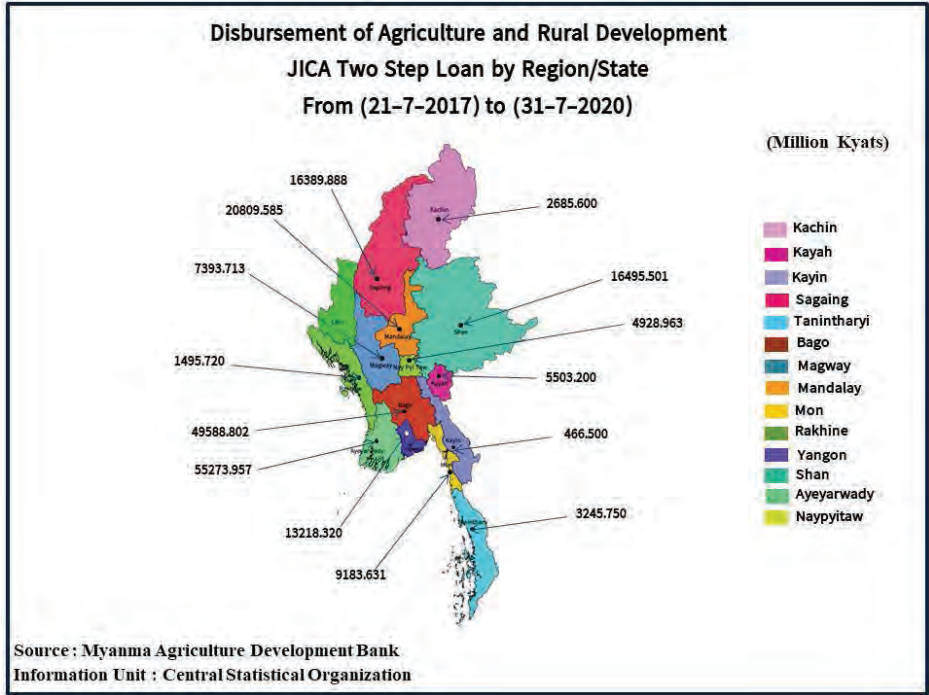
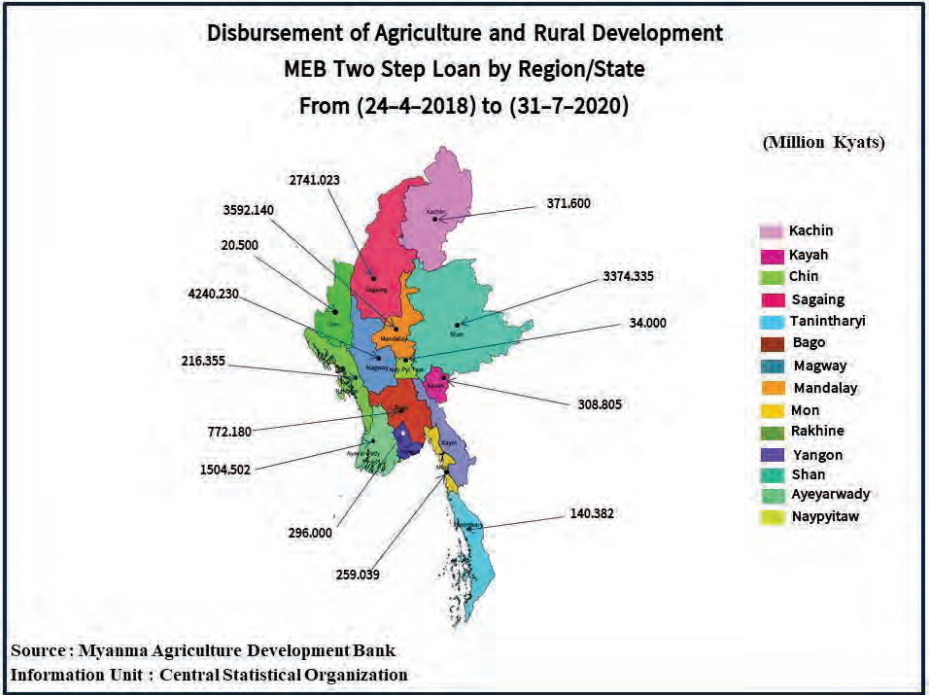
Moreover, to avoid the possible rejection to pass Japanese immigration counters

at Narita airport immigration, those who will take these relief flights are advised to contact Consular section at the Japanese embassy in Myanmar before taking the flights.

Under the rules of Border Control Measures, passengers who come from Myanmar, regardless of nationality, are required to stay 14-days

home quarantine and not allowed to use public transportation in Japan during that period.

The Consular Section of Japanese embassy will reply any questions about this matter through 1-telephones numbers from 01549644 to 01549648 and its email ryoji@yn.mofa.go.jp. —Aung Thura



Letter of Credit only accepted for gold export, import payment

By Nyein Nyein

INTERNATIONAL remittance for Myanmar's gold exports and imports can be made by the only Letter of Credit (LC), according to the notification released by the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce on 12 August.

Myanmar is placed on the Grey List by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the inter-governmental body that sets anti-money laundering standards. Therefore, the country needs to monitor the gold and jewellery exports and imports to ensure there is no illegal income, according to the Trade Department.

As per the notification released by the Ministry of Commerce, starting from April, payment method was changed to LC.

Yangon Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA) submitted a request for the resumption of the previous payment system (Telegraph Transfer) to the Ministry of Commerce instead. However, the ministry issued the notification to use LC only starting from



Local gold price is lower than that of international market, causing suspension of export. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAH

12 August.

"With the use of LC, payment can take about two months, cost banking service changes by two sides, and increase the charges for security matter in transportation. The traders are not happy with the new payment system due to volatile prices in the international gold market,"

said U Myo Myint, chair of YGEA.

"The traders are ok with TT system even if the prices fluctuate three to four times a day as there is no delay. Because of the anti-money laundering, only the LC system is available for trading.

We have to open an account at the Myanma Foreign Trade

Bank for both systems. Earlier, the foreign traders made the transaction through TT, and we also used the TT system. It has the fast nature of the deal.

"With the LC system, we have to open LC at the bank and so do for the buyer side at his/her bank. Additionally, they have to be shipped by linking

with the insurance company. It costs around US\$500 for 1,000 worth items, due to the banking service for the delayed payment and higher transportation charges," he explained

"Furthermore, the gold price daily fluctuates. Typically, telegraphic transfer is done depending on the origin and destination of the transfer, as well as any currency exchange requirements. Payments with LC are delayed for about one month. The traders will suffer losses if the gold price is on the rise. That is why we are not happy with the LC system," he added.

Change in payment system halted gold exports at the end of June. As a result of this, more than 10,000 local goldsmiths were unemployed owing to a trading halt with the external market, he continued.

Gold and other jewellery are primarily purchased by Japan and the Republic of Korea, and other tourists also buy them, the YGEA stated.

YGEA will insist on submitting the request for the resumption of the TT system.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Annual inflation rate dips to 7.91 per cent in June

THE annual rate of inflation in Myanmar, based on the Consumer Price Index, stood at 7.91 per cent in June 2020, according to a report released by the Central Statistical Organization under the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry.

The figure has remained above 8 per cent since June 2019. The inflation rate stood at 7.28 per cent in March 2019 and gradually inclined. It reached a peak of 8.61 per cent in September and dipped in November. It touched the highest level at 8.81 per cent in December 2019 because of the high season.

Afterwards, despite the drop in fuel oil price and gain in local currency, power tariff hike led to higher inflation rate up to 9.2 per cent in February 2020. Then, it gradually declined.

The inflation rate was registered at 8.35 per cent in May

2020, and so, the month of June with 7.91 per cent witnessed a small decrease of 0.44 per cent against May's rate. The core inflation, which strips out volatile food and energy prices, was 13.41 per cent in June 2020.

The Myanmar Kyat weakened against the US dollar in June, with a fall of K13 than the previous month. However, the imported oil price and gold price significantly rose in June compared with May's rates, causing food price to increase sharply.

Nevertheless, there was a remarkable increase in CPI in the household goods and maintenance, other commodities, clothing, health, education services, recreation, culture and non-food. The price of telecommunications and tobacco and beverages groups dropped.

In June, Ayeyawady Region

recorded the highest inflation rate at 12.71 per cent, followed by Magway Region at 12.13 per cent, and Nay Pyi Taw at 9.83 per cent. The price fluctuated with a maximum rate of 9.27 per cent in Ayeyawady Region and a minimum standard of 0.51 per cent in Mon State.

Earlier, the inflation rate was calculated based on a 2006 survey. The base year was later changed to 2012. The Central Statistical Organization conducted a Household Income and Expenditure Survey in 82 townships in November 2012. The concerned authorities have been making efforts based on policies on finance, currency, trade, and foreign currency control, in keeping with the second five-year National Development plan (2016-2017FY-2020-2021FY). — Htet Myat

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Over 600 Mandalay businesspersons apply for COVID loan in second time

MORE THAN 640 applicants from Mandalay Region have applied for the second batch of COVID-19 loan, according to Mandalay Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MRC-CI).

The COVID loan applications by the businesses stricken by the coronavirus impacts were received between 29 July and 10 August in the second batch.

"The priority sectors for the second K100 billion from the second batch of COVID-19 loan are agriculture and livestock enterprises, export and import businesses, and vocational schools," said U Ye Min Oo, Minister for Planning and Finance of Yangon Region, who also acts as chair of MSMEs agency and loan assessment committee.

Over 10,000 businesses put in the loan application in the second batch, and 75 per cent of them are from the regions and states outside Yangon, which accounts for 25 per cent of the applications.

Starting from 11 August, officials from the SMEs Department,

the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA), Myanmar Economic Bank, Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank, Department of Technical and Vocational Education and Training under the Ministry of Education, Trade Department, Fisheries Department and Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, and 21 representatives from the affiliated organizations are assessing the coronavirus loan amount so that the business can take out a loan in time.

More than 3,393 entrepreneurs engaged in CMP businesses, hotels and tourism sector and SMEs have been approved to receive K101.298 billion of the loan in the first batch.

A total of 330 COVID-19 affected businesses from Mandalay Region have been approved to receive the emergency COVID-19 Fund in the first batch, said an official of the MRCCI.—Htet Myat

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Strong enforcement is called key to preventing local transmission of COVID-19

WE have seen a single locally transmitted case of novel coronavirus, nearly one month after the first case in mid-July. A 26-year old woman from Sittway, Rakhine State, was diagnosed with the coronavirus. She had no history of travel abroad nor close contact with COVID-19 suspect.

The local transmission happened at a time while our people are inconsistent in following the health guidelines as our country has contained the coronavirus infection to a certain extent.

It is important for the people to remain calm and keep informed, and to follow health guidelines including social distancing and good hand and respiratory hygiene to prevent further infection in the community.

Social distancing, hand washing and wearing masks have been critical in helping us lower rate of infection in efforts to protect ourselves, our families and the most vulnerable in our community from the virus.

Since May, our country reported 276 cases of Coronavirus infection, with six deaths. Of them, 321 have been discharged from hospital after having recovered from the infection.

Of course, our country has contained the coronavirus infection to a certain extent due to sacrifices made by all people, along with relentless administrative actions. Unfortunately, it has been found today that people are not following the public health guidelines, though the authorities are enforcing these rules to keep the entire public safe.

In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic is also a natural disaster, and those who do not comply with the law can face fines and even prison time under Section-2 (b) of the National Disaster Management Law.

Under the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law, those who fail to disclose being sick with Coronavirus could face punishment.

If we can effectively contain the spread of the coronavirus, we hope that a second wave of the virus, which is expected to resurge in the next one to two months, can be prevented.

We encourage all local authorities, especially in Rakhine State, to continue to stay up to date on developments through health officials, local communities, volunteers and media.

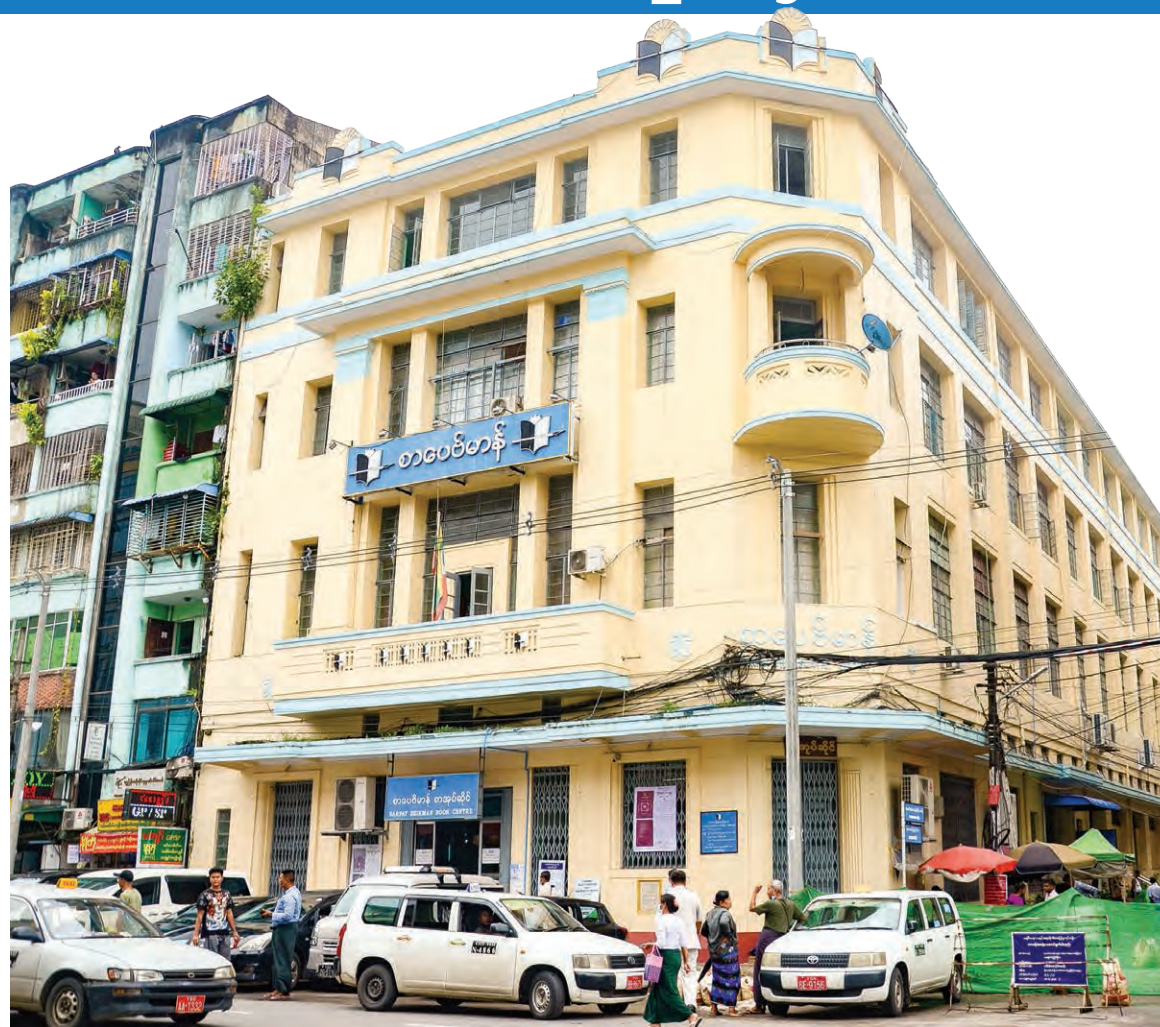
To effectively stop the source of infection, we need to put in place aggressive, adequate and immediate measures.



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The “Sarpay Beikman”

By Lokethar



Sarpay Beikman Building in downtown Yangon. PHOTO: PHOE KHWAR

THE article on “Sarpay Beikman” carried by the GNLM on 25th of July 2020 was interesting as it informed the public of a very important Institution which was set up in accordance with the guidance of our late leader Bogyoke Aung San in his speech at the well known National Planning Conference. The Conference was held on the 6th of June 1947 in the “Sorrento Villa” situated at No. 361 Pyay Road, Yangon. The original name of the Institution in English was “The Burma Translation Society”.

Bogyoke realized that with the gaining of Independence, Myanmar people would need to acquire knowledge to “light up the darkness” if they were to go forward in the world. Reading, at that time, was the preferred way of acquiring knowledge. However books on various subjects and topics in the Myanmar language were scarce. Hence Bogyoke thought it best to have books on various subjects written in foreign languages to be translated into the Myanmar language and published by the Burma Translation Society.

According to the article, the “Sorrento Villa” came to be the venue of the Burma Translation Society as well as its printing

and publishing facility in its early days of formation. As the institution was born out of a dire need, it has lasted with the passage of time and different modes of governments. The present name in English eventually adopted is the transliteration of the Myanmar name, “Sarpay Beikman”.

As regards translation, most of the works of translation has been from English to Myanmar. Many good books written in the English language from works of fiction to books on science,

history, literature, politics, biographies, dictionaries, books for children etc. have been translated by many Myanmar writers well versed in translating writings from English to Myanmar. Myanmar translations of books and written materials of other

languages are somewhat hard to come by, probably because there are fewer translators of languages other than English. The Sarpay Beikman has been instrumental in promoting, publishing and distributing of the translated written materials.

Nowadays with the advent of the Internet, most people can access the websites for knowledge and information in the English Language. To access the internet for knowledge and information, a fair knowledge of English is required. Hence learning to communicate in English will put one ahead in obtaining knowledge and information, literally on any subject. If one has a communication device and a good command of the English language the world of knowledge is “at one’s fingertip” so to speak.

The Sarpay Beikman should promote not only translations but also original writings in the English language on topics of interest to the reading public so that they may improve their ability at communicating in English and accessing the Internet to broaden their knowledge base. It would also help foreigners to know more about Myanmar and its people.

The English language should be viewed as a means of communication, whether spoken

or written. Seeking knowledge to keep up with the times is a must, whichever language is used. The English language is after all more familiar to Myanmar people as “English” as a subjects prescribed in the basic education curricula.

Of course any other “foreign language”, if learned to a utility level, can be the preferred language of business and commercial use accepted by many. As mentioned earlier, books written in other foreign languages by famous writers have also been translated by Myanmar writers with a good grasp of the foreign language. Such books may be of interest to many people studying the foreign language or using it at his/her workplace.

The “Sarpay Beikman” could form “Literary Groups”, from among its readers and writers, based on different foreign language preferences, to provide “platforms” for exchange of information and ideas on reading, writing and translating reading material written in the foreign language concerned, for the benefit of the Myanmar public.

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Coronavirus: latest global developments

HERE are the latest developments in the coronavirus crisis:

New Zealand election delay
New Zealand’s Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern delays the general election by four weeks to October 17 after a renewed coronavirus outbreak hampers campaigning.

Since the shock discovery of COVID-19 in Auckland last week, ending the nation’s 102-day streak without community transmission, there have been 58 confirmed cases, leading to the country’s largest city being put into lockdown.

Japanese economy in historic plunge

Japan’s economy shrank 7.8 per cent in the April-June quarter, the worst contraction in the

nation’s modern history, as the coronavirus deepens the country’s economic woes.

The contraction is still significantly less severe than declines seen in many other industrial economies and Japan has seen a smaller coronavirus outbreak compared to some of the worst-hit countries.

More than 770,000 deaths

The pandemic has killed at least 770,429 people worldwide since surfacing in China late last year, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP at 1100 GMT on Monday.

More than 21.7 million cases have been registered.

The United States has recorded the most deaths with 170,052, followed by Brazil with 107,852, Mexico with 56,757, In-

dia with 50,921 and Britain with 41,366.

Spanish restrictions extended

Four more regions of Spain come under new measures to curb a rise in COVID-19 infections, a day after a noisy Madrid protest against virus restrictions.

Spain’s most populous region, Andalusia, along with Galicia and Cantabria in the north and Castilla and Leon in the centre become the latest Spanish regions to begin enforcing 11 measures the government unveiled Friday to curb one of the fastest virus growth rates in Europe.

Thousands in S. Korea church quarantine

Thousands of members of a Protestant church linked to a

coronavirus cluster in Seoul have been asked to quarantine.

The Sarang Jeil Church is headed by Jun Kwang-hun, a controversial conservative pastor who is a leading figure in protests against President Moon Jae-in.

Beirut hospitals overwhelmed

Lebanon’s health minister warns that hospitals are reaching maximum capacity to treat coronavirus patients after the deadly Beirut blast overwhelmed clinics and as COVID-19 cases have mounted.

Lebanon has seen a spike in coronavirus-related cases and deaths in recent weeks, and they have hit a new record in the aftermath of the massive explosion that ripped through large parts of Beirut on August 4. —AFP



Crematorium operators wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) carry the body of a person who died of COVID-19 coronavirus, for a cremation, outside the Nimtala Crematorium, in Kolkata on 17 August 2020. India’s official coronavirus death toll soared past 50,000 on 17 August as the pandemic rages through smaller cities and rural areas where health care is feeble and stigmatisation rife. PHOTO: AFP

President’s Office continues announcement of illegal drug arrests, seizures action on tip-offs

THE Office of the President has issued Press Release 30/2020 yesterday, publicly announcing the Ministry of Home Affairs’ arrests and seizures in the fight against illicit drug trafficking up till 15 August.

The ministry made the arrests, acting on information, sent to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department of the Office of the President as of 15 August.

The full text of the press release will be reported in the 19 August issue of *The Global New Light of Myanmar*. — GNLM

Flood Warning (Issued at 13:00 hrs MST on 17-8-2020)

According to the (12:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Chindwin River at Khamti is observed as about (3) feet below its danger level. It may reach its danger level during the next (2) days.

According to the (12:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Chindwin River at Mawlaik is observed as about (3) feet below its danger level. It may reach its danger level during the next (3) days.

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas at Khamti and Mawlaik townships to take precaution measure.

Flood Bulletin (Issued at: 13:00 hrs MST on 17-8-2020)

Flood condition of Chindwin River

According to the (12:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Chindwin River at Homalin has exceeded by about (½) foot above its danger level. It may continue to rise above the present water level by about (½) foot during the next (2) days and may remain above its danger level.

According to the (12:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Chindwin River at Phaungpyin has exceeded by about (1) inch above its danger level. It may continue to rise above the present water level by about (1½) feet during the next (3) days and may remain above its danger level.

Advisory

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas in Homalin and Phaungpyin townships to take precaution measure.

Invitation to young writers for Sunday Special

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting the submission of poetries, opinions, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their work to the **Global New Light of Myanmar** at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, in person, or by email to dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Own name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been sent to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.).— Editorial Department, 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.

604 migrant workers return from Thailand through Myawady border on 17 August

A total of 604 Myanmar migrant workers arrived back home through Myanmar-Thai Friendship Bridge (2) of Myawady border town in Kayin State yesterday.

Kayin State Hluttaw MP U Thant Zin Aung and local officials helped the returnees with medical tests and other supplies.

A total of 65,637 Myanmar migrants have arrived back home through this route until now.

The latest group of returnees included 363 males and 241 females from different regions and states.—Htein Lin Aung (IPRD)

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Myanmar nationals returned from Thailand arrive at the Myawady border on 17 August. PHOTO: HTEIN LIN AUNG (IPRD)



32 Myanmar nationals return home from China via Chinshwehaw

THIRTY-TWO Myanmar nationals (24 males and 8 females) returned home from China via Chinshwehaw border town in Laukkai Township, Kokang Self-administered Zone on 16 and 17 August.

Of these, 18 Myanmar nationals returned home on 16 August, and 14 returned home on 17 August.

Two were from Yesagyo Township and 11 from Taungdingyi Township in Magway Region, 1 from Mohnyin Township in Kachin State, 1 from Lashio Township, 1 from Kyaukme Township, 1 from Tangyan Township, 1 from Muse Township, 1 from Mongyai Town-

ship, 6 from Hsenwi Township, 3 from Kunglong Township, 1 from Kongyan Township, 2 from Hopan Township and 1 from Laukkai Township.

Chinshwehaw Town's Work Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID – 19) has systematically sent back the returnees to their respective regions or states. The work committee has sent back a total of 14,539 returnees (8,086 males and 6,453 females) to their homes from 30 April to date.—Zin Zin (Chinshwehaw)

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)



Myanmar citizens returned from China line up to have body temperature checked at the Chinshwehaw border on 17 August. PHOTO: ZIN ZIN (CHINSHWEHAW)

Myanmar trade deficit sees two-fold rise as of 7 August

MYANMAR trade gap has significantly widened as of 7 August in the current financial year 2019-2020 to more than US\$1.79 billion from \$880.7 million registered in the corresponding period of the 2018-2019FY, according to the data provided by the Ministry of Commerce.

Between 1 October and 7 August in the current budget year, Myanmar's external trade increased to over \$31.48 billion from \$30.14 billion recorded in the year-ago period.

While exports were estimat-

ed at \$14.8 billion, imports were valued at \$16.6 billion. Compared to the previous financial year, exports showed an increase of \$218 million while imports climbed up by \$1.128 billion.

It is about two months left before the end of the financial year. The trade figures crossed over \$30 billion as of early August. So, it is possible to meet the trade target, said an official of the ministry.

Myanmar's foreign trade has shown a 10-per-cent increase, year over year, under the incumbent government.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods, while it imports capital goods, intermediate goods, CMP raw materials, and consumer goods.

The country's export sector relies more on the agricultural and manufacturing industries. While export earnings from the CMP (cut, make, and pack) garment businesses are rising, the country's reliance on natural resources, such as natural gas and jade, is lessening.

The government is trying to cut the trade deficit by screening luxury import items and boosting exports.

Myanmar's trade deficit was pegged at \$1.14 billion in the 2018-2019 financial year, \$1.3 billion in the previous mini-budget period (April-September, 2018), \$3.9 billion in the 2017-2018FY, \$5.3 billion in the 2016-2017FY, and \$5.4 billion in the 2015-2016FY, according to statistics released by the Central Statistical Organization. — Mon Mon
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

US convention season set to begin, with (virtual) spotlight on Biden

MILWAUKEE (United States) — As Democrats on Monday open an unprecedented virtual convention, the party's disparate factions are projecting a united front behind Joe Biden, brought together by their common determination to oust Donald Trump in November's election.

"It is absolutely imperative that Donald Trump be defeated," Bernie Sanders, a former Biden rival and a keynote speaker on the event's opening night, said Sunday on ABC's "This Week."

Adding to the drama, the four-day convention — originally planned for the Midwestern city of Milwaukee but forced online by the COVID-19 pandemic — takes place amid a furor over Trump's efforts to limit mail-in voting.

The president, insisting without proof that mail-in voting fosters fraud, has threatened to block extra funding that Democrats say is urgently needed to allow the US Postal Service to process millions of ballots.

In normal election years, nominating conventions are a raucous scene, attended by tens of thousands of party faithful and designed to inspire the party's base and lure independents and



Democratic presidential nominee, former US Vice President Joe Biden (R), and vice presidential running mate, US Senator Kamala Harris, hold a press conference after receiving a briefing on COVID-19 in Wilmington, Delaware, on 13 August 2020. PHOTO: AFP

the undecided.

Virtual atmosphere

Democrats had picked Milwaukee for its location in the important swing state of Wisconsin. The city had spent millions in preparation.

But planners have been

struggling to find virtual replacements for the usual roaring applause, circus-like atmosphere and balloon drops.

Viewers are expected to be treated to live feeds from several Democratic "watch parties," some even live-streamed from drive-in theaters or featuring

erstwhile Biden rivals like Senator Amy Klobuchar.

The experimental format will allow speakers to address American voters unfiltered — largely shorn of the usual overwrought stagecraft and screaming delegates. Or, some fear, it could make for a more boring show.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

China blasts US 'digital gunboat diplomacy' over TikTok

BEIJING (China) — China on Monday slammed Washington for using "digital gunboat diplomacy" after US President Donald Trump ordered TikTok's Chinese owner ByteDance to sell its interest in the Musical.ly app it bought and merged with TikTok.

As tensions soar between the world's two biggest economies, Trump has claimed TikTok could be used by China to track the locations of federal employees, build dossiers on people for blackmail, and conduct corporate espionage.—AFP ■

US expands sanctions on China's Huawei to limit technology access

The US administration Monday expanded its sanctions on China's Huawei, a move aimed at further limiting the tech giant's access to computer chips and other technology.

A Commerce Department statement added 38 Huawei affiliates around the world to the "entity list," claiming that the company was using international subsidiaries to circumvent the sanctions which prevent export of US-based technology.—AFP ■

EU leaders to hold emergency talks on Belarus crisis

EU leaders will hold emergency video talks on Wednesday to discuss the crisis in Belarus, where protests are swelling against the disputed re-election of President Alexander Lukashenko.

The summit was called by EU Council President Charles Michel after Moscow said it was ready to provide military help to its ally Lukashenko, who has ruled Belarus for 26 years.—AFP ■

Start of Afghan talks uncertain as prisoner release stalls

KABUL (Afghanistan) — Afghan authorities and the Taliban have hit an impasse over the planned release of hundreds of insurgents after opposition from some foreign governments, officials said Monday, apparently stalling peace talks.

The negotiations were expected to begin within days after prominent Afghans met in Kabul on August 9 and approved the

release of 400 Taliban prisoners — including many involved in deadly attacks — removing a crucial precondition to talks.

While Afghan authorities freed 80 Taliban prisoners on Thursday, there have been no further releases since then.

"There is no plan to release any prisoner today also," an official with the country's National Security Council told AFP

on Monday. President Ashraf Ghani's spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said "two countries had shared their concerns and reservations" about six or seven prisoners among the 400.

"The Afghan government is working with its partners to address the concerns about these prisoners," he told reporters.

Sediqqi did not name the countries, but Paris and Canberra have objected to the release of several insurgents accused of killing French and Australian nationals and soldiers.

Bettina Goislard, a French employee of the UN's refugee agency, was murdered by two Taliban militants in 2003, and a former Afghan soldier killed five French troops and injured 13 others in 2012 in Kapisa province.

France is "firmly opposed to the liberation of individuals sentenced for crimes against French nationals, especially soldiers and humanitarian workers," the foreign ministry said Saturday.

"We have consequently

asked Afghan authorities not to proceed with the liberation of these terrorists."

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison last week said he had lobbied against the release of a former Afghan army soldier who went rogue and killed three Australian partners.

Ghani himself has warned that the 400 militants were a "danger to the world".

Their release is part of a prisoner swap agreed in February between the Taliban and Washington as a precondition for peace talks.

That deal stipulated that Kabul release 5,000 Taliban prisoners in return for 1,000 Afghan security personnel held by the militants.

Afghan authorities say they too have released almost all prisoners, except those remaining from the 400.

The Taliban claim to have released all the 1,000 captives, but Sediqqi said the insurgents were still holding some Afghan soldiers.—AFP ■



In this handout photograph taken on 13 August 2020 and released by Afghanistan's National Security Council (NSC), Taliban prisoners walk as they are in the process of being released from Pul-e-Charkhi prison on the outskirts of Kabul. PHOTO: AFP

France sends experts to examine ship grounded off Mauritius

PARIS (France) — France is sending more experts to Mauritius Monday to help decide the fate of a grounded ship leaking oil into pristine waters off the coast of the Indian Ocean island.

France had already sent military planes, ships and equipment to help contain the oil spill, which also threatens the French island of La Reunion southwest of Mauritius.

The three additional experts will be tasked with helping the Mauritian government determine what to do with the wreck, which has split in two, Sebastien Lecornu, minister for France’s overseas terri-

tories, told Franceinfo on Monday.

France was in favour of an “environmental approach and protection of biodiversity, and particularly the coast of La Reunion,” he said.

Possibilities include sinking part of the ship in the open sea, which “is clearly not our preferred solution”, or to tow the wreck elsewhere and destroy it, which would require “more time”, the minister said.

No oil deposits have yet reached Reunion, he added.

The Japanese bulk carrier MV Wakashio ran aground on a coral reef off

the southeastern coast of Mauritius on July 25 and began oozing oil more than a week later, threatening a protected marine park with mangrove forests and endangered species.

Officials said over the weekend that the ship had broken in two.

Mauritius declared an environmental emergency and salvage crews raced against the clock to pump the remaining 3,000 tonnes of oil off the stricken vessel.

After visiting Mauritius, Lecornu returned to La Reunion late Sunday and said he believed the clean-up would involve “at least 10 months of work”.

—AFP ■



An aerial view taken in Mauritius on 17 August 2020, shows the MV Wakashio bulk carrier, belonging to a Japanese company but Panamanian-flagged, that had run aground and broke into two parts near Blue Bay Marine Park. PHOTO: AFP

Scorching temperature in US’s Death Valley could be global high



This US National Weather Service/NOAA handout photo obtained August 2020 shows a picture of the sensor that recorded an extreme temperature on 16 August 2020 in Death Valley National Park, California. PHOTO: AFP

WASHINGTON (United States) — A temperature of 130 degrees Fahrenheit (54.4 degrees Celsius) recorded in California’s Death Valley on Sunday by the US National Weather Service could be the hottest ever measured with modern instruments, officials say.

The reading was registered at 3:41 pm at the Furnace Creek Visitor Center in the Death Valley national park by an automated observation system -- an electronic thermometer encased inside a box in the shade.

In 1913, a weather station half an hour’s walk away recorded what officially remains the world record of 134 degrees Fahrenheit (56.7 degrees Celsius). But its validity has been disputed because a superheated sandstorm at

the time may have skewed the reading.

The next highest temperature was set in July 1931 in Kebili, Tunisia, at 131 degrees Fahrenheit (55.0 degrees Celsius) -- but again, the accuracy of older instruments has been questioned by some weather historians.

In 2016 and 2017, weather stations in Mitribah, Kuwait and Turbat, Pakistan recorded temperatures of 129.2 degrees Fahrenheit (54 degrees Celsius). After evaluation by the World Meteorological Organization both were downgraded by a few fractions of a degree.

The Geneva-based World Meteorological Organization said Monday it would start the process to verify the new US reading.

“This observed high temperature is considered

preliminary and not yet official,” said the US National Weather Service.

Heating up

Dan Berc, an official at the Las Vegas NWS office responsible for the site, told AFP that the sensor would be brought in for evaluation.

The investigation would take “at least a couple of months,” he said, adding: “Growing up as a kid, I thought 130 degrees Fahrenheit was a really cool record.”

Validation isn’t a formality, and long-held records have been thrown out after modern evaluation.

For decades, the heat record was officially the 136.4 degrees Fahrenheit (58 degrees Celsius) recorded in 1922 in El Azizia, now modern Libya.

—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V SAN PEDRO VOY. NO. (032S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SAN PEDRO VOY. NO. (032S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **18-8-2020** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **TMT** 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.
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Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

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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**

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PESTICIDE TRADE NAME CHANGE ADVERTISING

The following two pesticides are distributed by AGRO GREEN LAND CHEMICAL CO.,LTD and here we would like to pesticide trade name change advertising. Anyone who would like to object or inquiry about new trade name contact within 14 days to Joint-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon. AGRO GREEN LAND CHEMICAL CO.,LTD 09-978999155.

Sr.	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number
1	Veyong Siyar	Block	Emamectin Benzoate 5% SG	P2019-4766

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Circulation@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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Stocks rise, dollar down, tracking US trade tensions, stimulus

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Major world stock markets climbed Monday, while the dollar faltered, as the US and China traded further blows and investors awaited progress on a stalled American virus stimulus package.

High-level talks between Washington and Beijing on the status of their “phase one” trade agreement -- due to have taken place Saturday -- were postponed.

It comes as US President Donald Trump ratchets up tensions with Beijing as he seeks to win a November election faced with opinion polls showing him trailing Democrat Joe Biden in key battlegrounds.

China on Monday slammed Washington for using “digital gunboat



A woman rides past the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) on 13 July 2020 at Wall Street in New York City. **PHOTO: AFP**

diplomacy” after Trump ordered TikTok’s Chinese owner ByteDance to sell its interest in the Musical.ly app it bought and merged with TikTok.

Cancelled “trade talks

between the two countries... has added to the frosty situation”, noted David Madden, analyst at CMC Markets UK.

“The lack of agreement between Republicans

and Democrats in relation to the stimulus deal remains a concern too.”

Investors are keeping tabs on Capitol Hill, with Democrats and Republicans no closer to a new

stimulus for the beleaguered US economy.

There are few hopes either for any movement before the end of the month owing to both parties holding conventions over the next two weeks.

Still, the consensus opinion is that a deal will eventually be struck.

“Despite the stimulus package appearing to be in a standstill, the markets appear to be taking the view that major fiscal legislation is inevitable,” said AxiCorp’s Stephen Innes.

“Presumably based on the assumption that the Republicans will eventually accept a somewhat larger package in light of their incentive to support the economy ahead of the November election, where President Trump is trailing

in the polls.”

While the coronavirus continues to flare up around the world, forcing the reimposition of containment measures, analysts said stocks will likely continue rising owing to unprecedented backing from central banks.

In Asia, Tokyo’s main stocks index closed down 0.8 per cent Monday after data showed Japan’s economy contracted the most on record in the second quarter. “Investors cashed in on recent gains,” said Toshikazu Horiuchi, a broker at IwaiCosmo Securities.

“GDP figures were largely within expectations” but reconfirmed the sizable impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the Japanese economy, Horiuchi told AFP.—AFP ■

Tokyo stocks sag on concerns after Japan’s record GDP plunge

TOKYO — Tokyo stocks sank Monday as investors grew concerned over the outlook for the Japanese economy following a record plunge in April-June gross domestic product, which highlighted the weakness of private consumption that has been hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average ended down 192.61 points, or 0.83 per cent, from Friday at 23,096.75. The broader Topix index of all First Section issues on the Tokyo Stock Exchange finished 13.56 points, or 0.84 per cent, lower at 1,609.82.

Decliners were led by precision instrument, service and land transportation issues. The U.S. dollar was weak in the mid-106 yen range amid concerns about worsening ties between the United States and China following reports that the scheduled review of their phase-one trade agreement from last Saturday had been postponed indefinitely.

At 5 p.m., the dollar fetched 106.48-49 yen compared with 106.54-64 yen in New York and 106.75-76 yen

in Tokyo at 5 pm Friday. The euro was quoted at \$1.1853-1855 and 126.21-25 yen against \$1.1838-1848 and 126.16-26 yen in New York and \$1.1800-1802 and 125.97-126.01 yen in Tokyo late Friday afternoon. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Japanese government bond fell 0.005 per centage point from Friday’s close to 0.040 per cent as investors bought the safe-haven debt following the decline in Tokyo shares. The fall in the stock market came after the benchmark Nikkei’s four-day rally through Friday when it rose over 4 per cent. Shares were weak from the opening after government data released pre-market showed Japan’s economy in the April-June period shrank an annualized real 27.8 per cent from the previous quarter; the sharpest contraction on record. Investors had priced in to some extent the negative outcome but they took plunging private consumption, which accounts for more than half of the Japanese economy, as a selling cue after the share rally last week. — Kyodo News ■

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The following pesticides are distributed by Y AGRO SOLUTION CO.,LTD and here we would like to pesticide trade name change advertising. Anyone who would like to object or inquiry about new trade name contact within 14 days to Joint-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon. Y AGRO SOLUTION CO.,LTD 09-787630272.

Sr.	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number
1.	Ywet Nu Hla	Kyo Kar	Dimethomorph 9% + Mancozeb 60% WP	P2018-1927
2.	NPS Seer	All Shaw	Thiamethoxam 35% FS	P2018-4439
3.	Blue Fire	Pyaung Thalin	Glyphosate 41% SL	F2019-1935
4.	Noposion Iprodione 50 WP	Rova	Iprodione 50% WP	F2020-2728
5.	HP Cruiser	Hyper Morph	Dimethomorph 50% WP	P2018-4417
6.	Prelan	All Leave	Azoxystrobin 20% +Difenoconazole 12% SC	P2019-4743
7.	ZFN Titan	Yein Nwet Par	Indoxacarb 30% SC	P2018-4461
8.	HD Sharp	Myat Quit	Quizalofop-P-ethyl 10% EC	P2018-4449
9.	RDF Foison	Everest 1	Isoprothiolane 40 % EC	P2018-4418
10.	K.4 Satan 48 SL	Gly Min	Glyphosate 48% SL	F2018-1489

Notice is hereby given that the official distributor have been changed to Marlarmyaing Public Co., Ltd for the following insecticide manufactured by Nihon Nohyaku Co.,Ltd.

Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Type	Registration Number
Fuji-one 40 EC	Isoprothiolane 40% w/v EC	Full	F2014-142

We invite objections to Co-secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon from all parties within a period of fourteen (14) days from the publication of this notice. If no objections are receive within the period prescribed, parties mentioned above shall proceed with the completion of formalities recorded with the Pesticide Registration Board.

Nihon Nohyaku Co., Ltd.
Kyobashi OM Building, 19-8, Kyobashi 1- chome,
Chuo-Ku, Tokyo, 104-8386, Japan.

Notice is hereby given that the official distributor have been changed to Marlarmyaing Public Co., Ltd for the following insecticides manufactured by SDS Biotech K.K Co., Ltd. Tokyo, Japan

No.	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Type	Registration Number
1.	Daconil 40 SC	Chlorothalonil 40% SC	Full	F2012-317
2.	Daconil 75 WP	Chlorothalonil 75%WP	Full	FF2012-011

We invite objections to Co-secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon from all parties within a period of fourteen (14) days from the publication of this notice. If no objections are receive within the period prescribed, parties mentioned above shall proceed with the completion of formalities recorded with the Pesticide Registration Board.

SDS Biotech K.K. Co.,Ltd.
1-1-5, Higashi- nihombashi, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 103-0004, Japan.

New Zealand delays general election until Oct. amid virus outbreak



Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern speaks to media during a press conference at Parliament on 17 August 2020 in Wellington, New Zealand. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

SYDNEY — New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said Monday the country's general election will be delayed for a month until mid-October due to a recent coronavirus outbreak.

The election, which was originally due to be held on Sept. 19, will now take place on Oct. 17 after a cluster of coronavirus cases in the country's largest city, Auckland, grew to almost 60.

"I want to ensure we have a well-run election that gives all voters the best chance to

receive all the information they need about parties and candidates, and delivers certainty for the future," Ardern said at a press conference in Wellington.

"Moving the date by four weeks also gives all parties a fair shot to campaign and delivers New Zealanders certainty without unnecessarily long delays," she added, ruling out the possibility of her ordering a further postponement.

The resurgence of community transmission of the new virus in New Zealand last week

came just days after the country recorded 100 days of zero locally-acquired cases.

On Friday, Ardern announced that Auckland will continue to remain under Level 3 restrictions, the second-highest of the government's four-level system, for a total of two weeks. The rest of New Zealand will also remain at slightly more relaxed Level 2 restrictions until Aug. 27.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, New Zealand has recorded 1,280 cases and 22 deaths. — Kyodo News ■

Belarus workers stage strikes over disputed vote

MINSK (Belarus) — Workers at factories in Belarus answered opposition calls for fresh strikes on Monday after a historic weekend protest over President Alexander Lukashenko's disputed re-election brought tens of thousands to the streets.

In footage widely shared on social media, Lukashenko was confronted by workers at the Minsk Wheel Tractor Plant (MZKT) who shouted him down with chants of "Leave!" as he tried to give a speech.

A visibly angry Lukashenko walked off the stage, saying: "Thank you, I have said everything. You can shout 'Leave'."

Pressure has been building on the ex-Soviet nation's long-time leader since the August 9 election, which he claims to have won with 80 per cent of the vote.

In the biggest demonstration to date, more than 100,000 people took part in a "March for Freedom" in Minsk on Sunday following calls from main opposition figure Svetlana Tikhonovskaya for continued demonstrations.

A brutal police crackdown on post-election protests has drawn widespread condemnation and appears to have turned even Lukashenko's support base at state-owned industries against him.

European Union leaders are to hold an emergency video summit on Belarus on Wednesday, EU Council President Charles Michel announced, while Germany said it was prepared to back an expansion of previously announced sanctions.

Hundreds of workers and protesters gathered outside the

MZKT plant where Lukashenko was visiting, waving the red-and-white flag of the opposition and demanding his resignation.

Workers at the Minsk Tractor Works (MTZ) also told AFP that several thousand staff had walked off the job.

After flying in by helicopter, Lukashenko told workers he would not give in to calls for a new election.

"You will never expect me to do something under pressure," he was quoted as saying by his press service. "If anyone is unwilling to work and wants to leave, no one will harass you, do as you please, the door is open."

Demonstrators also gathered outside the Minsk headquarters of state television, where some staff were reported to have joined the strikes.

— AFP ■



Workers of Minskenergo (Minsk Energy Company) raise their hands during a rally in Minsk, on 17 August 2020, after incumbent president rejected calls to step down in a defiant speech. **PHOTO: AFP**

Google slams proposed changes to Australian media code



File photo shows the logo of Google Inc. in Mountain View, California, in 2018. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

SYDNEY — Google on Monday openly criticized proposed changes to Australian law that would see internet giants pay news companies for their content through a mandatory code of conduct, claiming the changes would put user data at risk.

A draft of the News Media Bargaining Code was announced in July with the Australian government proposing the legislation to "level the playing field" for Australian media businesses by making companies like Facebook and Google pay for content.

In an open letter promoted on the company's main search page, Google Australia Managing Director Mel Silva claimed the proposed code could lead to user data being handed over to news companies and a "dramatically worse" user experience.

"You trust us with your data and our job is to keep it safe," Silva wrote. "There's no way of knowing if any data

handed over would be protected, or how it might be used by news media businesses."

The Alphabet Inc.-owned company said the changes would also "force" Google to give an unfair advantage to news media companies, allowing them to "artificially inflate their ranking" over other content producers on multiple platforms.

"The proposed changes are not fair and they mean that Google search results and YouTube will be worse for you," Silva said.

Silva also suggested the changes may result in charges to the end user.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, which proposed the original draft code, responded Monday by accusing Google of publishing "misinformation".

It denied suggestions that Google would be required to share user data with Australian news businesses. — Kyodo News ■

Schools restart after short summer vacation amid pandemic

TOKYO — Many schools across Japan reopened Monday after a summer vacation that was shortened to allow students to catch up on classes missed due to earlier closures caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The shortest break decided on by municipal authorities was only nine days. Usually, Japanese students take more than a month's summer vacation.

Students wearing face masks started arriving at Ushioda Elementary School in Yokohama, near Tokyo, around 8 am. Their summer vacation had been shortened by roughly half.

"I was unable to go enjoy myself at the swimming pool because of the coronavirus," said NaoyaHirasawa, 12.

Schools are required to take steps to reduce the risk of heat exhaustion as well as prevent coronavirus infections. Temperatures have risen rapidly in recent days, with the mercury hitting 35 C or above in many locations.

In the central Japan city of Nagoya, students at Shimizu Elementary School sat in chairs placed apart and attended school assembly in their classrooms to avoid crowding, with the princi-



Students participate in a school term opening ceremony via a videoconference system in their classroom at a junior high school in Ogaki in Gifu Prefecture, western Japan, on 17 August 2020. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

pal, Tomio Suzuki, addressing them through the school public announcement system.

"Let's do our best to be able to say that we all made it through 2020, despite the novel coronavirus and the heat," he said.

In classrooms, windows were left open for ventilation while air conditioning was also

running. A teacher told pupils that to prevent heat exhaustion, they can take off their masks as long as they maintain social distancing.

Sone Elementary School in Takasago, Hyogo Prefecture, only had a nine-day vacation. "I didn't get much summer vacation, but I am happy to see my

friends," said 11-year-old Suzaku Fujiwara. Of the 1,794 local education boards across the country that closed elementary, middle and high schools due to the pandemic, 1,710 boards said as of June 23 that they were planning to shorten summer vacations, according to the education ministry. —Kyodo News ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Abe checks in at Tokyo hospital amid speculation about health

TOKYO — Amid speculation about his health, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe checked in to a hospital in Tokyo on Monday for what an aide called "a one-day regular health checkup."

Abe's visit to Keio University Hospital came a day after former economy minister Akira Amari, who is close to Abe, told a TV programme that the prime minister needs some rest. —Kyodo News ■

Largest protest in Thailand in years calls for monarchy reform

BANGKOK — The largest antigovernment protest in years was held in Thailand on Sunday, with mostly college students calling for reform of the country's monarchy which has long been shielded from criticism under the strict lese majeste law.

Local media estimated between 20,000 and 30,000 people participated in the protest in the capital Bangkok, making it the largest such protest since 2014 when then army chief Prayut Chan-o-cha seized power in a coup. —Kyodo News ■

Sri Lanka faces nationwide blackout due to power failure

COLOMBO — Sri Lanka faced a nationwide power failure on Monday due to a technical breakdown at a power station in Kerawalapitiya on the outskirts of capital Colombo, bringing businesses and daily life to a standstill.

The Ministry of Power said steps were being taken to restore power which went off a little after noon, assuring that electricity would be restored within a few hours.

Power Minister Dullas Alahapperuma rushed to the Kerawalapitiya Power Station within an hour after the nationwide blackout and remained with technicians who were trying to restore power. —Xinhua ■

Malaysia, Singapore reopen the border under tight control

KUALA LUMPUR — Cross-border travel between Malaysia and Singapore resumed Monday after being shut since March to stem the coronavirus outbreak.

However, the reopening of one of the world's busiest land crossing was tightly controlled with only a maximum of about 2,060 people allowed to cross

daily on both sides.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic led to Malaysia shutting the border on March 18, more than 300,000 people travelled between the two countries daily via the two bridges connecting Peninsular Malaysia and the city-state.

Out of these were some

100,000 Malaysians who commute to and from the city-state for work or study, and now many are stranded.

Johor Immigration Director Baharuddin Tahir told reporters that applications for cross-border travel between Malaysia and Singapore exceed the quota.

The two countries jointly formulated two sets of COVID-19 travel protocols or what they called the "Reciprocal Green Lane" and "Periodic Commuting Arrangement."

The RGL allows cross-border travel for essential business and official purposes only for up to 14 days but remains subject to COVID-19 preventive guidelines, including undergoing polymerase chain reaction, or PCR, swab tests.

Travellers must submit to the authorities of the receiving country a "controlled itinerary and adhere to this controlled itinerary during their visit."

The PCA, meantime, allows Singapore and Malaysia residents, who hold long-term immigration passes for business or work purposes in the other country, to enter that country for work. They must work consecutively in that country for three months before being allowed to return home for short-term leave.

"Under RGL, only 400 people are allowed per week. So if divided by seven days, about 50 to 60 (people can travel across the border). For PCA, our quota is 2,000 a day. For these five days, (applications) are already full," Baharuddin said.

Malaysia and Singapore have declared the coronavirus outbreak in their respective countries as under control.

The total number of cases in Malaysia is now over 9,200 with 125 fatalities, compared with Singapore which has reported more than 55,000 cases and 27 deaths. —Kyodo News ■



Photo taken from Malaysia's Johor Bahru shows almost empty roads near the border with Singapore on 18 March 2020, after Malaysia imposed a two-week nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of the new coronavirus. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Shan United to play against Southern Myanmar on 22 August

SHAN United FC will compete against Southern Myanmar FC at the Thuwunna Stadium at 3:30 pm on 22 August, the day MPT Myanmar National League 2020 will restart, according to the league's social media.

On the same day, Magwe FC and Yangon United FC will play at the Yangon United Sports Complex (YUSC).

On 23 August, Yadanarbon FC will compete against ISPE FC at the Thuwunna Stadium, while Ayeyawady United FC and

Rakhine United FC at the YUSC at 3:30 pm.

These four matches are included in the Week-10 of MPT Myanmar National League 2020.

At present after Week-9, Hantharwady United FC is at the top of the standing table with 21 points from eight played games, followed by Ayeyawady United in the second place with 17 points from seven played games, and Yangon United FC in the third place with 14 points from seven played games. — Kyaw Khin

Japan's Kei Nishikori tests positive for coronavirus

NEW YORK — Japan's Kei Nishikori said Sunday he has tested positive for the novel coronavirus, with the news coming two weeks before the U.S. Open, where he had his most successful Grand Slam performance in 2014 with a run-up finish.

The 30-year-old said he was self-isolating in Florida and as a result has pulled out of the Western and Southern Open, which has been moved to New York from its traditional venue in Cincinnati to act as a warm-up event for the Aug. 31-Sept. 13 U.S. Open.

"Hi everyone, I have some unfortunate news today. This morning while still in Florida, I got tested for COVID-19 and tested positive," Nishikori said in a statement on his official app, adding, "I am feeling well

and have very little symptoms."

Nishikori, currently ranked 31st in the world, has not played a competitive match since undergoing elbow surgery in October last year.

He said he "will obviously be in complete isolation for the safety of everyone" and will receive a test again on Friday.

Nishikori, who also reached the U.S. Open semifinals in his past two appearances in 2016 and 2018, said he got the positive test result the day before he and his team were scheduled to fly to New York.

A number of players have already withdrawn from this year's U.S. Open over fears of contracting the coronavirus, including defending champion Rafael Nadal and women's world No 1 Ashleigh Barty. — Kyodo News

MFF introduces new FIFA football rules for MPT MNL 2020



An official from MFF's Referees Department explains new FIFA football rules to MNL football clubs' coaches and footballers at the meeting hall of Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on 17 August. **PHOTO: MFF**

A ceremony to launch new football rules set by FIFA was held at the meeting hall of Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon yesterday.

The event was organized ahead of MPT Myanmar National League 2020 that will restart on 22 August.

MNL Chief Executive Officer U Soe Moe Kyaw, Chief Operating Officer U Sue Aung, MFF Chief Medical Officer Dr Aung Kyaw Oo, MNL clubs' Director U Tun Tun Aung and officials, and the football clubs' head coaches and players attended the meeting.

U Khin Maung Than, U Hla Than and U Hla Min from MFF's Referees Department explained the new football rules with the use of a projector.

The questions asked by the coaches and footballers attended were also discussed at the meeting. — Kyaw Khin

Singaporean investors in 'advanced' talks to buy Newcastle United

SINGAPORE — Three Singaporean entrepreneurs behind a Paris-based conglomerate are in "advanced" talks to buy English Premier League football club Newcastle United, the company said Monday, just weeks after a Saudi-backed bid was withdrawn.

Bellagraph Nova Group, which operates across 100 countries in fields ranging from finance to sport, healthcare and luxury goods, said it has given Newcastle a letter of intent and proof it has funds for the purchase.

The company also said it had "enlisted the help" of former England captain and Newcastle legend Alan Shearer, along with fellow former player Michael Chopra.

The bid was announced after a Saudi-backed consortium withdrew its offer to buy Newcastle in late July, after months of waiting for Premier League approval.

"We are already negotiating the term of our acquisition



The logo of the Newcastle team is displayed on the empty rows of seats at the stadium prior to the English Premier League football match between Newcastle United and West Ham United at St James' Park in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, north east England on 5 July 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

of Newcastle Football Club. We are at the advanced stage of the purchasing," a Bellagraph Nova Group spokesman told AFP.

Bellagraph Nova Group was co-founded by Singaporean cousins Nelson and Terence Loh and their business partner Evangeline Shen in 2008.

The Lohs are former investment bankers at JP Morgan, and are known to be keen sports fans who sponsored Singaporean racing driver Yuey Tan as well as the national muay thai team, the Straits Times news-

paper said.

Singaporean businessman Peter Lim already owns Spain's six-time La Liga champions Valencia.

Bellagraph Nova said it sent a letter of intent and "proof of funds" to Newcastle on August 10. The company's founders "have declared their willingness to massively contribute to the development of the club through their solid and international structure and a combined business/sport devoting mindset", it added.—AFP



Kei Nishikori of Japan, who is nursing a right elbow injury, practises before a Davis Cup qualifier against Ecuador on 7 March 2020, in Miki, Hyogo Prefecture. Nishikori did not play in the team event.

PHOTO: KYODO NEWS