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Friday, 8 January 2021

YRTA runs over 3,000 YBS buses daily during COVID resurgence

YANGON Region Transport Authority (YRTA) Secretary Dr Maung Aung said over 3,000 YBS buses or three-quarters of all Yangon Bus System (YBS) city buses are resuming their daily operations. However, COVID-19 pandemic has caused an expressive decline in YBS buses operation.

“Daily YBS bus operations have dropped in the pandemic period. But now, over 3,000 YBS buses are running their operations as usual, which is three-fourths of all YBS city buses. There are only 450,000 or 500,000 passengers on board the buses. Normally, around 800,000 passengers are travelling using YBS city buses. Most of the commuters are using the buses, especially in the morning and evening. Only a few passengers are using buses in the afternoon,” he elaborated.

More than 4,000 buses from nearly 100 bus lines provide daily service for passengers in the Yangon region. So far, over 3,000 buses are resuming their operations. YRTA is also supporting the necessary things for YBS to be able to operate the buses regularly.

Moreover, YRTA also provided the masks, the stickers to remind the people to wear the



YBS buses are seen in downtown Yangon during the second wave of coronavirus outbreak in Myanmar. PHOTO: MYINT MAUNG KYAW

masks and the bus conductors to spray on the vehicle. YRTA also exempted the YBS buses from contributing K4,000 per bus daily

to the YRTA management funds from March, the YRTA secretary added.

“Now, Yangonites are aware

of wearing the masks. Wearing the face covers can help prevent the people from getting or spreading the virus, and it is the

best way to control the disease by not infecting other people,” said Dr Maung Aung. —Myint Maung Kyaw (Translated by Hay Mar)

594 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 7 January, total figure rises to **128,772**

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **128,772** after **594** new cases were reported on 7 January 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these **128,772** confirmed cases, **2,799** died, **112,048** have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 7 January 2021

Total Cases

128,772

New Cases

594

Total Death Tally

2,799

Discharged from Hospital

112,048

Daily death toll until 8 pm 7-1-2021

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Ministry of Health and Sports

“People are the key”

His Excellency Rumen Radev, President of the Republic of Bulgaria
sends Congratulatory Message to the President

ON behalf of the Bulgarian people and on my own behalf, I extend my most cordial congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, as well as my most sincere wishes for the prosperity and well-being of the friendly people of Myanmar.

I avail myself of this opportunity to underline my confidence in the future more active development of the relations of friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation between our two countries.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest considerations.

Her Excellency Salome Zourabichvili, President of Georgia
sends Congratulatory Message to the President

On behalf of the Georgian people and on my own behalf, allow me to extend to you my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

Let me reiterate that Georgia attaches high importance to the development and enhancement of relations with Myanmar. I do hope that in the coming years, friendly partnership between our countries will continue to grow for the mutual benefit of our nations.

Mr President, please accept the assurances of my highest consideration along with my best wishes for peace and prosperity to You and Your country.

The Most Honourable Andrew Holness, ON, MP, Prime Minister of
Jamaica sends Congratulatory Message to the President

ON behalf of the Government and the people of Jamaica, I extend congratulations to the Government and people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, as you celebrate the 73rd Anniversary of your Independence.

Jamaica and Myanmar have enjoyed cordial relations since the establishment of diplomatic ties over two decades ago. Even as our respective countries strive to cope with the effects of the current global health crisis, we look forward to advancing our collaborative efforts for the mutual benefit of our peoples.

Please accept, Excellency, my best wishes for the peace and prosperity of the people of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

His Excellency Boyko Borissov, Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria
sends Congratulatory Message to the State Counsellor

ON behalf of the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria and on my own behalf, I extend most sincere congratulations on the occasion of the National Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar – the Independence Day.

I avail myself of this pleasant opportunity to express my confidence that the friendly relations between Bulgaria and Myanmar will continue to develop and expand in all spheres of mutual interest.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Myanmar nationals brought back home from India, Japan by relief flights



Myanmar returnees are seen at the Yangon International Airport on 7 January 2021. PHOTO: MNA

THE relief flight of Air India organized by the Myanmar Embassy in New Delhi landed at Yangon International Airport bringing back a total of 44 Myanmar nationals after they were stranded in India due to the suspension of international flights, yesterday afternoon.

The 18th relief flight of All Nippon Airway (ANA) organized by the Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo also brought back a total of 101 Myanmar national, who were stranded in Japan, yesterday evening.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Yangon Region government arranged

7-day quarantine at specific places or designated hotels, followed by the 7-day home quarantine.

To bring back the Myanmar citizens and Myanmar seamen who are stranded in foreign countries by relief flights and chartered flights in accordance with the instructions from National-Level Central Committee on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cooperated with the relevant ministries and Myanmar embassies from respective countries and shipping companies.—MNA

(Translated by Ei Phyu Phyu Aung)

Maha Patthana recitation ceremony held at Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw



THE opening ceremony of 126th Maha Patthana recitation was held at Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The five members of Sangha, including Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vimala Buddhi, who is the senior member of the advisory board of the pagoda and the presiding monk of Pali Tekkatho Mingalar Zay Yone Monastery, attended the opening ceremony. Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture Thura U Aung Ko, Directors-General for Religious Affairs and Department for the Promotion and Propagation of Sasana, Deputy Permanent Secretary and officials were also present.

The Maha Patthana recitation ceremony will take place from 7 to 11 January. —MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

Union Minister Thura U Aung Ko and officials pay homage to the Members of Sangha at the Uppatasanti Pagoda in Nay Pyi Taw on 7 January 2021. **PHOTO: MNA**

Environmental conservation officials meet for implementation plans

UNION MINISTER for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Ohn Win presided over the first coordination meeting of the Department of Environmental Conservation for 2020-2021FY via videoconferencing at its office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The Union Minister said that the department was first established over eight years ago for the environmental conservation in all sectors.

Policies and strategies, laws and by-laws and rules and regulations relating to the environment were laid down to work for the clean environment and healthy ecosystem in successive generations of the country.

The department was established in 2012-2013FY, it is now being operated with 1,411 staff with 15 Region/State offices, 45 District offices, and 7



Union Minister U Ohn Win speaks at the virtual meeting of the Environmental Conservation Department on 7 January 2021. **PHOTO: MNA**

Township offices. The national environmental policy, climate change policy, strategy and main function, waste strategy, and main function were released during this period. Implementations of the related sectors based on the policies, strategy, and main function have somewhat achievements.

Additional 43 district offices and 194 township offices

are planned to be opened in the seven years from 2019-2020FY to 2025-2026FY. Plans are being made to open the offices, appoint staff, and to request budgets for the projects.

Vice-President-led National Environmental Conservation and Climate Change Central Committee organized ten meetings so far, and resolutions of the meetings were being implemented in all levels of Region/State and District/Township.

The department granted small-scale mining permits in regions and states to help the livelihoods of the residents and conducted environmental assessments in cooperation with Region/State governments.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Zin Tun)

Tatmadaw contributes K1 bln to COVID-19 vaccination fund

THE Tatmadaw contributed K1 billion to COVID-19 vaccination fund of the nation yesterday, according to the report of Office of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services.

The report said that the Tatmadaw made the first cash donation from the one-month salary of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and senior Tatmadaw officers and one-day salary of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) officers and the substituted civil staff members in April 2020, followed by the second cash donation from 25 per cent of the one-month salary of senior Tatmadaw officers and one-day salary of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air)

officers and the substituted civil staff members in May 2020.

The two donations amounted to over K4 billion in total. The cash donations were spent on purchasing medical supplies for hospitals, civil society organizations, quarantine centres of the Tatmadaw and the treatment centres of COVID-19 positive patients.

While the Tatmadaw is actively taking part in the fight against the pandemic, the latest donation of K1 billion is the first contribution to the COVID-19 vaccination fund, and further donation will be made if necessary.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Peacemaking processes in the post-2020 period



AT this time when we already have the peace roadmap for the post-2020 period clearly in our view, we will implement the post- 2020 period peace process with new approaches by exerting our efforts from all angles and points of view so that not only the NCA signatories but also the non-signatories will come on board and cooperate.

We have realized that both formal and informal dialogues are pivotal to the peacemaking processes in the post-2020 period. Similarly, we also recognize the role of public participation. This is related to paving the way for inclusiveness of all the stakeholders. Moreover, we have to focus on the design aspect of the peacemaking process such as policy and framework guidelines, the formation of necessary working groups, and the establishment of systems and mechanisms.

(Excerpt from Chairperson of National Reconciliation and Peace Centre and State Counsellor
Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's speech on New Year, on 2 January 2021)

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe discusses participation of artistes in COVID-19 response efforts

UNION MINISTER for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe and Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein participated in a videoconference on 6 January with the artistes who are taking part in COVID-19 response efforts.

At the meeting, Dr Tun Myint, Head of Yangon Region Public Health and Medical Services Department, explained the contribution of artistes in COVID-19 response efforts in Yangon Region.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein said that many performers contribute in COVID-19 response efforts by reaching out to help the general public, and it will become an unforgettable milestone.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe said that COVID-19 could not be completely eradicated,

and the disease may continue for several months. He called on the performers not to slow down their efforts in the COVID-19 response process.

Only adhering to COVID-19 preventive guidelines will be able to control the spread of COVID-19, said the Union Minister, who pointed out that only when the COVID-19 spread is reduced to an acceptable level, the peoples' businesses, education and social matters will be able to resume normal operations. He called on the performers to use various ways to educate the general public about COVID-19.

The Union Minister emphasized the crucial role of performers in changing the habits of the general public for control of COVID-19 in a short period. People love performers and are more



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe speaks during the virtual meeting with artistes on COVID-19 response efforts on 6 January 2021. PHOTO: MNA

obedient to their words, said the Union Minister citing research findings.

He said that the songs, videos, cartoons and messages provided by musicians, performers and cartoonists will be sent to State/Region Public Health Departments.

He expressed thanks for performers and cartoonists for their contributions in the Stop COVID-19 Yellow Campaign in Yangon Region.

Actors, musicians, traditional dancers, composers, singers,

cartoonists, presenters, and donors who participated in the virtual meeting discuss on their roles in COVID-19 response efforts.

In his closing speech, the Union Minister said that the suggestions of performers and the attendees are invaluable for COVID-19 response efforts. He has great respect for knowledge and opinions of them. He said that future works of the Ministry will be carried out in line with those ideas.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein said that they would continue arranging meetings with experts from various fields for COVID-19 response efforts.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

Work committee on drafting national land law, harmonization of related laws holds third meeting

THE Work Committee on Drafting the National Land Law and Harmonization of Related Laws held its third meeting via videoconferencing at the Office of the Union Attorney-General in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the meeting, the committee's Chairperson Union Attorney-General U Tun Tun Oo said that seven sub-work-groups were formed to implement the work plan according to the decision of the second meeting of the committee. He continued that sub-work-groups are unable to conduct field visits and face-to-face meetings because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but are conducting non-face-to-face observations and online discussions. He said that the Work Committee sought



Work Committee on Drafting the National Land Law and Harmonization of Related Laws holds virtual meeting on 7 January 2021. PHOTO: MNA

public opinions on the action plan (draft) via daily newspapers and the website of the Office of the Union Attorney-General, and received 172 suggestions.

He said that great efforts are being made to create a National Land Law that looks forward to a future democratic federal union. It also aims at bringing sustainable development, peace, prosperity, socio-economic security and food security for all the citizens, including ethnic nationalities. He said that to achieve that goal, it is necessary to take into account

the general public's suggestions on the action plan (draft) for the National Land Law. He added that the process of drafting National Land Law would be continued in accordance with the plan approved by the meeting. He also stressed that the general public could be involved in carrying out the process, and it is necessary to get relevant suggestions. He pointed out that it is required to pay great attention to recognize land ownership of ethnic nationalities.

He said that the land-sector related points approved by the Union Peace Conference-21st Century Panglong sessions need to be included in the bill. He also highlighted the importance of recommendations from the tech-

nical advisory board in reviewing existing laws for compatibility with National Land Law and improving the management of the National Land Use Council. He emphasized that if all work collaboratively, the National Land Law (draft), which will be in line with the national land use policy, will be completed within a reasonable period of time. He said that the drafting process must be carried out in accordance with the action plan and the sub-work-groups need to work collaboratively to draft the backbone of the law.

Members of the committee, members of the technical advisory board and other invitees participated in the meeting.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

Plan International Myanmar presents communication tools for visually-impaired, hearing-impaired persons

PLAN International Myanmar transferred braille and sign language video files about nine disasters for the persons with visual or hearing impairments yesterday.

The tools for PWDs were presented at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, and Country Director of Plan International Myanmar Mr Haider Yaqub firstly briefed the donation.

Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye said the ministry is making efforts for the children, youths, women and elderly people to get their individual rights in full in addition to the development.

The preventive measures and responses are also being carried out to overcome the



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye participates in the handover ceremony of communication tools for visually impaired and hearing impaired persons via videoconferencing on 7 January 2021. **PHOTO: MNA**

risks of natural and human-made hazards in rehabilitation pro- grammes.

The ministry leaves no one behind in its all plans, especially for the people with disabilities who are badly hit during natural disasters.

The School for the blind Kyimyindine of Social Welfare Department and Plan International Myanmar jointly created the braille for the blinds and sign language video files for the deaf people about nine kinds of dangers such as fire, flood, strong wind, storm, drought, earthquake, Tsunami, lightning and landslide. The braille and video files will be delivered to the PWDs via the federations of people with disabilities and other disabled people organizations.—MNA

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)

COVID-19 Call Centre opens daily

In efforts to speed up the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 disease, the call centre (**phone number 2019**) is established by four communications operators and the Blue Ocean Company with the coordination of the Medical Research Department of the Health and Sports Ministry and Post and Telecommunications Department from 9 am to 5 pm daily at the Medical Research Department in Yangon.

Over 43 staff from the Medical Research Department and 17 volunteers from the Myanmar Medical Association totally 60 workers have been working at the centre since 8th April.—MNA

Chairman of Aden Group of Companies donates \$1.5 mln for COVID vaccination fund

U Chit Khaing, Chairman of Aden Group of Companies donated \$1.5 million for COVID-19 vaccination fund raised by the National Committee on COVID-19 Prevention, Control and Treatment yesterday.

Regarding the donation, U Chit Khaing said, “I donated as much as I can while all the people are facing COVID-19 pandemic. The government also welcomes such cash contribution. I want to urge everybody to make whatever amount of donation for the people in protecting them from the risks of COVID-19 pandemic. I also wish that our country could overcome

COVID-19 pandemic soon.”

The donors can transfer any type of foreign currency into Foreign Currency Account No EDC 600012. The local donors can also donate at Myanmar Currency Account No OA 013733 at Myanma Economic Bank in Nay Pyi Taw.

The Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry announced that the government had raised the initial fund of K1 billion and US\$250 million to purchase COVID-19 vaccines for the country. —Min Thit

(Translated by Khine Thazin Han)



Chairman of Aden Group of Companies U Chit Khaing. **PHOTO: MNA**

Trade Mark Ads

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Announcement on fund establishment to purchase COVID-19 vaccines

- The National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on 30-12-2020 formed a Fund Management Sub-committee on the Purchase of COVID-19 Vaccines. The sub-committee has opened the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund at the Myanma Economic Bank in Nay Pyi Taw as follows:
 - Fund for purchase of COVID-19 vaccines (Foreign Currency Account No. EDC 600012). The bank account will be initially deposited with USD250 million, equivalent to about K338 billion from State-funding.
 - Fund for purchase of COVID-19 vaccines (Myanmar Currency Account No. OA 013733). The bank account is initially deposited K1 billion (K1,000 million) from State-funding.
- Therefore, organizations and people (local/ foreign countries) who want to contribute cash donation for the purchase of vaccines, can donate any type of foreign currency to the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund (Foreign Currency Account No. EDC 600012) at the Myanma Economic Bank (Nay Pyi Taw), and can donate Myanmar Kyat to the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund (Myanmar Currency Account No. OA 013733).
- The potential well-wishers can contact the following phone numbers:

Director-General (067 3410156)
Treasury Department (067 3410158)

Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry

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Number of companies registered on MyCo exceed 15,000 in 2020: DICA

By Nyein Nyein

THE number of companies registered on the online registry system, MyCO, reached over 15,000 in 2020, the statistics released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) indicated.
The registration and re-registration of companies on the MyCO website commenced on 1 August 2018, keeping with the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.
Last year, the figures of registered companies stood at 1,415 in January, 1,298 in February and 1,015 in March, only 348 companies in April, 798 in May, 1,314 in June, 1,650 in July, 1,551 in August, 1,378 in September, 1,693 in October, 1,099 in November and 1,521 in December, as per statistics of the DICA.
At present, 100 per cent

of the applicants are using the online registration platform, according to the DICA data.
In 2019, the figure stood at 1,733 in January 2019, 1,419 in February, 1,108 in March, and over 1,045 in April, 1,411 in May, 1,307 in June, 1,428 in July, 1,302 in August and 1,181 in September. The figures reached a fresh new peak of 2,059 in October 2019. Then, 1,615 new companies in November and 1,772 in December were recorded, indicated the DICA data.
When the online registry was launched in August 2018, 1,816 new companies registered on MyCO. The figure stood at 2,218 in September 2018, 1,671 in October, 1,431 in November and 1,364 in December 2018.
Since the online registry platform’s establishment, 40,960 new companies and 46,377 exist-

ing companies have registered and re-registered on MyCO, bringing the total number of registered companies to 87,337 by October-end.
Also, all registered companies need to file annual returns (AR) on the MyCO registry system within two months of incorporation, and at least once every year (not later than one month after the anniversary of the incorporation), according to Section 97 of Myanmar Companies Law 2017. According to Section 266 (A) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public companies must simultaneously submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5). All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within 28 days of the financial year ending, as per Section 53 (A-1) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

Newly established companies are required to submit ARs within two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns.
The DICA has notified that any company which fails to submit its AR within 13 months will be notified of its suspension (I-9A). If it fails to submit the AR within 28 days of receiving the notice, the system will show the company’s status as suspended. Companies can restore their position only after shelling out a fine of K50,000 for AR fee, K100,000 to restore the company on the Register, and K100,000 for late filing of documents.
According to the DICA notice, if a company fails to restore its status within six months of suspension, the registrar will strike its name off the Register. (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Hsedawgyi dam to provide full irrigation for summer paddy, sesame in Feb

MANDALAY Region Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department will provide sufficient irrigated water from Hsedawgyi Dam for the local farmers who will grow summer paddy and summer sesame on 67,348 acres of land starting from the first week of February.
Now, the Hsedawgyi Dam has entirely stored the water. At the end of December, the Hsedawgyi dam has 358,260 acres of remaining water level with 84,000 acres of dead water level and 274,260 acres of usable water. Depending upon the remaining water level, the department targeted to provide full water to 67,053 acres of summer paddy and 295 acres of summer sesame for the



Picture shows Hsedawgyi Dam in Madaya Township, Mandalay Region. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG

local farmers in this financial year. Likewise, dam water will be left for monsoon paddy cultivation for the next season, said U

San Min Tun, deputy director of Mandalay Region Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department. “We will provide

the irrigated water fully to the summer paddy growers. To be able to provide enough water, we have already stored 363,000 acres of water in 419.5-foot wide Hsedawgyi dam,” he clarified.
The department is planning to grow 67,053 acres of summer paddy in Mandalay and PyinOoLwin district of water area including 42,225 acres of summer paddy in Madaya township, 65 acres in Chanmyathazi township, 18,807 acres in Patheingyi township and 5,956 acres in Amarapura township. Also, the department targeted to plant 295 acres of summer sesame crops. —Min Htet Aung (Man Sub-printing house)
(Translated by Hay Mar)

6 fishers prosecuted, 32 fishing boats seized in Ayeyawady dolphin protection zone

ACCORDING to the Wildlife Conservation Society, six persons were prosecuted, and 32 fishing boats seized for electrofishing in the dolphin conservation zone of the Ayeyawady River in Mandalay Region within four months of 2020.
“Ayeyawady dolphin protection project has been in place between Mandalay and Kyaukmyaung dolphin protection zone since 1 September 2020. A team inspects those areas day and night and assists ef-

forts to crack down on illegal fishers. Now, those six people have been charged under Mandalay Region Freshwater Fishing Law,” said U Kyaw Hla Thein, in-charge of the Wildlife Conservation Society, which is part of the Ayeyawady dolphin conservation project.
With the team patrolling every day during the one-year project of Ayeyawady dolphin conservation, two fishermen were arrested and 11 fishing vessels, electric fishing nets, batteries and machines seized in December, the fourth month of the dolphin protection project. The number of Ayeyawady dolphin death rate was on the rise again in 2020. The Ayeyawady dolphins have mostly been killed by electrofishing and illegal fishing.
The one-year patrolling project implemented by the Fisheries department is being carried out to reduce and finally eliminate the illegal fishing and electrofishing and develop

the Ayeyawady dolphin and the fisheries resources.
According to the data recorded in February 2020, 79 dolphins have been found in the conservation area, which is the highest number on record. On the other hand, this year has seen the highest number of death rate with eight dolphins. So far, there will be over 70 dolphins in Ayeyawady dolphin conservation area. —Aung Thura
(Translated by Hay Mar)

Green gram prices rise on steady Chinese demand

THE price of green gram remains high on account of the steady demand by China, traders said.

At present, the FOB prices of green grams (Fair and Average Quality) move in the range of US\$1,050-1,100 per metric ton depending on varieties.

Green grams (Shwe Wah variety) from the Mandalay Region and Sagaing Region townships are also flowing into the Mandalay market. The price is expected to remain high due to growing demand, according to Mandalay depot.

The green grams fetch K39,000-41,000 per basket during the harvest season this year, Pakokku commodity depot's data indicated.

The low rainfall affected the yield. As a result of this, some growers are

not financially doing well despite the high price of green gram, said U Tin Win, a grower from Nyaung-U Township.

U Min Nyo, a grower who uses electric pumps, stated that we do not worry over yield rate as we depend on irrigation water.

China accounts for 60 per cent of Myanmar's green gram exports. Besides, countries in the European Union also purchase green grams from Myanmar. The export volume of green grams to India is lower compared to other countries. China prefers green grams (Shwe Wah) variety, said an official from the Commerce Ministry.

China makes value-added products from green grams and sends them to foreign markets. Moreover, it produces bean by-products as feed-

stuffs.

Myanmar's green gram exports have registered over 330,000 metric tons in the 2015-2016 financial year, over 400,000 in the 2016-2017FY, and over 350,000 in the 2017-2018FY and over 300,000 the 2018-2019FY. Green grams are mostly exported to China through the border trade channels.

Of the total pulses' exports, green grams accounted for more than 26 per cent of the exports in the previous years.

As per green gram plantation data, there are over 300,000 acres of plantations in the country. Green grams are primarily grown in Sagaing, Magway, Mandalay, Yangon, Bago, and Ayeyawady regions and Mon and Kayah states. — Ko Htein, Ko Khant (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Myawady-Maesot border trade normal despite transport restrictions

THE border trade through Myawady-Maesot between Myanmar and Thailand remains normal although Thailand ordered restrictions in Maesot, according to Myawady Chamber of Commerce.

Myawady border trade did not halt owing to the restriction orders by Thailand. Myanmar trucks cannot enter Maesot, but trucks from Thailand come and pick up the goods at Myawady post, the chamber stated.

We have experienced trade suspension via Myawady in October. The halt in trading undoubtedly harms the traders and truck drivers from both sides. It is good that trade does not stop at present, said a trader from Myawady.

Trade between Thailand and Myanmar via the Myawady border between 1 October and 18 December in the current financial year 2020-2021 plunged to US\$199.959 million from \$238.639 million registered in the year-ago period, according to the data from the Ministry of Commerce.

During the last financial year, Myanmar has increasingly exported corns to Thailand through Myawady border crossing. Myanmar's corn exports to Thailand significantly soared to over 1.2 million tonnes through land borders between Myanmar and Thailand during October and May period in the 2019-2020FY, said an official of the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar is prepping

for corn export to Thailand under zero-tariff starting from 1 February 2020, said U Min Khaing, chairman of Myanmar Corn Industrial Association. There are seven border posts between Myanmar and Thailand, Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Hteekhee, Myeik, Mawtaung and Maese.

Myanmar primarily exports corn, natural gas, fishery products, coal, tin concentrate (SN 71.58 per cent), coconut (fresh and dry), beans, and bamboo shoots to Thailand. It imports capital goods such as machinery, raw industrial goods such as cement and fertilizers, consumer goods such as cosmetics and food products from the neighbouring country. — Htet Myat (Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

Trade Mark Ads Call

Thin Thin May, 09251022355



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National Land Law key to addressing land rights issues

WITH a commitment to ensuring a National Land Law, which can guarantee sustainable land management, land rights, protect the rights of ethnic minority communities, sustainable socio economic development and food security, the Union Government is working on amending the existing laws related to land management.

According to the third meeting of the Work Committee on Drafting the National Land Law and Harmonization of Laws Related to Land Management held yesterday, the seven sub-committees collected a total of 172 suggestions following online consultation with the public and a range of relevant stakeholders.

To ensure that there is a consistent, fair and equitable land governance framework, the suggestions and pragmatic ways should be taken into consideration.

As the work on drafting the National Land Law continues, further participation of the people and inviting their suggestions should be given priority in the coming processes.

It is worth noting that the points related with the land sector approved at the sessions of the Union Peace Conference- 21st Century Panglong and other points for post-2020 period related with land sector would be incorporated into the draft of the law.

Besides, to ensure systematic utilization and management of land resources in our country, it is required to take into consideration the suggestions from the technical advisory group on reviewing and amending the laws related to land use and management and the rule of law.

In our country, there is an urgent need for harmonization between laws related to land management. The laws also need to be consistent with the National Land Use Policy, or NLUP.

To ensure sustainable livelihoods and the development of the country, our land resources need to be managed and utilized properly. Only systematic utilization and management of land resources can improve the socio-economic condition of the people.

We are confident that thanks to the cooperation and coordination of all relevant stakeholders, a National Land Law that protects the land rights of communities and development of agriculture as 70 percent of Myanmar's population resides in rural areas.

For the successful drafting of the National Land Law, the relevant authorities, organizations and individuals need to fully understand the contents of the National Land Use Policy and to cooperate and coordinate with each other while listening to the voices of the people.

■ ■ ■

The World Ocean

By Than Htun (Myanmar Geosciences Society)



The Indian Ocean, with depth contours and undersea features. SOURCE:ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA, INC.

Cape Agulhas.

- The Arctic Ocean is the smallest of the five. It joins the Atlantic Ocean near Greenland and Iceland and joins the Pacific Ocean at the Bering Strait. It overlies the North Pole, touching North America in the Western Hemisphere and Scandinavia and Siberia in the Eastern Hemisphere. The Arctic Ocean is partially covered in sea ice, the extent of which varies according to the season.
- The Southern Ocean is a proposed ocean surrounding Antarctica, dominated by the Antarctic Circumpolar Current, generally the ocean south of 60 degrees south latitude. The Southern Ocean is partially covered in sea ice, the extent of which varies according to the season. The Southern Ocean is the second smallest of the five named oceans.

First of all, I would like to introduce the Indian Ocean which occupied 2100 km coastline of western and southern Myanmar, so as to familiar young generations with significant characteristics of it. I intend to present concise account of all five oceans of the world one by one in the year 2021.

Indian Ocean

Indian Ocean, body of salt water covering approximately one-fifth of the total ocean area of the world. It is the smallest, geologically youngest, and physically most complex of the world's

three major oceans. It stretches for more than 6,200 miles (10,000 km) between the southern tips of Africa and Australia and, without its marginal seas, has an area of about 28,360,000 square miles (73,440,000 sq. km). The Indian Ocean's average depth is 12,990 feet (3,960 metres), and its deepest point, in the Sunda Deep of the Java Trench off the southern coast of the island of Java , is 24,442 feet (7,450 metres).

Physiography And Geology

The origin and evolution of the Indian Ocean is the most complicated of the three major oceans. Its formation is a consequence of the breakup, which began about 180 million years ago, of the southern supercontinent Gondwanaland; by the movement to the north-east of the Indian subcontinent (beginning about 125 million years ago), which began colliding with Eurasia about 50 million years ago; and by the western movement of Africa and separation of Australia from Antarctica some 53 million years ago. By 36 million years ago, the Indian Ocean had taken on its present configuration. Although it first opened some 140 million years ago, almost all the Indian Ocean basin is less than 80 million years old.

Seamounts

Seamounts are extinct submarine volcanoes that are conically shaped and often flat-topped. They rise abruptly from the abyssal plain to heights at least 3,300

feet (1,000 metres) above the ocean floor. In the Indian Ocean, seamounts are particularly abundant between Réunion and Seychelles in the Central Indian Basin and the Vening Meinesz group near Wharton Basin. Bardin, Kohler, Nikitin, and Williams seamounts are examples.

Ocean basins

Ocean basins are characterized by smooth, flat plains of thick sediment with abyssal hills (i.e., features that are less than 3,300 feet high) at the bottom flanks of the oceanic ridges. The Indian Ocean's complex ridge topography led to the formation of many basins that range in width from 200 to 5,600 miles (320 to 9,000 km). From roughly north to south they include the Arabian, Somali, Mascarene, Madagascar, Mozambique, Agulhas, and Crozet basins in the west and the Central Indian (the largest), Wharton, and South Australia basins in the east.

Continental rise, slope, and shelf

The continental shelf extends to an average width of about 75 miles (120 km) in the Indian Ocean, with its widest points 190 miles (300 km) off Mumbai (Bombay) on the western coast of India and off northwestern Australia. The island shelves are only about 1,000 feet (300 metres) wide. The shelf break is at a depth of about 460 feet (140 metres). Submarine canyons indent the steep slope below the break. The Ganges (Ganga) and Indus rivers of Asia and the Zambezi River of Africa have all carved particularly large canyons. Their sediment loads extend far beyond the shelf, form the rises at the foot of the slope, and contribute to the abyssal plains of their respective basins. The Ganges sediment cone is the world's widest and thickest.

Trenches

The Indian Ocean has the fewest trenches of any of the world's oceans. The narrow 50 miles (80 km), volcanic, and seismically active Java Trench is the world's second longest, stretching more than 2,800 miles (4,500 km) from southwest of Java and continuing northward as the Sunda Trench past Sumatra, with an extension along the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The portion of that system adjacent to Sumatra was the centre of a massive undersea

U Myo Thant Pe concurrently accredited as Ambassador of Myanmar to Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Nay Pyi Taw, 8 January

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Myo Thant Pe, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the People's Republic of China, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.—MNA

U Myint Swe concurrently accredited as Ambassador of Myanmar to Republic of Malawi
Nay Pyi Taw, 8 January

THE President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Myint Swe, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of South Africa, concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the Republic of Malawi.—MNA

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

Thank you so much for covering my article "The good old days at the Rangoon University" in the 7 January issue. Here, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that due to my incomprehensive writing I had created a confusion. The "(Kyar) Ba Nyein" mentioned in my article and the famous Burma Champion boxer "Kyar (Tiger) Ba Nyein" were two different persons. I should have written Kyar (Draught) Ba Nyein instead to differentiate the two of them, or I should have pointed out clearly in the article that they were two different persons so as not to be confused.

So, please allow me to clear that confusion through your daily with this "Letter to the Editor". I would also like to take this opportunity to suggest to you to please consider reintroducing that item as in the past. It shouldn't necessarily be a on a daily basis, but on certain days, once or twice a week will suffice.

Sincerely yours.
Khin Maung Myint.
7/1/21

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

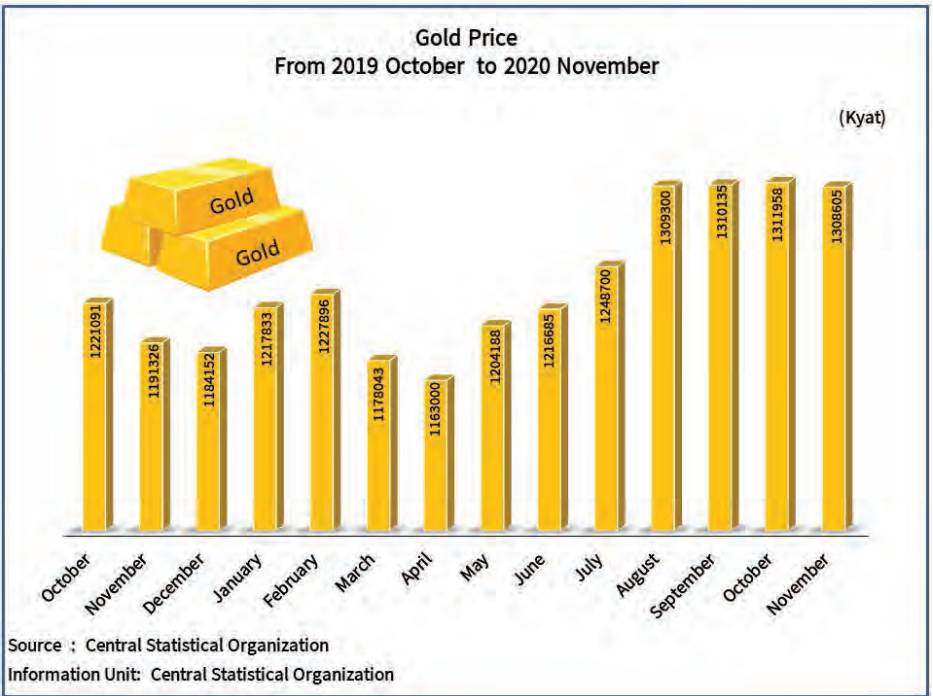
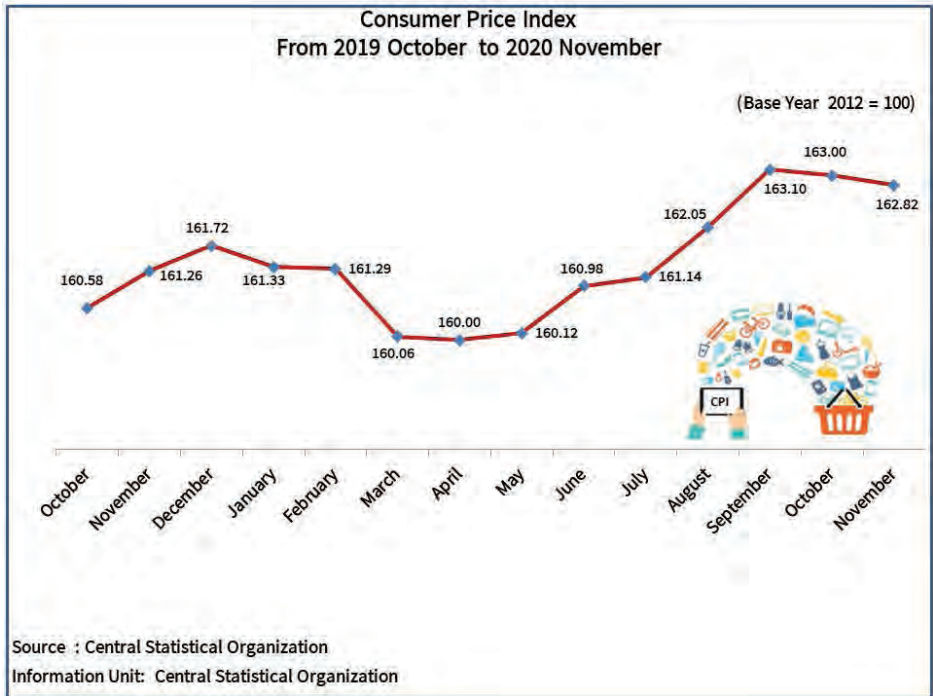
(Issued at 7:00 pm Thursday 7 January, 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 8 January, 2021: Light rain are likely to be isolated in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing, Yangon, Ayeyarwady Regions and Shan, Chin, Kayin, Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5-8) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Increase of night temperatures in Naypyitaw, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyarwady Regions and Shan, Rakhine and Kayah States.



CONFIDENTIALITY CLAUSES

EU insists on keeping vaccine contracts secret

THE European Union will keep the details of its contracts with Covid-19 vaccine makers secret while negotiating with them, the bloc’s commissioner for health said Thursday.

“We are bound by the confidentiality clauses of the contract, and disclosure of any confidential information at this moment in time undermines the ongoing negotiations that we have with companies,” Stella Kyriakides told the European Parliament.

The European Commission has negotiated or is in the process of negotiating pre-purchase agreements with seven manufacturers of proven or potential Covid-19 vaccines.

Two of the vaccines, ones made by BioNTech/Pfizer and by Moderna, have been authorized for use in the EU, and the Commission hopes others will follow.

The bloc has already secured advance order contracts for two billion doses of those vaccines, enough for twice the EU’s population of 450 million given that most of the vaccines require

two doses, to be administered weeks apart.

But a slow rollout in member countries, coupled with the secrecy obscuring the terms of the contracts, have contributed to the political pressure building against EU governments and the Commission.

Kyriakides said, however, that the confidentiality clauses would be respected for the time being.

“When the time’s ready within the contractual constraints (we’ll) explore making information of these contracts available to nominated members of the Parliament with specific arrangements... once the sensitive ongoing negotiations are concluded,” she said.

Kyriakides added that the confidentiality was part of an EU strategy to get the most cost-effective result.

Spreading risk

By negotiating on behalf of - and in coordination with - the EU’s 27 member countries, “it reduces cost and it gives us a



The Belgian government says it is updating its COVID-19 vaccination roll-out plan which has been widely criticized for being slow. PHOTO: AFP

stronger negotiating position,” she argued.

The EU has sealed deals with BioNTech/Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Sanofi-GSK and Curevac, and it is in talks with Novavax.

The Commission has been criticized in the German media, accused of under-buying vaccines developed by German outfits BioNTech and Curevac to proportionally boost those made by French group Sanofi.

But Kyriakides strongly denied that, noting that the negotiations started early last year when no data was available as to which of the potential vaccines might turn out to be effective.

SOURCE: AFP

THE SHARP RISE

UK scrambles for hospital beds as virus surges

HOSPITAL chiefs in England were scrambling for hospital beds on Thursday as the surge in coronavirus cases risked overwhelming the system, healthcare providers and medics said.

A leaked briefing suggested that even in a relatively positive scenario, London’s hospitals could be beyond capacity in less than two weeks. The

UK on Wednesday confirmed more than 62,000 new cases in 24 hours, with numbers growing quickly outside southeast England, where clusters of a new highly infectious strain of the virus were first identified.

Over 30,000 people were in UK hospitals with the virus, more than at the peak of the first wave. The sharp rise has forced hospital bosses to consider shift-

ing some inpatients to beds in nursing homes or care homes, said the head of NHS Providers, which represents hospitals in England. “We’ve seen 5,000 new patients in hospital beds with Covid-19 over the past week -- that’s 10 full hospitals’ worth of Covid patients... so it’s a really big challenge,” Chris Hopson told BBC radio.

SOURCE: AFP

CANADA

Quebec premier orders Canada’s first pandemic curfew

QUEBEC premier Francois Legault ordered the first pandemic curfew in Canada on Wednesday as part of new lockdown measures to slow the spread of a second wave of Covid-19.

The lockdown and 8:00 pm to 5:00 am (0100 to 1000 GMT) curfew will take effect starting Saturday in the province and last four weeks, Legault told a news

conference.

“We’ve asked police to enforce these measures,” he said, adding that those breaking the rules would face fines of up to Can\$6,000 (US\$4,700).

A curfew of this scale has not been ordered in Canada since the Spanish flu a century ago, according to historians.

SOURCE: AFP

ALLERGIC REACTIONS

1 in 100,000 had severe reactions to Pfizer vaccine: US study

ROUGHLY one in a hundred thousand people who received the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine have had severe allergic reactions, US health officials said Wednesday while stressing that the benefits of immunization greatly outweigh the known risks.

The data comes from the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, which documented 21 cases of anaphylaxis after administration of a reported 1,893,360 shots from December 14 to December 23.

“This averages out to a rate of 11.1 anaphylaxis cases per one million doses administered,” senior CDC official Nancy Messonnier told reporters.

By comparison, flu vaccines cause about 1.3 anaphylaxis



A health worker holds a vial containing the Pfizer/BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine in Aulnay-sous-Bois, France. PHOTO: POOL/AFP

cases per million doses administered, and so the rate of anaphylaxis for the Pfizer vaccine is roughly ten times greater.

Messonnier added that anaphylaxis cases were still “ex-

ceedingly rare” and it remains in people’s best interest to take the vaccine, particularly in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic that is a far greater danger to their health.

“A good value proposition for someone to get vaccinated is their risk from Covid and poor outcomes from Covid is still more than the risk of a severe outcome from the vaccine,” she said.

“Fortunately, we know how to treat anaphylaxis, and we’ve put provisions in place to ensure that at immunization sites, the folks administering the vaccine are ready to treat anaphylaxis.”

The 21 cases ranged in age from 27 to 60 years old, with a median age of 40, and all but two were treated with epinephrine.

Nineteen of the cases (90 per cent) occurred in females, and the median onset time of symptoms was 13 minutes, but ranged from two to 150 minutes.

SOURCE: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Slow vaccine rollouts fuel worry as US logs record daily Covid death toll

ENGLAND went back into full lockdown as Europe battled Wednesday to stem a rising tide of coronavirus cases, and the United States logged its worst daily death toll of the pandemic.

The Covid-19 crisis has shown no signs of slowing, with known infections nearing 86 million worldwide and more than 1.8 million deaths, even as many nations ramp up their vaccination rollouts.

England began its third national lockdown Tuesday as alarm grew in Britain over the latest surge in cases which is threatening to overwhelm its National Health Service, piling on the misery for people growing tired of social distancing and the economic cost. “It’s just exasperating, because I don’t know if people can just go that extra mile, another six weeks with this lockdown. It’s just crazy,” said Alex, a 65-year-old retiree and one of the few people out on the streets of London on Tuesday.

A senior government minister has warned the lockdown could last into March.

SOURCE: AFP

In-person schooling to resume in March

IN Paraguay, authorities have announced that schools will reopen on February 11th, with in-person classes officially relaunching on March 2nd. Schools are being told to prepare a mixed learning environment, so that those who choose to maintain distance education can do so.

Consequently, many schools are scrambling to create the necessary protocols and systems and then teach them to their staff in anticipation of the resumption of in-person classes. Schools must also vet the physical condition of their teachers before arbitrarily sending them back to class in order to ensure that at-risk teachers are not being unnecessarily put at risk of infection. Teacher unions, meanwhile, have stated that they will only support such in-person classes if and when biosecurity conditions are guaranteed for their members.

SOURCE: AFP

MELBOURNE

Thousands to get tested as Australia-India cricket match named possible Covid hotspot

THOUSANDS of cricket fans who attended Australia’s showpiece Boxing Day Test against India have been told to get tested and isolate Wednesday, after a spectator who attended the event tested positive for Covid-19.

Melbourne Cricket Ground

Health authorities said the man in his thirties was not infectious while at the famed Melbourne Cricket Ground on the second day of play “but there is potential he acquired the virus while there” or at a nearby shopping centre.

“The MCG is being investigated as a potential source for the infection,” Victoria’s Depart-



Fans chant at the Melbourne Cricket Ground last month. A spectator who was at the showpiece Boxing Day Australia-India Test has tested positive for coronavirus and fans seated nearby have been urged to get Covid tested and isolate. PHOTO: AFP

ment of Health said.

A race is now on to trace and test an estimated 7,000-8,000

fans, and to find out if one of the highest-attended sporting events since the pandemic began was a

super spreading event.

“We’re encouraging anyone who was in The Great Southern Stand, zone 5 of the MCG between 12.30 pm and 3.30 pm on 27 December, to get tested and isolate until they receive a negative result,” health authorities said.

Boxing Day Test

The Boxing Day Test is a centrepiece of Australia’s sporting calendar and just under 30,000 people attended this year, well short of capacity.

Several retail stores in the Chadstone Shopping Centre were also named as possible sites for the source of the infection.

SOURCE: AFP

TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

China moves to stamp out virus outbreak in city of 11 million



Residents wait in line for nucleic acid tests at a community in Qiaoxi District of Shijiazhuang, capital of north China’s Hebei Province, Jan. 6, 2021. PHOTO: XINHUA

TRAVEL has been restricted to a northern Chinese city of 11 million people and schools closed as authorities Wednesday moved to snuff out a cluster of Covid-19 after dozens were infected.

Highways closed

Ten major highways leading into the city of Shijiazhuang, around 300 kilometres (200 miles) south of Beijing, have been closed and a bus terminus was closed in an attempt to prevent the virus spreading beyond

the city in Hebei province.

There have been 117 cases in the city — including at least 63 more reported Wednesday — 78 of which were asymptomatic, prompting mass testing across the affected area. Unlike much of the world, China has largely brought the virus under control through strict lockdowns and travel restrictions.

But there have been a series of local outbreaks in recent weeks, prompting mass testing and targeted lockdowns.

SOURCE: AFP

THE RAPPROCHEMENT

Gulf states to restore links with Qatar within a week: UAE

THE Gulf states will restore travel, trade and transport links with Qatar within a week, the UAE said Thursday, after a landmark deal to normalize ties ended a damaging rift.

Saudi Arabia and its allies the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt, in June 2017 slapped a boycott on Qatar over claims it backed Islamist groups and was too close to Iran.

The quartet agreed to lift the restrictions at a summit Tuesday in the Saudi desert city of Al-Ula, after energetic diplomacy from the Trump administration which was keen for a foreign policy win in its closing days.

UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash said that although rebuilding confidence and addressing difficult geopolitical issues were longer-term tasks, there was a push to quickly restore physical links.

"The practical measures will be within a week... includ-



The Gulf states will restore travel, trade and transport links with Qatar within a week, the UAE said Thursday, after a landmark deal to normalize ties ended a damaging rift. **PHOTO: A HANDOUT PICTURE PROVIDED BY THE SAUDI ROYAL PALACE ON JANUARY 5, 2021/AFP**

ing travel, transportation, trade etc," he told a press briefing, also flagging the prompt reopening of diplomatic missions.

Analysts have warned that the hasty reconciliation did not address underlying resentments which risk resurfacing.

And the United Arab Emirates, the staunchest critic of Doha and its leadership throughout the crisis, was seen as a reluctant party to the rapprochement.

But Gargash said that the UAE endorsed the process, even if the thornier issues including

Qatar's relationship with Iran and Turkey's presence in the Gulf may take time to work through.

The UAE is "behind this deal, and positive about the prospect of re-establishing relations with Qatar," he said.

SOURCE: AFP

XINJIANG UYGUR AUTONOMOUS REGION

Tarim Oilfield supplies over 270 bln cubic meters gas to east China



A staff member works at Kela-2 gas field of the Tarim Oilfield in Aksu, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, July 8, 2017. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

THE Tarim oilfield branch of PetroChina, China's largest oil and gas producer, said it has supplied over 270 billion cubic metres of natural gas to 15 provincial-level regions in China via the country's West-to-East gas pipeline.

Located in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the Tarim Oilfield is the country's third-largest on-shore oil and gas producer, and its natural gas output accounts for one-sixth of China's total domestic gas output.

The company said natural gas from the oilfield has benefited about 400 million residents in more than 120 cities and over 3,000 enterprises since the gas pipeline started operation in 2004.

Over the years, the annual supply of natural gas from the oilfield through the gas pipeline has increased from 351 million cubic metres in 2004 to 25 billion cubic meters today.

SOURCE: Xinhua

GDP SEEN CONTRACTING

Indian economy likely to contract 7.7 pc in 2020-21

INDIAN economy is estimated to contract 7.7 per cent in 2020-21 compared to 4.2 per cent growth in the previous fiscal year, mainly on account of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, official data released on Thursday said.

"The growth in real GDP during 2020-21 is estimated at -7.7 per cent as compared to the growth rate of 4.2 per cent in 2019-20," reads a statement released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) of India's federal ministry of statistics and programme implementa-



Modi's government is struggling to kickstart what was once the world's fastest growing major economy. **PHOTO: AFP**

tion.

According to the ministry, the growth in nominal GDP during 2020-21 is estimated at minus 4.2 per cent.

"With a view to contain spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, certain restrictions were imposed from 25 March, 2020. Though the restrictions have been gradually lifted, there has been an impact on the economic activities as well as on the data collection mechanisms," the ministry said.

SOURCE: Xinhua

NEWS
IN BRIEFNEW APPLICATIONS FOR
UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITSNew US jobless
claims still high in
final week of 2020
at 787,000

THE United States saw 787,000 new applications for unemployment benefits in the final week of 2020, the Labour Department said Thursday, indicating layoffs remain widespread months into the coronavirus pandemic. The total was just 3,000 less than the previous week, seasonally adjusted, but still nowhere near the record-low unemployment seen before Covid-19 broke out in the US in March, causing widespread business restrictions that crippled the economy.

SOURCE: AFP

AFTER GROUNDING

Canada's WestJet
planning to return
737 MAX to service
in January

CANADIAN airline WestJet said Wednesday it plans to return its passenger fleet of Boeing 737 MAX aircraft to the skies this month, nearly two years ago after their world-wide grounding following two crashes that killed 346 people.

"Our first MAX will be ready to return safely to service as of January 21," company president Ed Sims said in a statement.

SOURCE: AFP

A PERIOD OF NON-STOP
ORDER GROWTHGerman industrial
orders unexpectedly
rise in November

GERMAN industrial orders beat forecasts in November, unexpectedly rising on the back of strong demand from eurozone countries, official data showed Thursday.

Demand was 2.3 per cent higher than in October, federal statistics agency Destatis said.

The data trumped analysts' expectations of a 1.4 per cent slump, according to a poll by FactSet.

Orders were also 4.0 per cent above those in February 2020, the month before curbs were imposed to halt transmission of the coronavirus.

SOURCE: AFP

SENATE RACE

Wall Street stocks shrug off Capitol Hill unrest, eye end of Trump term

WALL Street stocks mostly rose Wednesday, shrugging off unrest in Washington as rioters, angry supporters of outgoing President Donald Trump, stormed the US Capitol, disrupting a vote to make official Trump's November election defeat. The display drew shudders from commentators worried about a democracy on edge, and some politicians decried an attempted coup. But even with the chaos, the Dow still finished at an all-time high.

Investors are essentially running out the clock on Trump's term and expect the US to move on soon. "I think there's just a realization that's what's happening today is the end," said FHN Financial's Chris Low. "We should be back to a more rational universe within a week or two. The occupation of the US Capitol came shortly after Vice President Mike Pence announced he would not intervene to stop the certification of President-elect Joe Biden's victory, drawing criticism from Trump, who continued to falsely claim the election was somehow fraudulent.

In a defiant speech to supporters who gathered in Washington at his behest, Trump vowed, "we will never give up." Hours later, a flag-waving mob broke down barricades, and smashed glass doors of the Capitol, swarming inside, rampaging through offices and onto the usually solemn legislative floors. One woman was shot and killed, and others injured inside the Capitol, police said. Lawmakers were evacuated and huddled in offices and inside the chamber wearing gas masks as security forces guarded the doors with guns drawn.

SOURCE: AFP



Supporters of outgoing US President Donald Trump stormed the US Capitol delaying certification of the presidential election. PHOTO: AFP

"SHAMEFUL CHAPTER"

US businesses condemn Capitol 'chaos,' blame Trump



A congressional staffer holds his hands up while police secure the Capitol on Wednesday. PHOTO: AFP

MAJOR US corporations and businesses groups on Wednesday condemned the occupation of the US Capitol by rioters angry at President Donald Trump's election defeat, with one organization raising the possibility of the president being removed from office. The statements came on a shocking day for the United States, which saw mobs overrun Congress after a rally by Trump, who had sought to thwart the process of lawmakers certifying election results. That was the final administrative step before Democratic President-elect Joe Biden enters

the White House later this month, but the normally ceremonial affair spiralled into mayhem. "Today marks a sad and shameful chapter in our nation's history," Apple CEO Tim Cook said on Twitter late Wednesday. "Those responsible for this insurrection should be held to account, and we must complete the transition to President-elect Biden's administration. It's especially when they are challenged that our ideals matter most." The Business Roundtable issued a statement calling on "the president and all relevant officials to put an end to

the chaos and to facilitate the peaceful transition of power." The lobbying group, which represents over 200 chief executives, blamed the events on "unlawful efforts to overturn the legitimate results of a democratic election. The country deserves better." US Chamber of Commerce CEO Thomas J. Donohue said: "The attacks against our nation's Capitol Building and our democracy must end now," and Congress should "conclude their Constitutional responsibility" to certify the winner of the presidential vote.

SOURCE: AFP

BREXIT

UK car sales crash to almost 30-year low

BRITISH new car sales crashed to the lowest level for almost three decades in 2020, with demand ravaged by chronic coronavirus fallout and Brexit uncertainty, industry data showed Wednesday. Sales tanked by 29.4 per cent compared with 2019 to 1.63 million new vehicles, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) said in a statement. That was the lowest level since 1992.

The sector suffered a revenue loss of £20.4 billion (\$27.7 billion, 22.6 billion euros), according to the industry organization. Sales took a hit late last year also after the British government said it planned to ban diesel and petrol car sales from 2030 as part of a plan to achieve carbon neutrality by the middle of the century.

SOURCE: AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V SINAR BANDUNG VOY. NO. (685N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V SINAR BANDUNG VOY. NO. (685N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8-01-2021 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of AWPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY. NO. (209N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY. NO. (209N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 8-01-2021 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPPING

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY
HOLIDAY NOTICE

As the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the 13th JANUARY 2021 (Kayin New Year Day) Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

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A VIOLENT MOB STORMED THE US CAPITOL

SENATE RIOTS

Washington chaos leaves image of ‘exceptional’ America in tatters

THE storming of the US Congress left America’s image as a beacon of democracy severely tarnished Thursday, with allies unable to hide their shock and authoritarian regimes gleefully exploiting the unrest. In normal times, a state-backed gang rampaging through a legislature to demand a lost election be nullified would have US diplomats marching to their laptops to draft a statement of condemnation.

But after the deadly violence in Washington on Wednesday, it was the turn of officials in capitals from Bogota to New Delhi to call for calm.

In a string of statements,

leaders could barely contain their shock at seeing Donald Trump’s supporters briefly – but quite easily – overrun the crucible of US democracy and challenge the peaceful transfer of power:

“Where were the police and the Senate bodyguards...?” Czech foreign minister Tomas Petricek asked aloud, as the world watched Trump supporters cart off podiums, ransack offices or strut around Congress in a horned helmet unmolested.

Through slavery and segregation, Civil War and Cold War, US presidents have often hailed their democracy as exceptional, what Ronald Reagan called the



Crowds arrive for the “Stop the Steal” rally on Jan. 6, 2021 in Washington, DC. Trump supporters gather in the nation’s capital to protest the ratification of President-elect Joe Biden’s Electoral College victory over President Trump in the 2020 election. PHOTO: GETTY/KYODO

“shining city on the hill.”

That image has been questioned many times before, but

after four norm-shattering years of Trump, it took just a few hours of mob rule to make America look

pretty ordinary, and as fragile as anywhere else.

SOURCE: AFP

CHAOS IN WASHINGTON

U.S. Congress roiled by pro-Trump riots

THE U.S. Congress was thrown into turmoil on Wednesday in the process of certifying Democrat Joe Biden’s presidential win, as supporters of President Donald Trump stormed the Capitol to defy the election results in what was seen as a serious assault on democracy.

Lawmakers later resumed the counting of the electoral votes that was halted for hours due to the chaos. They completed early Thursday the country’s final step to affirm Biden as the winner of the November presidential election, and he will be sworn in on Jan. 20. But the scenes of protesters smashing windows and vandalizing offices in the Capitol seem to have tarnished the image of the United States, which has championed democracy around the world, putting Trump in the hot seat over his role in inflaming his supporters through unsubstantiated claims aimed at



Pro-Trump supporters storm the U.S. Capitol following a rally with President Donald Trump on Jan. 6, 2021 in Washington, D.C. Trump supporters gather in the nation’s capital to protest the ratification of President-elect Joe Biden’s Electoral College victory over President Trump in the 2020 election. PHOTO: GETTY/KYODO

undermining the election.

The incident has also resulted in calls for the Republican incumbent to be removed from office by his Cabinet, although his term is set to end in about two weeks. “Even though I totally disagree with the outcome

of the election, and the facts bear me out, nevertheless there will be an orderly transition on Jan. 20,” Trump said in a statement posted on Twitter by White House spokesman Dan Scavino after the election results were finalized.

SOURCE: Kyodo

‘DEMOCRACY UNDER SIEGE’

International press condemn Trump

THE chaos unleashed on the US Capitol by Donald Trump’s supporters dominated front pages across the world Thursday, with headlines such as “Trump sets fire to Washington”, “Democracy under siege”, and “The Coup of Madness”. For the most part the international press laid the blame squarely at the outgoing president’s feet, accusing him of having encouraged the violence.

In Britain, “Trump supporters storm heart of American democracy” was the headline in The Times, describing how, “Democrats and Republicans alike pulled on gas masks and sheltered under desks and staff hid in offices.” “Democracy under siege”, wrote The Daily Telegraph, reporting “unprecedented scenes of violence and chaos” in Washington as “hordes of Trump supporters” stormed the Capitol.

SOURCE: AFP



Richard Barnett, a supporter of US President Donald Trump sits inside the office of US Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi as he protests inside the US Capitol in Washington, DC, January 6, 2021. PHOTO: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

US Congress formally certifies Joe Biden's election win

US lawmakers on Thursday formally certified Joe Biden as the winner of the presidential election -- clearing the way for his inauguration on January 20. Republican Vice President Mike Pence certified the Electoral College count of 306 electors in favor of the Democrat against 232 in favor of outgoing Republican President Donald Trump. This comes after a violent mob stormed the US Capitol on Wednesday, interrupting the process of certifying the election results. None of the objections to states’ votes were sustained. With this, Biden and Harris will be inaugurated on 20 January as scheduled, bringing the Trump presidency to a close. Outgoing US President Donald Trump on Thursday offered the clearest signal yet that he will voluntarily leave office on January 20, saying there will be an “orderly transition” to Joe Biden’s presidency. SOURCE: AFP

Four people die amid violence at U.S. Capitol -- police

FOUR people died as supporters of U.S. President Donald Trump violently occupied the Capitol on Wednesday, according to police of Washington, D.C..

One was shot and killed, the other three died because of medical emergencies amid the violent protests at the Capitol, Metropolitan Police Department Chief Robert Contee said in the evening, adding that 52 people have been arrested.

In the night, Washington D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser extended the public emergency to 15 days, until the day after President-elect Joe Biden’s inauguration, in response to the breach of the Capitol. On Wednesday afternoon, Trump’s supporters pushed through barriers at the Capitol building, interrupting the certification of the 2020 electoral votes and forcing a Capitol lockdown. SOURCE: Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

PRISONER TO PRESIDENT

Populist poised to win Kyrgyz presidency

KYRGYZSTAN holds presidential elections Sunday, with a populist politician who has served jail time for hostage-taking widely tipped to top the ballot. Sadyr Japarov's anticipated journey from prison to the presidency is an example of the dramatic changes in fortunes that politicians can enjoy in a Central Asian country that is both more volatile and more pluralistic than its staid, authoritarian neighbours. But critics of the combative Japarov, who became acting leader during a political crisis last year before quitting to run in the vote, fear his victory could tip Kyrgyzstan towards the strongman rule dominant in the ex-Soviet region.

SOURCE: AFP

ALASKA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

US leases long-sought Alaska oil rights in Trump's final days

US President Donald Trump's administration auctioned off 11 oil leases in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge on Wednesday, in a last-ditch move to expand drilling in the areas coveted by some petroleum producers before he leaves office. Major oil companies however sat out bidding for tracts in the environmentally sensitive area, and nine of the leases went to the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority, a state agency, while two went to small companies.

SOURCE: AFP

MINUS 19.6°C

Beijing freezes as temperature hits five decade lows



People walk on a street in Chaoyang District, Beijing, capital of China, Jan. 6, 2021. PHOTO: XINHUA/JU HUANZONG

TEMPERATURES in the Chinese capital plunged to their lowest for more than five decades on Thursday, as Beijing was hit by gale-force winds and bitter conditions.

On Thursday morning the mercury dropped to minus 19.6 degrees Celsius (minus 3.3 Fahrenheit), breaking a previous cold weather record set in 1969.

The cold reading was the lowest since 1966, when temperatures in the city fell to minus 27.4 degrees Celsius (minus 17.3 Fahrenheit).

Thousands took to social media to complain about the city's weather, with the hashtags "How cold is this winter?" and "Beijing's temperature reaches the lowest since 1966" both trending topics on Weibo and garnering a collective 240 million views.

"I heard the wind shouting at me: I want to kill you," wrote one.

Yet there was no snow and little ice on Thursday, as the atmosphere over the city was extremely dry.

The last time temperatures fell to this level, the founder of communist China Chairman Mao was at the helm, and about to embark on the ten-year Cultural Revolution -- a decade-long period of social and political chaos that also quashed political rivals.

The same year, to dispel rumours about his failing health, the then-73-year-old Mao also swam across the waters of the Yangtze river in a political stunt to prove his youthfulness.

SOURCE: AFP

CHAOTIC SCENES

Ghana army moves to quell parliament clash ahead of swearing-in



The mayhem erupted after a ruling party deputy tried to seize the ballot box during the vote for Ghana's parliament speaker. PHOTO: AFP

GHANAIAN soldiers intervened in parliament to quell a clash between opposing parties in chaotic scenes overnight ahead of the body's swearing-in on Thursday.

Mayhem erupted after a lawmaker from the ruling party tried to seize the ballot box during the vote for parliament speaker.

The ensuing clash lasted

several hours until the army moved in, with national television broadcasting the drama live.

"There was total breakdown of law and order," said MP-elect Kwame Twumasi Ampofo of the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC).

"Looking at a member of parliament and a minister of state snatching ballot papers...

was so shameful." The new parliament is split down the middle between the two main parties, posing the risk of gridlock on tackling Ghana's problems. President Nana Akufo-Addo, who narrowly won re-election in the December 7 vote for the legislature and head of state, will also be sworn in on Thursday.

SOURCE: AFP

MARITIME DISAGREEMENT

South Korean delegation heads to Iran over seized oil tanker

A South Korean delegation left for Iran on Thursday to negotiate the early release of an oil tanker and its crew seized in strategic Gulf waters this week. Iran's Revolutionary Guards said Monday it had seized the South Korean-flagged Hankuk Chemi -- which it said was carrying 7,200 tonnes of "oil chemical products" -- for infringing maritime environmental laws.

The Guards said the arrested crew were from South Korea, Indonesia, Vietnam and Myanmar. The South Korean delegation, led by the director-general of the foreign ministry's Middle Eastern affairs department, boarded a plane early Thursday and was set to arrive in Tehran via Doha.

"I plan to meet my counterpart at the Iranian foreign ministry and will meet others through various routes if it will help efforts to resolve the issue of the ship's seizure," said Koh Kyung-sok, the chief delegate, before boarding



The South Korean delegation led by Koh Kyung-sok (L) is heading to Iran to negotiate the release of an oil tanker and its crew seized in strategic Gulf waters. PHOTO: YONHAP/AFP

the plane. Iran's seizure of the tanker came after Tehran had urged Seoul to release billions of dollars of Iranian assets frozen in South Korea under US sanctions. Iran was a key oil supplier to resource-poor South Korea until Washington's rules blocked the purchases. South Korea's vice-foreign minister is due to travel to Tehran next week to discuss the

frozen assets, a visit that Seoul said would go ahead despite the seizure. According to Iran's central bank governor Abdolnasser Hemmati, the country has "\$7 billion of deposits in South Korea" that can neither "be transferred nor do we get any returns on, while they ask us for the costs" of holding the funds.

SOURCE: AFP

Juventus end AC Milan's 27-game unbeaten run in Serie A

MILAN—Italian champions Juventus inflicted a first league defeat of the season on Serie A leaders AC Milan, ending their 27-match unbeaten run with a 3-1 win on Wednesday.

Stefano Pioli's side maintained their one-point advantage over city rivals Inter Milan who missed a chance to go top with a 2-1 loss at Sampdoria.

AC Milan had been unbeaten since before the coronavirus lockdown last March, with a run of 12 matches without defeat to complete last season where they finished sixth, and 15 games this campaign.

Federico Chiesa bagged his first brace for the champions, scoring on 18 and 62 minutes in the San Siro with Weston McKennie getting a third with quarter of an hour to go.

Davide Calabria had pulled a goal back before the break to level for Milan who were playing without injured star Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

The hosts had been hit hours before kick-off with the news that forward Ante Rebic and midfielder Rade Krunic had tested positive for Covid-19.—AFP ■

Yangon United signs Emerson Reis Luiz for one-year loan

IN preparation for the upcoming Myanmar National League season, Yangon United signed a Brazilian midfielder Emerson Reis Luiz from Zwegapin United with a one-year contract, according to the team's statement released yesterday.

Upon joining the Yangon United, Emerson has expressed his cheerfulness.

"I am very happy to be back to Yangon and feel so good to be here. I know the team and history, and I am sure to play well for the team again. I want to say the fans that I give my best to every single game and fight for the title. Every year the team always fights for the title, and I am thrilled to be back with this team."

Emerson began his career with Guarani FC in 2003, and he was playing for some professional football clubs in Brazil till 2013.

In 2014, he arrived at the Myanmar National League club Yangon United and helped the



Brazilian midfielder Emerson Reis Luiz holds the Yangon United banner as part of his football club arrival. **PHOTO: YUFC**

team win the MNL Championship title in 2015.

Next, he moved to Bosnian club FK Sarajevo for a year loan.

However, he returned to

Yangon United in 2017 and did his best for the team again.

In 2018, he again spent another two years in Brazilian clubs, and then he moved back to

the Myanmar National League and played for Zwegapin United in the 2020 season with 11 appearances and three goals scored. —Lynn Thit (Tgi)

Of mice and men: Keeping track of Ronaldo and co

LONDON—Cristiano Ronaldo and his Portugal team-mates may be surprised to learn the video and data analysis their coaches use was devised by scientists who used it to track the behaviour of mice, monkeys and human eye movements.

Ruben Saavedra, the Spanish CEO of Metrica Sports, says it is not a stretch to transfer the use of data to track the behaviour of mice and rats to

the task of tracking "movement of players on the pitch".

Saavedra and Argentinian co-founder Bruno Dagnino -- who studied the eye movements of monkeys and humans -- found they shared more than an interest in science when they were studying for their PhDs in the Netherlands.

"We had two things in common: as Barcelona and Argentina fans, Lionel Messi was an easy link, and we were the

only people on our courses who loved football," Saavedra told AFP in an interview. "There are lots of nerds in science who do not have other hobbies and so he and I could talk football, which was nice."

The final part of the puzzle was complete with another Argentinian, Enzo Angilletta, who had a video production company.

Together they developed a system that integrates data

with video analysis, which had been done only manually before. By marrying data and video they created what its developers call a "workflow of football analysts".

"Presenting graphs and raw data was not enough for clubs," said Saavedra. The process is unusual in that it analyses technical skills and positioning during matches, rather than simply measure distance covered.—AFP ■

E-sports: Shanghai builds \$1.1 billion hub in push to be global industry leader



The Chinese e-sports team battles the Thai team at Arena of Valour, one of the six e-sports demonstration events at the 2018 Asian Games, in Jakarta, Indonesia, on August 26, 2018. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

SHANGHAI—China has begun building a US\$900 million (\$1.18 billion) facility it hopes will be the envy of e-sports and seal its push to make Shanghai the global capital of the fast-growing professional gaming industry.

The Shanghai International New Cultural and Creative E-sports Centre is scheduled for completion in 2023 and will cost at least 5.8 billion yuan, Chinese authorities and media said.

Officials in the Shanghai district home to the centre said they want it to become "a pilgrimage site" for e-sports enthusiasts from all over the world.

Once finished, it will boast a 6,000-seater e-sports venue, a five-star e-sports-themed hotel and a museum devoted to gaming, Minhang district officials said.

The high-tech hub will span 500,000 sq m and "accommodate hundreds of domestic and foreign e-sports-related enterprises", the district economic development committee said following Monday's groundbreaking ceremony.

Speaking to AFP in 2018, leading Shanghai sports official Luo Wenhua said the Chinese city "has proposed to become the capital of e-sports".—AFP ■