MoHS continues COVID-19 vaccination to ministry officials and civilians

Myanmar avocados see good foreign demands

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Myanmar-India border trade increases amidst coronavirus pandemic

Hong Kong Disneyland reopens as anti-virus measures loosen

THE bilateral border trade between Myanmar and India totalled US$115.4 million as of 12 February in the financial year 2020-21, an increase by $59.23 million compared to the same period last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Between 1 October and 12 February of this FY, Myanmar exported some $114.79 million worth of commodities to India. In contrast, imports from Myanmar’s second-largest neighbouring country were worth $0.62 million. The two countries’ border trade was US$66.18 million last year.

The border trade between the two countries is conducted mainly through Tamu, Reed and Thanlant cross-border points. In contrast, a significant part of bilateral trade is delivered through ships.

“Myanmar and India closed the border in March 2020. Border closure also included the crossing between Tamu and the India town of Moreh on account of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the border trade resumed on 6 January following the COVID-19 rules and regulations,” said the Tamu Merchants Association official.

The vast South Asian country’s imports from Myanmar include areca nuts, ginger, saffron, turmeric, bay leaves and other fruits and vegetables besides human hair, fishery and forest products. It mostly exports medicines, oil cakes, electronic products, motorbikes, cotton yarn, non-alloy steel and other construction materials.

Myanmar’s total border trade with China, India, Thailand and Bangladesh via the 16 land borders was valued at $3.98 billion, including $2.7 billion in exports and $1.26 billion in imports. — Zwe/GNLM

Hong Kong Disneyland reopened Friday with the territory’s government lifting some social distancing measures to fight the spread of the coronavirus as the pandemic eases.

It is the third reopening for the popular theme park following previous closures in January, July and December last year lasting a total of about nine months due to the pandemic. It last closed on 2 Dec.

Local media Cable TV reported that about 100 people lined up at the gates before it opened, among them a teenager who said he was so excited he could not sleep the previous night.

“Every time Disneyland reopens is to be cherished,” Yin said, donning an Olaf facemask, a snowman character in the “Frozen” animated film. “Or you would lose the chance to play when it closes.”

Only guests with reservations are admitted, the park said. It closes on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The closures came after the park saw a declining number of visitors. Full-year attendance through September 2019 dropped 4 per cent from a year earlier to 6.5 million visitors, according to company figures. — Kyodo News

Hong Kong Disneyland reopened Friday with the territory’s government lifting some social distancing measures to fight the spread of the coronavirus as the pandemic eases.
Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (76/2021)
9th Waxing of Tabodwe 1382 ME
20 February 2021
Duty Termination

The following persons are terminated from their duties from Anti-Corruption Commission:

1. U Soe Tint
2. U Aung Lwin
3. U Han Nyunt
4. Daw Myat Myat Soe
5. U Aung Than Myint
6. U Khin Maung Myint
7. U Myo Myint
8. Daw Aye Aye Mu
9. U Zaw Win
10. Daw Lai Lai Thwin
11. U San Win

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

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (77/2021)
9th Waxing of Tabodwe 1382 ME
20 February 2021
Appointment and Assignment of
Chairman of Anti-Corruption Commission

U Tin Oo, Member of Union Civil Service Board, is transferred and appointed as Chairman of the Anti-Corruption Commission in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

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

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (78/2021)
9th Waxing of Tabodwe 1382 ME
20 February 2021
Appointment and Assignment of
members of Anti-Corruption Commission

The following persons are appointed as the members of the Anti-Corruption Commission in accordance with Article 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

1. U Tin Swe Win
2. U Htin Kyaw
3. Police Brig-Gen Kyaw Win Thein (Retired)
4. Daw Khin Cho Ohn
5. U Aung Myint Lwin
6. U Than Soe
7. U Maung Maung Tint
8. Police Brig-Gen Thura Bo Ni (Retired)
9. U Tin Myint
10. Daw Kyu Kyu Win

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

Request to Public

1. Democracy practices have granted the public freedom of speech, practices and living. Such freedoms should not harm others. Diverse views of others should be understood, but should not be disturbed or harassed. However, with the reason for human rights, some persons are now under pressure, harassed and threatened in breaching the laws. Undisciplined acts could lead to tarnishing the image of democracy.

2. For preventing destructive actions against the stability of the State, the safety of the public and the rule of law, it is also required to take proper actions in line with the law.

3. All the people who favour justice, freedom, equality and safety are requested to oppose breaching the laws and prevent such actions for the benefit of country and people.

7 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 20 February, total figure rises to 141,735

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 141,735 after 7 new cases were reported on 20 February 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, 3,196 died, 131,249 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA
MoHS continues COVID-19 vaccination to ministry officials and civilians

MINISTRY of Health and Sports continued the COVID-19 vaccination to civil services personnel and people over the age of 65 in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon Region yesterday.

The Department of Public Health in Nay Pyi Taw vaccinated a total of 907 officials from 10 ministries in Nay Pyi Taw and Union Minister for Health and Sports Professor Dr Thet Khine Win, Deputy Minister U Myo Hlaing, Directors-General and responsible persons encouraged and supervised the vaccination.

Similarly, a total of 112 monks was vaccinated in the Inya COVID-19 vaccination centre in Yangon in accordance with the COVID-19 immunization regulations. It is reported that the Ministry of Health and Sports will continue the vaccination to civil services personnel and the people over the age of 65.—MNA

Announcement to the civil servants who fail to perform their duties for various reasons

1. Civil servants are the people who are working to make the whole state machinery function well. No matter how much the political, economic or government changes, civil servants must perform the duties to function the state machinery. They must abide by the rules and regulations regarding working hours, performance, and conduct in the workplace in accordance with the Civil Service Law and Employee Ethics. Those who breach the employee ethics and misconduct can be taken action in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service Law. If an employee's act or fail to serve is a possible offence, legal action will be taken.

2. Therefore, it is announced to the civil servants who fail to perform their duties for various reasons to return to work as soon as possible while urging employees to return to work.

State Administration Council's Announcement

Some unscrupulous persons are putting various forms of pressures and posing threats to civil service personnel in performing their duties at present. The civil service personnel who have encountered such pressures and threats shall contact the following phone numbers. Strong legal actions will also be taken against those who make such pressures and threats.

Contact phone numbers: -067 412 168, -067 412 222, -067 412 246, -067 412 387, -067 412 388, -067 412 444, -067 412 598, -067 412 666, -067 412 539, -067 412 540.
Protestors attack security force members at Mandalay Yadanabon dock

The CDM activists from Sein Pan Ward of Mandalay destructed the operation of two Mandalay-Bhamo water vessels at Gawwein dock and U Htay Win, mechanical technician grade-4 also took away the keys of vessels yesterday.

Although the officials and security force members conducted relief measures on such case, the protestors did not accept the negotiation and attacked the police with stick, knives, stones, catapults and other materials. Therefore, the police force dispersed them in accordance with the prescribed crowd dispersal methods.

But in the afternoon, the protest crowd gathered at the corner of 41st street and Strand road and blocked the police and attacked with stick, knives, stones, catapults and other materials. Some of the police members were injured due to their attack.

The unscrupulous persons also blocked the Strand road to stop vehicle convoys which came to help the police members blocked by the protestors, and also attacked with stick, knives, stones, catapults, harpoons and other materials. A total of 11—3 Tatmadaw members and 8 police were injured and five vehicles destroyed.

The security force softly dispersed the crowds in accordance with the prescribed crowd dispersal methods and law to save the members blocked by the crowd. The crowd dispersed in the evening. The officials detained the leaders of the protest and will take action in accordance with the law.

Some of the aggressive protestors were also injured due to the security measures conducted by the security force in accordance with the law. —MNA

Ninety per cent of rural areas in Dala get access to electricity

About 90 per cent of the rural areas in Dala township can now access electricity. According to the Township Electricity Manager’s Office, only six villages remain to have access to electricity.

There are 54 villages in 23 village-tracts of Dala township in the Yangon region. Only six villages need to access electricity. Therefore, all the villages will have access to electricity very soon.

“In 2020-2021, only six villages are left to install electricity. These villages are Kyutawyo village, Chaw Lae Wa village, Wae Gyi village, Thayaw Than village, Thayargone village and Nyaung Laybin village. The 400-volt power lines and 11 kV power lines have also been installed. The electricity could be supplied after the installation of the meter boxes. Now, about 90 per cent have accessed the electricity, said an official from the Township Electricity Manager’s Office. The electricity from 33/6.6 kV and 15+5 MVA transformer in Dala township and 33/11 kV and 5 MVA transformer in Pyawbwegyi village have already been distributed to 54 villages, including 24 wards and 23 village-tracts in Dala town. The locals in Dala township have lagged in development on account of poor access to transportation. Now, transportation is getting better, and electricity is now available in their villages. Therefore, the education, health, social, economic and the lifestyle of the local residents will be developed. —Naing Lin Kyaw (Dala)/GNLM

Healthcare provided at military hospitals

Military hospitals in the townships of regions and states are providing medical treatments to the people to solve their difficulties in healthcare services.

A total of 20,422 outpatients and 2,884 inpatients reached these hospitals from 5 February to date.

Senior medical experts, doctors and nurses have conducted 856 major operations and 462 minor operations, and the serious cases are treated by the senior doctors. These hospitals managed for the birth of 1,272 babies, while 1,272 pregnant women were taken to the respective military hospitals.

Officials from the respective commands also provided the patients with foods, according to the report of the Office of Commander in Chief of Defence Services. —MNA

NOTICE TO INFORM

The Myanmar Police Force has issued a statement saying to report about those who have been issued the arrest warrants, for peace and stability in the country.

The statement said that a state of emergency had been declared in the country since 1 February, 2021, in accordance with Article 417 of the 2008 State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and efforts are being made to ensure the rule of law and regular functioning of the state machinery. Meanwhile, Min Ko Naing (a) Paw Oo Tun, Kyaw Min Yu (a) Jimmy, Htwe Lin (a) Lin Lin, Insein Aung Soe, Myo Yan Naung Thein, Eaint Poe U (a) El Pinsalo and Maung Maung Aye have been charged under Section 505 (b) of the Penal Code in the relevant courts for writing articles and speeches by using their popularity on social media that could harm the peace and order of the country, and the relevant courts have issued arrest warrants under the Code of Criminal Procedure.

As every citizen is responsible for the stability and peace of the country, if you find any fugitives mentioned above or if you have information about them, report to the nearest police station or call the telephone numbers issued in each state, region and Nay Pyi Taw and those who receive them will be taken action in accordance with the law.
Personal goods imported through Myawady land border

PERSONAL goods are being imported through the Myawady land border trade zone. The personal goods consist of electronic items, foodstuffs, clothes and shoes, Nivea, Mistine, Bella, Promina, Karmart, Arehe, C’Care, Lolane and Berina’s facial foam, cosmetics and hair colour and shampoo.

Under the World Trade Organization (WTO)’s Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures, cosmetics are permitted to import without requiring an export licence. Upon production of the import declaration form at the Customs Department, the goods can be imported.

Nevertheless, the chemicals needed for the production of the cosmetics can be imported only with the approval of the relevant ministry after obtaining an import licence.

According to the prevention of Hazard from Chemicals and Related Substances Rules issued under Notification 85/2015-2016 by the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry (formally The Ministry of Industry) on 12 January 2016, the cosmetic raw materials applied for import licence are the chemicals. So, the licences are being issued only with the approval of the Ministry of Industry.

The raw materials to produce the cosmetics are needed to systematically scrutinize that they are not harmful to the customers.

To enable issuance of the import licence by the Ministry of Industry, these chemical products will be sent to the Department of Research and Innovation under the Ministry of Education to carry out the safety test for the manufacturers to be issued with the letters of recommendation that guarantee the safety of consumption if the test results are appropriate.

Although the cosmetic importers could import without having an import licence, the raw materials to produce the cosmetics are allowed to import only with the approval of the relevant department.

— NN/GNLM

Myanmar avocados see good foreign demands

THE foreign countries have shown their interests in Myanmar avocado, said U Myo Nyunt, vice-chair of Myanmar Avocado Producer and Exporter Association (Mandalay).

In 2019, Myanmar exported three varieties of avocados-Amara, Hass and Bucaneer to the UK as a trial. Myanmar avocado achieved good results in the UK market, and Germany and Italy also interested in Myanmar avocado.

“We received an offer to export avocado in the coming year. The avocado received good results in the British market. Singapore and Thailand also offered to import Myanmar avocado,” he said.

Although Myanmar avocados are grown to penetrate the foreign market, it now mainly focuses on the local market.

The avocado farmers grow good avocado varieties to export and the foreign countries make an offer between 1,000 and 2,000 tonnes of avocado. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)/GNLM

Farmers succeed in dragon fruit cultivation in Kyaukse

THE local farmers who grow dragon fruit using underground water in Kyaukse Township are successfully cultivating the dragon fruits and fetching a good income. Now, dragon fruits are being grown across the country. There are three types of dragon fruit species — white, yellow and red.

“I have grown about 2,000 red dragon fruit species plants. The cultivation of them cost K2.2 million, including nursery plants and cultivation charges. After growing dragon fruits for three months, the plants needed to be fertilized. The dragon fruits are water-loving plants that need to be irrigated to keep the soil moist,” said U San Myint, a dragon fruit grower.

After one year, the fruits can be started to pick up. One box of dragon fruits contains 28 fruits if it is a big one and 32 fruits if it is a small one, which is priced between K12,000 or 15,000. If the plants have cared well, they can be harvested and sold for up to 17 years. — Thet Maung (Kyaukse)/GNLM

Request to health workers

1. It is appreciated for the strenuous efforts of the medical doctors, nurses, medical experts and other health workers at the respective departments under the Ministry of Health and Sports at the front-line in the fight against prevention, containment and treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

2. As the vaccination programme of COVID-19 is being conducted for the public and the real-time healthcare services are required for the people, all the staff members at the respective departments under the Ministry of Health and Sports are strongly urged to return to their duties with taking the well-being of patients into consideration.

Ministry of Health and Sports
8 February 2021

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
Britain calls for rich states to share vaccine with poor

BRITAIN has circulated a draft resolution to members of the UN Security Council calling on rich countries to donate doses of the Covid-19 vaccine to poorer and war-torn states, according to a text of the draft seen by AFP Friday.

The resolution, submitted Thursday by Britain to the other 14 members of the Security Council, “emphasizes the need for solidarity, equity, and efficacy and invites donation of vaccine doses from developed economies to low- and middle-income countries and other countries in need.”

The draft resolution was announced Wednesday by Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab during a session of the Security Council, and estimates that around 160 million people worldwide are living in a conflict zone or unstable circumstances that puts them at risk of not receiving a vaccination.

The text “calls for the strengthening of national and multilateral approaches and international cooperation... in order to facilitate equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines including in armed conflict situations.”

It also “demands that all parties to armed conflicts engage immediately in a durable, extensive, and sustained humanitarian pause to enable, inter alia, Covid-19 vaccinations in areas of armed conflict.”

It calls on UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who this week denounced the “wildly uneven and unfair” distribution of vaccines around the world, “to report on the implementation of this resolution, in particular a full assessment of all the impediments to the Covid-19 response, including vaccination programmes, in countries in situations of armed conflict and complex humanitarian emergencies as necessary and at least every 90 days.”

Last year, it took the Security Council, stalemated by Chinese and Russian veto power, 88 days to pass a resolution calling for armed parties in Yemen to halt operations to allow for a vaccine to be distributed.

London hopes its resolution will be adopted in the coming weeks. But Russia could be difficult to convince after stating this week that the issue of vaccines did not fall within the ambit of the Security Council.

Meanwhile, a 34-year-old Canadian announced her plans to challenge the 71-year-old Guineas for the position of UN secretary-general when his current term expires in January 2022.

Arra Akanksha, who was born in India and currently works in the UN development agency, said in a letter that the United Nations was “not living up to its promise or our promise. We are failing those we are here to serve. We are here to solve humanitarian crises, not perpetuate them.”

Over 200 million vaccine doses administered globally so far

MORE than 200 million coronavirus vaccine doses have been administered in at least 167 countries and territories, according to an AFP count based on official sources Saturday.

In total 201,042,149 doses had been given worldwide by 1000 GMT – a figure that does not include the latest data from China and Russia, who have stopped making their progress public in recent days.

Some 45 per cent of the injections took places in countries belonging to the wealthy G7 club, whose members account for just 10 per cent of the global population.

Its seven countries - the US, Canada, Britain, Germany, France, Italy and Japan – promised on Friday to share doses more fairly with worse-off countries.

G7 leaders plan to more than double their total support to worldwide coronavirus vaccinations, to $7.5 billion, including through the World Health Organization-led Covax scheme. More broadly, 92 per cent of doses worldwide have been given in countries classified by the World Bank as “high-income” or “upper-middle income”, accounting for around half of global population. Among the 29 countries the institution ranks as “low-income”, only Guinea and Rwanda have begun vaccinating.

Israel is far ahead of any other country worldwide with almost half its population having received at least one vaccine dose. One in three Israelis has received both doses needed for full protection. – AFP

Pandemic has plateaued, according to Scienzano

THE number of daily deaths in Belgium is declining, according to data published Saturday morning by the Scienzano Public Health Institute. An average of 39 deaths per day was recorded from 10 to 16 February, a reduction of almost 5 per cent.

The daily average for new infections in the same period is 1,186 - another 5 per cent decrease when compared to the previous week.

Belgium is still seeing an average of 119 hospitalizations per day, with patient numbers rising slowly: 313 people are currently in intensive care.

Thus far, 4.18% of the population has received the first dose of the vaccine - around 385,000 people. – AFP

Mongolia to spend 79.3 mln USD on COVID-19 vaccines: minister

MONGOLIA will spend 226 million Mongolian tugriks (about 79.3 million U.S. dollars) to vaccinate its people against COVID-19, the country’s Health Ministry said Saturday.

“The Mongolian government has approved a total of 226 billion Mongolian tugriks for all activities related to COVID-19 vaccination, including the purchase, transportation, storage and inoculation,” said Sereejav Enkhbold, the country’s health minister.

Mongolia is planning to vaccinate at least 60 per cent of its 3.3 million people, or all adults in the country, against the coronavirus within 2021, with 20 per cent of them to be vaccinated under COVAX, a global initiative to ensure quick and equal access to vaccines against the virus, according to the minister. – Xinhua

U.S. COVID-19 vaccine rollout hindered by winter storms

U.S. COVID-19 vaccine rollout has been hindered by power outages amid the ongoing winter storms in much of the country, with nearly all states experiencing shipment delays.

U.S. government vaccine distribution partners “have all faced challenges as workers have been snowed in and unable to get to work to package and ship the vaccines,” said Andy Slavitt, White House senior adviser for COVID-19 response, on Friday. The country has a backlog of six million vaccine doses due to storm weather, according to the White House.

More than 2,000 COVID-19 vaccination sites have been affected, slowing the pace of administering doses. Some vaccines were sitting “safe and sound” in factories and hubs, and approximately 1.4 million doses were being transported Friday, according to Slavitt.

UPS and FedEx will be making Saturday deliveries, and all backlogged doses would be delivered “within the next week,” he said. Slavitt also announced that the federal administration is working with Florida and Pennsylvania to open five additional vaccination centers.

California, the most populous U.S. state hit hard by the pandemic, has witnessed severe delays of vaccine shipments, leading to the cancellation of vaccination appointments.

Los Angeles has postponed more COVID-19 vaccination appointments originally scheduled for Saturday as vaccine shipments remain mired in transit. Local officials pushed back 12,500 appointments scheduled Friday because of supply disruptions. – Xinhua

The winter storm spawned at least four tornadoes, according to Atlanta-based weather.com. PHOTO: AFP
Russia says registers third coronavirus vaccine

MOSCOW announced Saturday it had registered its third vaccine against the coronavirus and promised to introduce the jab to the Russian population by March. Russia was the first country to register a vaccine against Covid-19 in August ahead of clinical trials, and the Sputnik V jab has been authorised in more than two dozen countries around the world.

“Today we note that a third vaccine, CoviVac, has been registered,” Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said at a government meeting broadcast on state television.

“And already in mid-March, the first 120,000 doses will be distributed within the civilian circulation,” he told the cabinet.

First greeted with scepticism, the effectiveness of Sputnik V was confirmed by the Lancet medical journal earlier this month.

Moscow relied on the nationwide rollout of the vaccine to stave off the impact of a second wave of infections that battered the country late last year.

But mortality data released recently revealed that Russia’s death rate was still one of the highest in the world.

President Vladimir Putin announced in October that the country had registered its second vaccine, EpivacCorona, which health officials had said would enter mass production this month.

Mishustin said Saturday that Russia had produced 10 million doses of Spuitnik and 80,000 batches of the EpivacCorona vaccine.

Argentina president tells health minister to quit over vaccine line-jumping

Health Minister Gines Gonzalez Garcia was asked to step down after it emerged that people close to him had skipped the line for a Covid-19 vaccination.

ARGENTINA’S President Alberto Fernandez asked his health minister to resign Friday after it emerged that friends of his had skipped the line for a Covid-19 vaccination.

So far only health workers have been vaccinated in Argentina and vaccinations for people aged over 70 only began on Wednesday in the province of Buenos Aires. The scandal broke after a 71-year-old journalist, Horacio Verbitsky, announced on the radio that, owing to his long-standing friendship with Health Minister Gines Gonzalez Garcia, he had already been able to get vaccinated in his office. Local media reported that other people close to the government were also vaccinated at the health ministry.

Mr Pollard believes policies of initially vaccinating more people with a single dose may provide greater immediate population protection than immunising half the number of people with two doses.

Mr Pollard believes policies of initially vaccinating more people with a single dose may provide greater immediate population protection than immunising half the number of people with two doses, especially in places where the Oxford vaccine is in limited supply.

A three-month interval between doses of the Oxford COVID-19 vaccine results in higher vaccine efficacy than a six-week gap, according to a new study which says the first dose can offer up to 76 per cent protection in the months between the two jabs.

Virus outbreak hits Chinese community in Cambodia

AN outbreak of coronavirus has hit the Chinese expat community in Cambodia, the country’s Premier Hun Sen said Saturday, a setback in the Southeast Asian nation’s otherwise successful containment efforts.

The kingdom has so far fared well in tackling the virus and life in the capital Phnom Penh has largely returned to normal.

But a group of Chinese nationals who underwent testing to obtain medical certificates for overseas travel recorded positive results on Saturday, sparking fears of a wider outbreak in the community.

“We have discovered a big community infection with 32 cases... this is a bad situation for us,” Hun Sen said during a speech broadcast on state-run TV.

“Those found positive today are all Chinese.”

The increasing presence of Chinese businesses across the kingdom has heightened anti-Chinese sentiment among some Cambodians, and Hun Sen urged people not to discriminate against Chinese nationals because of the latest outbreak.

The strongman prime minister, one of the world’s longest serving leaders, is a staunch ally of Beijing, and Cambodia receives billions of dollars in soft loans and investment from China.

Early in the pandemic many countries closed their borders to China, where the virus was first detected, but Hun Sen refused to follow suit and even travelled to Beijing to meet with leader Xi Jinping last February in a show of solidarity.

Romanian homeless people made a vaccine priority

ALMOST 300 homeless people have been vaccinated against coronavirus in Romania, making it one of the first European countries to single out people who are sleeping rough, health authorities said Saturday.

“These people are among the most exposed to infection risk. It’s hard for most of them to follow infection control measures,” senior health minister Andrei Baciu told AFP.

Bucharest decided to move the homeless up the priority scale – following in Denmark’s footsteps – after pressure from charity groups.

Now people sleeping rough are on par with the over-65s, chronically ill people and teachers, and just below health workers. Mobile vaccination teams have visited shelters in several towns including the capital over the past few days.

PHOTO: TASS

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP
Vaccination shots for the elderly people aged 65 and above in coming weeks and our country is on the road to recovery. The number of people who has speeded up and taken lives of over 1,000 people in our country and has disrupted our economy.

As the vaccination program gains momentum, we see the beginning of our victory against the pandemic. Meanwhile, we are confident that our people will also be patient and wait for their turn with trust and confidence.

We appeal all people to abide by COVID-19 health rules and guidelines during the period while the vaccines are still not available.

And, those who have been vaccinated against the virus are urged not to even think of putting the mask away anytime soon. Almost 19 percent of our population will be vaccinated against COVID-19 in 2021 and 2022.

Sixteen days after the beginning of vaccination, with 1.3 million vaccines donated by the Government of India, 150,000 doses of vaccines purchased from India are being distributed in 11 medical centers.

Meanwhile, vaccines provided under the COVAX Facility can be expected to arrive any day. Vaccines and vaccines bought by the state budget will arrive in April. Government is following the role of precipitation in Earth’s water cycle and how it interacts with other Earth systems requires a global view. The distribution of water over Earth’s surface and changes in the atmosphere, hydrosphere, and land.

But, we would like to urge all those who have been vaccinated or not to follow the basic rules and regulations — including wearing masks and social distancing until we are out of the woods.

As the progress of vaccination is being made, patience is required.
UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Friday hailed the re-entry of the United States into the Paris Agreement on climate change and called for global action to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

"Today is a day of hope, as the United States officially rejoins the Paris Agreement. This is good news for the United States, and for the world," Guterres told a virtual event to mark the U.S. re-entry.

"For the past four years, the absence of a key player created a gap in the Paris Agreement, a missing link that weakened the whole. So today, as we mark the United States re-entry into this treaty, we also recognize its restoration, in its entirety, as its creators intended," he said. "Welcome back."

The United States signed the Paris Agreement on April 22, 2016, and expressed its consent to be bound by the agreement by acceptance on Sept. 3, 2016. Donald Trump, shortly after taking office as U.S. president, announced in June 2017 that his country would cease all participation in the agreement. The U.S. withdrawal officially took effect on Nov. 4, 2020.

On his first day in the White House, President Joe Biden signed a new instrument of acceptance, which was deposited with the UN secretary-general on the same day, enabling the U.S. re-entry on Feb. 19, 2021, in accordance with provisions of the Paris Agreement.

Guterres on Friday called for U.S. and global action to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

The Paris Agreement is a historic achievement. But the commitments made so far are not enough. And even those commitments made in Paris are not being met, said Guterres.

The six years since 2015, when the Paris Agreement was negotiated, have been the six hottest years on record. Carbon dioxide levels are at record highs. Fires, floods and other extreme weather events are getting worse, in every region, he said. "If we don’t change course, we could face a catastrophic temperature rise of more than 3 degrees this century."

This year is pivotal for global climate action, and the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, Scotland, in November will be a make-or-break occasion. Governments will take decisions that will determine the future of people and the planet, he said. — Xinhua

Brussels approves EU-UK personal data flows

THE European Commission lifted the threat of crucial data flows between Europe and Britain being blocked in a move that would have crippled business activity as it said Friday that privacy safeguards in the UK met European standards.

In a key post-Brexit decision, the EU executive said that British authorities had sufficient measures in place to protect European users’ personal data, freeing up data transfers for businesses as well as for police.

The adequacy decision, to be formally adopted by the 27 member states, would ensure that data protection will “never be compromised when personal data travel across the Channel,” said EU Justice Commissioner Didier Reynders.

Businesses will breathe a sigh of relief at the decision, with more and more companies relying on cross-border cloud computing and other technology to function every day.

This was made especially clear during the COVID-19 pandemic as companies and governments increasingly went online, counting on big tech’s networks to operate.

A negative decision would have blocked the transfer of data from EU-based companies to the UK, crippling activity. — AFP

As peace deal drifts, South Sudan risks fresh crisis

The peace process has drifted as South Sudan risks from economic crisis, brutal ethnic violence, an armed insurgency, and its worst hunger crisis since declaring independence from Sudan in 2011.

The eve of its first anniversary, South Sudan's unity government is in trouble, with the country's fragile peace process in doubt and old rivalries again threatening a return to war.

President Salva Kiir and Vice President Riek Machar, for years on opposing sides of the battlefield, formed a coalition government on February 22, 2020 after nearly a year of delay and haggling along with international pressure.

The agreement to share power was born from a truce that ended five years of bloodshed in the world’s newest country that cost nearly 400,000 lives and drove four million people from their homes.

The ceasefire still largely holds — but it is being sorely tested, observers say.

Apart from forming a government in Juba, almost none of the other provisions of the peace accord signed by Kiir and Machar have been honoured a year after the pair shook hands.

National parliament has not convened, contested ministerial posts remain unfilled, and Kiir and Machar’s troops have not unified into a single army — a critical safeguard against another outbreak of fighting.

“With both men continuing to command their own separate forces, the journey back to war could be short,” said the International Crisis Group in a February report. The peace process has drifted as South Sudan reels from economic crisis, brutal ethnic violence, an armed insurgency, and its worst hunger crisis since declaring independence from Sudan in 2011. — AFP

UN report finds Trump ally violated Libya arms embargo: US media

PRIVATE security contractor and ally of former US President Trump Erik Prince violated a United Nations arms embargo in Libya, a confidential report has reportedly found.

Prince, founder of private military contractor Blackwater USA, violated a UN arms embargo on Libya, a confidential report has reportedly found.

Prince to possible UN sanctions, US media

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PRIVATE security contractor and ally of former US President Trump Erik Prince violated a United Nations arms embargo in Libya, UN investigators have found in a report detailed by US media on Friday.

The confidential report to the Security Council, obtained by the New York Times and the Washington Post, said that Prince deployed a force of foreign mercenaries and weapons to strongman Khalifa Haftar, who has fought to overthrow the UN-backed Libyan government, in 2019.

The $80 million operation included plans to form a hit squad to track and kill Libyan commanders opposed to Haftar — including some who were also European Union citizens, the New York Times said.

Prince, a former Navy SEAL and the brother of Trump’s education secretary Betsy DeVos, drew infamy as the head of the Blackwater private security firm, whose contractors were accused of killing unarmed Iraqi civilians in Baghdad in 2007.

Four who were convicted were pardoned by Trump last year.

The accusation exposes Prince to possible UN sanctions, including a travel ban, the Times said.

Prince did not cooperate with the UN inquiry and his lawyer declined to comment to the New York Times, it added. —AFP

ON the eve of its first anniversary, South Sudan’s unity government is in trouble, with the country’s fragile peace process in doubt and old rivalries again threatening a return to war.

President Salva Kiir and Vice President Riek Machar, for years on opposing sides of the battlefield, formed a coalition government on February 22, 2020 after nearly a year of delay and haggling along with international pressure.

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G7 leaders pledge support for Tokyo Olympics

LEADERS from the Group of Seven industrialized nations have pledged full support for Japan to host a “safe and secure” Olympic Games this summer.

“We support the commitment of Japan to hold the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 in a safe and secure manner this summer as a symbol of global unity in overcoming COVID-19,” read a joint statement released after a virtual meeting of leaders chaired by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Friday night.

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga told the meeting that Japan is determined to host the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games this summer despite COVID-19, briefing Tokyo’s preparations for the Games with the International Olympic Committee.

Suga told reporters after the meeting, “I was able to gain support from all the leaders. It was so encouraging.”

G7 includes the seven leading industrialized countries of Britain, the United States, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Canada. Suga, who took office last September, was attending the meeting for the first time, as were U.S. President Joe Biden and Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi. The postponed 2020 Olympic Games has been rescheduled for July 23-August 8, 2021. — Xinhua

‘Violence unacceptable’ Spain PM says as rapper protests rage

SPAIN’S government will confront all forms of violence, Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said Friday as violent protests over the jailing of a rapper for controversial tweets ran into a fourth night.

“Democracy never, ever justifies violence,” the Socialist leader said in his first public condemnation of the unrest which began on Tuesday and has raised questions about Spain’s democracy.

Consequently, the Spanish government will confront any kind of violence,” Sanchez said.

“In a full democracy—which Spain is—the use of any kind of violence is unacceptable. There is no exception to this rule,” he added, in reference to remarks by Podemos leader Pablo Iglesias who said Hasel’s jailing raised questions about Spain’s democracy.

About 100 people have been arrested since the protests began, including 16 overnight in Valencia and the eastern city of Barcelona, and scores have been injured, including a young woman who lost an eye after being hit by a foam round fired by police on Tuesday. —AFP

Russia announces first known case of H5N8 avian flu in humans

Russia said Saturday its scientists had detected the first case of transmission of the H5N8 strain of avian flu to humans and had alerted the World Health Organization.

In televised remarks, the head of Russia’s health watchdog Rospotrebnadzor, Anna Popova, said scientists at the Vektor laboratory had isolated the strain’s genetic material from seven workers at a poultry farm in southern Russia, where an outbreak was recorded among the birds in December.

The workers did not suffer any serious health consequences, she added.

“We support the world’s first case of transmission of the avian flu (H5N8) to humans and have already been sent to the World Health Organization,” Popova said.

There are different subtypes of avian influenza viruses.

While the highly contagious strain H5N8 is lethal for birds it has never before been reported to have spread to humans. —AFP

Kremlin critic Navalny to serve prison time as Moscow court dismisses appeal

A Moscow court on Saturday upheld a ruling to jail the Kremlin’s most prominent opponent Alexei Navalny, sealing his first lengthy prison sentence in a decade of legal battles with Russian authorities.

Judge Dmitry Balashov dismissed Navalny’s appeal against a recent decision to imprison him for violating the terms of a suspended prison sentence in a case that has raised concerns about free speech in Spain. Violence is an attack on democracy.

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5.2 million people displaced in DR Congo, including 3 million children: UN

There are about 5.2 million displaced people in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo) – about half of whom were forced to flee their homes in the last 12 months, according to United Nations data. The UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) on Friday released a report Fear and Flight. An uprooted generation of children at risk in the DR Congo, noting that of the total number of displaced people, three million are children. Whole villages have been set ablaze, health centres and schools ransacked, and entire families – including children – hacked to death, in a series of merciless attacks in eastern DR Congo by fighters using machetes and heavy weapons, said UNICEF. “Displaced children know nothing but fear, poverty, and violence. Generation after generation can think only of survival”, Edouard Beigheder, UNICEF Representative for the DR Congo, said. —Xinhua

Protests that began in Catalonia have now spread to other cities, including Madrid. PHOTO: AFP

Anna Popova praised “the important scientific discovery,” saying “time will tell” if the virus can further mutate. PHOTO: Dmitry Astakhov, Sputnik, Government Pool

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**GOV’T, TEPCO ORDERED TO PAY 278 MIL. YEN OVER FUKUSHIMA CRISIS**

A Japanese high court on Friday overturned a lower court decision that dismissed the state’s responsibility in the 2011 nuclear crisis, ordering both the government and the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant’s operator to pay damages to 43 people who had to evacuate from their hometowns as a result.

The Tokyo High Court ordered the state to cover the total damages of 278 million yen ($2.63 million) together with Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings Inc. over the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident. PHOTO: KYODO

**GOOGLE FIRES ANOTHER LEAD AI ETHICS RESEARCHER**

GOOGLE said Friday it fired a lead artificial intelligence ethics researcher, following controversy last year over the tech giant’s dismissal of a Black colleague who was an outspoken diversity advocate.

“T’m fired,” Margaret Mitchell told AP via Twitter.

Google told AFP that after reviewing “this manager’s conduct, we confirmed that there were multiple violations of our code of conduct, as well as of our security policies, which included the exfiltration of confidential business-sensitive documents and private data of other employees.”

Mitchell’s dismissal came a day after Google named one of its few Black executives, Marian Croak, as head of a new centre of expertise on responsible AI within Google Research.

“For the past six years she’s been a vice president at Goog­le working on everything from site reliability engineering to bringing public Wi-Fi to India’s railroads,” senior programme manager Sepe Hejazi Moghadam said of Croak in a blog post announcing her new position.

Mitchell was suspended from her job last month in response to her downloading and sharing company documents, according to a Google statement. Mitchell said she was troubled by the firing of Gebru, her co-leader on the AI ethics team. —AFP

**WINTER WEATHER CLOSES TEXAS CHIP PLANTS, WORSENINGShortages**

The winter storm ravaging the United States has forced the shutdown of computer chip manufacturing in Texas, threatening to worsen a global semiconductor shortage.

NXP Semiconductors, a major provider of automotive and mobile phone chips, said its plant in Austin, Texas was closed amid the state’s electric power difficulties.

“We are carefully monitoring the situation and will resume operations in our Austin facilities as soon as possible,” said David Reed, executive vice president for operations at the Dutch-based company. Infineon Technologies said it was given notice this week that power would be turned off for its plant in Austin. “This gave us a few hours to prepare for the disruption and we were able to put the factory into a safe state and protect our employees and production inventory,” a statement from the German-based tech firm said. “We have immediately set up a task force, which is continuously monitoring the situation and executing mitigation measures.” Operations were also suspended at Texas facilities of South Korea’s Samsung, according to media reports. The news comes amid a worsening shortage of semiconductors affecting a variety of sectors including automobiles, mobile phones, game consoles and more. Manufacturers have faced challenges in meeting strong consumer electronics demand during the pandemic, while meeting needs of other sectors.

The Biden administration said last week it was assessing immediate steps to address the semiconductor shortage and planned an executive order to shore up critical supply chain items.

The White House said the administration wants a “comprehensive review of supply chains for critical goods” that can guide both short- and long-term actions. —AFP

**U.S. AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS TO CHINA HIT RECORD HIGH IN 2021: USDA**

U.S. agricultural exports to China are expected to hit a record $31.5 billion this fiscal year (FY) 2021 that ends on Sept. 30, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) said on Thursday.

The figure is 4.5 billion dollars higher than the department’s previous forecast in November, due to the strong first-quarter shipments and surging sales to China, the USDA said in its Outlook for U.S. Agricultural Trade.

“October-December exports reached a historic high of $14.4 billion, largely a result of strong shipments of soybeans, corn, sorghum, wheat, cotton, and chicken paws. Outstanding sales of many of these products remain high, with com sales at unprecedented levels,” the USDA said.

China is forecast to remain as the largest U.S. agricultural market in FY 2021, followed by Canada and Mexico, according to the USDA. —Xinhua

**PARIS AUTHORITY WINS AIRBNB COURT CASE OVER RENTAL RESTRICTIONS**

PARIS authorities are celebrating another victory after winning a court case against Airbnb and other short-term holiday rental companies that they hope will boost the city’s property market.

Paris’s Court of Cassation ruled that regulations designed to counter the impact of Airbnb and other short-term rental sites on the local property market were “proportionate” and in line with European law. The de­cision could now encourage other European cities to take similar steps.

The victory for the City of Paris against Airbnb and fraudsters who rent their properties illegally, deputy mayor Ian Brossat, who is in charge of housing, wrote on Twitter, saying it ended five years of court battles. —Xinhua

**PLAID® CLOUD SERVICES DEPLOYS TO CHINA**

PLAID® CLOUD SERVICES has deployed to China, the company said Thursday.

The platform is designed to help financial institutions and fintechs in China offer their customers financial services, according to the announcement. The platform currently provides a multi-cloud supported platform for financial institutions in China, the company said.

**EMIRATES TO LAUNCH DUBAI-TOOCTOBER 17 FLIGHT WITH DEPARTURES FROM SHARJAH**

TOOCTOBER 17 AIRPORTS in the UAE will see the resumption of flights between Dubai International and Sharjah International. The flights operate daily.

Emirates said Wednesday it will launch flights between these two airports with a total of 76 flights between October 17 and 21. PHOTO: Reuters
Sterling soars close to three-year high above $1.40

THE British pound soared above $1.40 on Friday for the first time in almost three years, propelled by a vaccination drive that has boosted economic recovery hopes.

Sterling breached the symbolic barrier for the first time since April 2018, reaching $1.4088. “The markets are forward-looking and any softness in data during this lockdown is continuing to be shrugged off,” Think-Markets analyst Fawad Razaqzada told AFP after official UK figures Friday showed slumping retail sales and soaring government borrowing.

“The market is expecting that the UK also avoided a ‘no-deal’ Brexit at the end of last year, which is one of the key reasons... (for) $1.40, a level where it was trading around before that 2016 referendum” in favor of Britain’s exit from the European Union.

The British currency has risen more than 2 percent against the euro in February, as the aggressive rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination program in the UK raised expectations its economy will recover faster than that of its European peers.

Britain reported this week it has vaccinated 11.6 million people with a first dose against COVID-19 so far, the fastest rollout per capita of any large country.

Neil Jones, head of FX sales at Mizuho Bank, said sterling is benefiting from the fact that the currency market is already looking at a “post-COVID world”.

—AFP

Bitcoin market hits $1 trillion in value

THE total value of all bitcoin topped $1 trillion on Friday, capping a spectacular record-breaking week for the world’s most popular cryptocurrency.

At about 2030 GMT, bitcoin zoomed to its latest all-time pinnacle at $55,155 after a string of corporate giants embraced the digital unit.

With more than 18.6 million bitcoins created since the digital currency was launched in 2009, the entire market is now worth $1.015 trillion, according to data provider Coinmarketcap.com.

“This is certainly big news for the industry and this would not have been possible without the involvement of smart money,” said AvaTrade analyst Naeem Aslam.

“The reason that one trillion dollar market capital is significant because not many believed that bitcoin can achieve this. Now, we have a real number which is massive in size and we are going to get more investors joining this rally,” he added.

Bitcoin has set a blistering record pace, blasting past $50,000 on Tuesday, a week after Tesla revealed it had invested $1.5 billion in the unit.

—AFP

Bolsonaro appoints army reserve general to head Petrobras

In this file photo taken on December 14, 2018, then-President-elect Jair Bolsonaro (L) and General Joaquin Silva e Luna attend a ceremony at a navy base in Itaguaí city, Rio de Janeiro state. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

BRASIL’s far-right president, Jair Bolsonaro, appointed an army reserve general to lead state-owned energy giant Petrobras, after criticizing several successive minuses in the price of fuel.

“The government decided to appoint Joaquim Silva e Luna to fulfill a new mission, as... president of Petrobras, after closing the cycle, exceeding two years, of the current president Roberto Castello Branco,” said a brief note from the Ministry of Mines and Energy, published by the president on his Facebook account.

Silva e Luna, formerly the defense minister under president Michel Temer, had been serving as general director of the Itaipu Binacional dam.

His nomination will have to be confirmed by the Petrobras board of directors. Earlier Friday Bolsonaro had announced that there would be “changes” at Petrobras.

“We will never interfere in this great company, nor in its pricing policy, but people cannot be surprised with certain increases,” Bolsonaro said during a morning event in the northeastern state of Pernambuco. He did not give further details.

His statements were followed by a sharp drop in the oil company’s share prices. They closed down 7.92 percent Friday, with preferred shares down 6.63 per cent.

Petrobras has increased fuel prices four times so far in 2021, a cumulative rise of nearly 35 per cent. The price of gas cylinders, widely used by poor families, has also increased considerably this year, a new blow to people already severely affected by the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

—AFP

China-Europe Railway Express brings more foreign products to inland China

CHINA-EUROPE Railway Express continues to deliver a wide variety of goods and products from countries along the Belt and Road to their final destination in China during the Spring Festival, providing consumers with more choices during the country’s most important traditional festival, Chinanews.com reported on Feb.17.

In recent days, the freight trains have transported foreign commodities, including pure milk, chocolate, and cold-chain foods all the way to Zhengzhou, capital city of central China’s Henan province.

Transporting these foreign products to China’s market amid a worldwide pandemic is a difficult task.

“We must strengthen epidemic control measures throughout the whole process, while keeping the products fresh,” stated Li Ming, deputy stationmaster of Putian Station on the Zhengzhou section operated by China Railway Zhengzhou Bureau Group Co., Ltd. —Xinhua

Claim Day Notice

M.V San Pedro Voy. No. (1068)

Claims of cargo carried on M.V SAN PEDRO VOY. NO. (1068) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-2-2021 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/MMP 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

M/S MCC TRANSPORT (SPORE) PTE LTD

Agent For:

Shipping Agency Department
Myanmar Port Authority

Myanmar Port Authority

M/V Cherry Voy. No. (019N/S)

Claims of cargo carried on M.V CHERRY VOY. NO. (019N/S) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 21-2-2021 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.

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Phone No: 2301185

M/S INTER ASIA LINES

Agent For:

Shipping Agency Department
Myanmar Port Authority

Myanmar Port Authority
Dawei-Hteekhee road to get easy access to Thailand's Bangkok

By Zin Lin Myint, Translated by Robert Tun Win

Infrastructure such as buildings, transport, water and power supplies are necessary for the state of being perfect in a bid to develop the economy of the State. Especially, transport plays a crucial role in carrying out development tasks for a region of a country. Moreover, it is also important to create travel routes to neighbouring countries besides smooth and secure local transport links. With the aim of developing travel routes, plans are underway to build a motor road linking Dawei Special Economic Zone with Hteekhee.

The plan is to build a motor road from Dawei SEZ in Dawei District, Taninthayi Region, to Hteekhee on the border of Myanmar and Thailand. Dawei-Hteekhee motor road will be about 140 KM long, and it will be a two-lane road. It will be as good as the best in the world. Upon completion, anyone can travel to Bangkok, Thailand, from Hteekhee within two hours.

Dawei-Hteekhee is currently an earthen road, and it will be upgraded into a tarred road. After upgrading the road, it will take about two and half hours to travel to Hteekhee on the border of Myanmar and Thailand from Dawei SEZ, and it will be a two-hour drive from Hteekhee to Bangkok, Thailand. It will take about four and a half hours to get to Bangkok from Dawei.

The arrangement has been made to invite tenders for the construction of Dawei-Hteekhee motor road project, which was approved by Pyidaungsu Hluttaw in April of 2017, and the project is now to begin the work.

The Neighbouring Countries Economic Development Corporation Agency of Thailand (NEDA) will issue out the loans to be spent on the implementation of Dawei-Hteekhee motor road project. As regards, the Ministry of Construction acted as the responsible ministry, and environmental and social impact assessments were carried out and recently approved.

Upon completion of upgrading the Dawei-Hteekhee motor road project, not only Taninthayi Region but also Dawei SEZ will witness great progress relating to society and economics, thereby promoting bilateral trade cooperation between Myanmar and Thailand which can expand the economic area and travel service between the two countries through mutual friendship and goodwill. The Dawei-Hteekhee road is currently an earthen road facing landslides and road erosion which cause road damages and traffic congestion in the rainy season. Rainwater causes the surface under the ground to soften, making it full of mud. In this state, traffic congestions and accidents come about thereby resulting in a barrier to freight transport and travel. For that reason, Dawei-Hteekhee road will be upgraded into a tarred one.

It was learnt that the Taninthayi regional government and land
The plan to upgrade Dawei-Hteekhee road project will begin in June or July in 2021. Once Dawei-Hteekhee road upgrading project has been finished, anyone will be able to go to Thailand by land besides an extension of trade area to Southeast Asian countries through Thailand.
**Yangon United sign Magwe forward player on loan**

In preparation for a new football season of the Myanmar National League, Yangon United Football Club previously confirmed that forward player Pyae Moe from Magwe Football Club has joined with the Yangon United football squad for a two-year contract agreement, according to the team statement.

The 28-year-old defender has expressed his feeling upon joining the top domestic league football club.

“I am so proud to be offered by this great team. And I know it could be harder to take a position among the talented players, and I have to gear up my performance more and more. And I do my best for the fans as well,” Pyae Moe said. Pyae Moe studied football education at the Institute of Sports and Physical Education (Mandalay) from 2008 to 2009. Next, he played for the Ministry of Sports in the Inter-ministries Football Tournament and began his professional journey with Rakhine United (U-21) in 2011. Then he advanced to the senior team playing four years. He spent one year in Zeyar Shwe Myaw, 2017-2018 in Hantharwady United, and 2019-2020 in Magwe producing quality performances in the respective teams. He was a star player in the senior Myanmar national team in 2015 for World Cup Qualifiers. —GNLM

**Burns matches 36-hole Riviera record to grab PGA lead**

American threatened to run away from a star-studded field with a bogey-free round to stand on 12-under 130 at the halfway mark. “I was hitting it good and I had some good looks and I was able to convert them,” Burns said. “Just had patience out there. I didn’t try to force anything. Whenever we were in a tricky spot, just took what the golf course gave us.”

World number one Dustin Johnson, the reigning Masters champion, shot 67 to share second on 135 with fellow Americans Tyler McCumber and Jordan Spieth. American 24-year-old lead at the US PGA Genesis Invitational. The 24-year-old American threatened to run away from a star-studded field with a bogey-free round to stand on 12-under 130 at the halfway mark. “I was hitting it good and I had some good looks and I was able to convert them,” Burns said. “Just had patience out there. I didn’t try to force anything. Whenever we were in a tricky spot, just took what the golf course gave us.”

Burns matched the 36-hole course record at Riviera at 12-under par 130 after shooting a 66 Friday to seize the lead of the US PGA Genesis Invitational. 

**Klopp won’t focus on Man City when Liverpool review title flop**

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp. PHOTO: POOL/AFP

LONDON — Jurgen Klopp says Liverpool won’t focus on catching Manchester City when he reviews what went wrong in their disastrous Premier League title defence.

City are 10 points clear at the top of the table and Liverpool boss Klopp has been forced to concede the championship is out of the title race.

The injury-plagued Reds are languishing 16 points behind City in sixth place after three successive league defeats. But Klopp, whose team were thrashed 4-1 by Pep Guardiola’s men recently, is adamant City are not going to be the driving force behind his own plans for improvement next term.

“We do not have to think about that now because we do not play them any more this year, probably. Maybe in the Champions League,” Klopp told reporters on Friday.

“It was never the case where we thought ‘how can we overtake City’, or ‘how can we become the finest team in English football again?’” —AFP

**Japan’s Osaka dominates Brady to win Australian Open**

JAPAN’S Naomi Osaka dismissed Jennifer Brady in straight sets to win the Australian Open and underline her growing hold on women’s tennis on Saturday.

Osaka edged a tight first set but controlled the second to win 6-4, 6-3 in 77 minutes in front of 7,381 fans at Rod Laver Arena.

Third seed Osaka preserves her 100 percent record in Grand Slam finals after winning the 2018 and 2020 US Opens and the 2019 title in Melbourne. The reigning US Open champion, who beat her idol Serena Williams in the Melbourne semi-finals, has now won two of the last three Grand Slams as her status and reputation soars.

“We played in the semis of the US Open a couple of months ago and I told everyone that you’re going to be a problem,” Osaka told Brady at the trophy presentation. “And I was right. It’s really incredible to me to see your growth over the past few months, it’s really cool for me to see.”

Osaka, 23, is only the third player after Monica Seles and Roger Federer to win their first four major finals, and will now rise to second in the world rankings.

She saved two match points in the fourth round against Garbine Muguruza and swept past Williams in straight sets in the semis. —AFP

Osaka has won her fourth major title. PHOTO: AFP

Osaka has won her fourth major title. PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO:  AFP

PHOTO: POOL/AFP

PHOTO:  AFP

PHOTO:  AFP

PHOTO:  AFP

PHOTO:  AFP

PHOTO:  AFP