ETHNIC RIGHTS STRATEGY KEY TO ENSURING PEOPLE ENJOY EQUAL RIGHTS PAGE-8 (OPINION)

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Military columns participate in full-dress rehearsal for 76th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day Parade

Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Soe Win is viewing the full-dress rehearsal for the 76th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day Parade, yesterday.

MILITARY columns, which will participate in the parade of the 76th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day that falls on 27 March, took part in the full-dress parade at Nay Pyi Taw parade ground yesterday morning.

Anawyahtar, Kyansitthar, Bayintnaung, Aungzayya, Hsinbyushin, Bandoola and Aung San columns led by Parade Commander Maj-Gen Soe Min Oo marched into the parade ground on the parade agenda by singing marching songs in chorus to the accompaniment of the Tatmadaw military band. Together with Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Council members General Mya Tun Oo, Lt-Gen Soe Htut, senior military officers including Chairman of the Leading Committee for Observance of the Armed Forces Day Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye, Chairman of the Management Committee for Observance of the Armed Forces Day Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Zaw Myo Tin and officials inspected full-dress rehearsal of the military columns. After the parade, the Vice-Senior General attended to the needs in coordination with officials.

Officers and other ranks from Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and Myanmar Police Forces, female members, members of Navy Seals, the female member of special operation task forces, troop of heavy machinery corps from the Tatmadaw (Army and Navy) and aircraft from the Tatmadaw (Air) participated in the parade rehearsal. Those members wore badges and uniforms used by the Myanmar Tatmadaw in successive eras from the independence struggle to 2020, holding military weapons and today's modern weapons used in successive eras for portraying silver, golden and diamond jubilee eras. — MNA ■

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population
Minister's Office
Notification (164/2021)
12th Waxing of Tabaung 1382 ME
24 March 2021

1. Outbreaks of arson fire happened at 18 factories that had registered at Hlinethaya, Shwelinpan industrial zone and Shwepyitha branches of Township Social Security Offices in Yangon Region at 1:30 pm on 14-3-2021, 2:00 pm on 15-3-2021 and 3:00 pm on 19-3-2021, leaving buildings and equipment of factories damaged.
2. A total of 2,229 male workers and 13,428 female workers, totalling 15,657, who insured at the Social Security Board, became jobless after outbreaks of fire as natural disasters. The Social Security Board will spend its fund on providing cash assistance which shall equal 40 per cent from the last premium fees they paid in accord with Section 31 (b) (ii) of the 2012 Social Security Law, and Rules 136 (b) by exercising authority stipulated in Section 100 of the law.
3. In conformity with the provisions of the second paragraph, employers or officials on behalf of the employers from factories and workplaces must apply for taking out the cash assistance of social security for insured workers at the township Social Security Offices from the date when the notification was released.
4. Releases described above come into force from the date when this notification was released.

U Myint Kyaing
Union Minister

Noticeable points in filing complaints to Anti-Corruption Commission

1. Anyone may send information and complaints on matters related to corruption and wealthiness based on corruption to the commission or commission office or work committee, workgroup, preliminary security team or any investigation teams formed in line with this law or relevant governments or government organizations in accord with the prescribed rules.
2. Complaints must be directly sent to the commission but copies.
3. The complaint must comprise the name of the complaint sender, signature, copy of citizenship scrutiny card, full address and telephone number.
4. Important pieces of evidence such as eyewitnesses, documents, photos, audio files and video files can be attached to the complaints.
5. If one intentionally files complaints to cause grievance against or to discredit anyone, it is noticeable that action will be taken against them under Section 59 of the law.

Address for complaints
Anti-Corruption Commission
Office No 56, Zeya Htani Road, Ottarathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, Post Box (144)
Telephone No. 067-8103347, 067-8103334
Email address-accm@accm.gov.mm
Website address-http://www.accm.gov.mm

Myanma gems and jewellery exhibition committee to provide registration to attend 2021 pearl and gems fair

THE Central Committee of the Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Exhibition, under the supervision of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, will hold the 2021 Pearl and Gems Fair in Myanmar Kyats from 1 to 10 April at the Mani Yadanar Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw.

The fair will allow those who have licence and permission under the Myanmar Gemstone Law and Rule, those who have registered under Myanmar Companies Law and citizens of Myanmar who are members of the Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Entrepreneurs Association to attend following the regulations.

Citizen jewellers who wish to attend the exhibition will be able to register at the Myanma Gems and Jewellery Museum (head office in Nay Pyi Taw) from 24 March.

For more information on permission to attend the 2021 Pearl and Gems Fair, please contact the Central Committee of the Myanmar Gems and Jewellery Exhibition, Myanmar Gems Trading Head Office (Nay Pyi Taw).—MNA

76th Armed Forces Day military parade to be broadcast live on MRTV

THE 76th Armed Forces Day military parade will be held on 27 March at Nay Pyi Taw Military Parade Ground. It will be broadcast live on Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV), MITV, Myawady TV and Voice of Myanmar Radio. — MNA

Yangon circular train resumes operation

MYANMA Railways has stopped operations, including Yangon circular train, for various reasons. Five RBE carriages resumed operation at 8:35 am from Insein railway station yesterday.

That circular train ran to Yangon railway station, Mingalardon railway station and arrived back at Insein station at 11:50 am.

During this operation, the concrete sleepers, old rail track, stones, logs and barbed wire were found on the railway track between Gyogon and Thamine Myothit stations, Thamine Myothit and Thamine stations, Kamayut and Hledan stations, and the crossroads of Kamayut and Ywarma Kyaung Lan stations, between Paywat Sake Kone and Okkalapa stations and in the compound of Insein DRC locomotive station. The security forces, MR officials and local people collectively removed these roadblocks and the train successfully operated for the passengers.

The cases will be opened against the unscrupulous perpetrators who made destructive elements at respective township police stations to take action under the law.

The MR is also making arrangements to resume the operations of circular trains daily as before.—MNA

Rail lines are blocked by barbed wires.

MR personnel seen clearing the blocked materials on rail tracks.

It is necessary to find out possible ways and means to reopen banks

ALTHOUGH not all banks have been reopened yet, instructions have been given to reopen banks by taking necessary security measures. Banks have agreed to operate in accordance with the monetary policies adopted by the State since they were established. In accordance with rules and regulations, action will be taken against banks that cannot reopen. It is necessary to find out possible ways and means to reopen banks. As violations of rules and regulations adopted by the State in dealings with foreign currencies and lending limits were found out in the scrutinization of banking operations, it is necessary for the central bank to take measures for routine banking operations.

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

Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) holds its regular meeting (2/2021)

THE Myanmar Investment Commission was reorganized on 4 March 2021 with nine members in accordance with Notification No. 30/2021 of the State Administration Council.

The Commission held its first meeting (2/2021) yesterday morning at Office No. 18, Office of the State Administration Council. Chairman of Myanmar Investment Commission Lieutenant-General Moe Myint Tun and members of the Myanmar Investment Commission participated in the meeting.

The meeting approved ten new projects in the communication service, manufacturing, hotel business, and electricity generation. The approved projects amounted to USD579.019 million, kyats 36.781 billion and 945 job opportunities are expected to be created.

At this meeting, the Region and State Investment Committees were reorganized in accordance with the Myanmar Investment Law to allow investment projects in the regions and states.

By the end of February 2021, the countries with the largest investment out of 51 countries/regions investing in Myanmar are Singapore, the People's Republic of China, and Thailand. The electric power sector leads the list of most invested sectors out of 12 business sectors with 26.16% of total investment. This was followed by the Oil and Gas sector, accounting for 25.89% and the Manufacturing sector, accounting for 14.69%.—MNA

Myanmar rejects and dissociates itself from the draft resolution tabled by the European Union during the 46th session of the Human Rights Council

A DISCUSSION on the draft resolution entitled "Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar" tabled by the European Union was held during the 46th session of the Human Rights Council on 24 March 2021 in Geneva. U Kyaw Myo Htut, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, participated in the discussion through a pre-recorded video.

(L) The 46th session of the Human Rights Council is in progress and Deputy Minister U Kyaw Myo Htut (R) for Foreign Affairs participates in the discussion via a pre-recorded video.

During the submission of the draft resolution, the Deputy Minister underlined the factually and technically flawed facts mentioned in the resolution, the references on the reports which were not supported by credible evidences as well as the elements which could erode the ongoing domestic judicial mechanisms and which could impose a threat and a direct challenge to the sovereignty of the country.

Furthermore, the Deputy Minister stated that Myanmar is consistently against the country-specific resolution which is politicized and unbalanced on a country. He added that the said resolution would not contribute to improving rather worsening the situation on the ground, particularly to the developing and least developed countries. Therefore, the EU's draft resolution would not surely contribute to finding solutions to overcome the challenges faced in Myanmar, but it would rather impose serious impediments on the efforts for bringing peace, stability, national reconciliation and development of the people of Myanmar. Moreover, he underlined that the sovereign right of a country should not be intruded, rather be respected. In this manner, he stated that Myanmar rejects and dissociates itself from the draft resolution as a whole. China, Venezuela and Russia also dissociated themselves from the resolution. —MNA

23 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 24 March, total figure rises to 142,315

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **142,315 after 23 new cases** were reported on 24 March 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, **3,203 died, 131,774** have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

MoHS discusses resumption of central-level hospital operations in Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw

THE Ministry of Health and Sports held the coordination meeting on resuming hospital operations in central-level hospitals in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw. At the meeting, Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Thet Khine Win said most people have to rely on public hospitals. Medical superintendents and medical personnel play an essential role in serving people with necessary healthcare services. He said it is needed to maintain the medical professionals' dignity. The first and second wave of COVID-19 has been overcome despite the difficulties.

Union Minister Dr Thet Khine Win chairs the coordination meeting to resume central-level hospital operations, yesterday.

He added the announcement requesting medical professionals to return to work for the people. He said they could contact the Ministry's call centre, phone number and email address if they have trouble returning to their work.

He said plans are underway to purchase and install advanced equipment required for treatment and diagnosis in public hospitals during the current financial year, adding that preparations must be made to ensure that there is no shortage of necessary medicines and no oversupply/overdose of medicines.

The Union Minister called on making continuous efforts to prevent the third wave of COVID-19 by the excellent coverage of COVID-19 vaccination in respective regions and states and said arrangements are being made to get the staff's necessary allowances, including dinner allowance for the night duty staffs in the public hospitals.

He also urged the subject doctors, including the medical superintendents, to guide their staff in the right direction so that they do not go astray and hold meetings for the resumption of hospital operations and work together in unison public healthcare services.

Afterwards, Director-General U Sein Win of the Union Minister Office discussed matters related to financial and staffing. Acting Director-General of the Department of Medical services discussed hospital management and hospital equipment maintenance to resume the hospital operations.

The meeting was also attended by officials from the Department of Medical Services and Medical Superintendents of the central-level hospitals from Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw. —MNA

Coordination Meeting on ODA Loan and Grant Projects provided by Government of the Republic of Korea holds

The MoIFER deputy minister chairs the coordination meeting on the ROK-aided projects yesterday.

THE Coordination Meeting on Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan and grant projects provided by the Government of the Republic of Korea, led by U Than Aung Kyaw, Deputy Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

At the meeting, the officials from the ministries concerned reported on the current implementation status of the ongoing loan and grant projects and also informed the implementation constraints of respective projects. After hearing the reports from the ministries concerned, Deputy Minister urged the representatives of the ministries to provide a timely report with prescribed forms and also requested to prepare for the necessary actions in line with the project contracts.

The meeting was also attended by the senior officials from the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Ministry of Electricity and Energy, Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Sports, Ministry of Construction, Union Attorney-General Office and Foreign Economic Relations Department.—MNA

628 detainees released from Insein central prison

A total of 628 protesters (360 males and 268 females) detained at Insein Central Prison under Section 505 (a) of the Penal Code for involving in the riots in Yangon Region were released yesterday morning and sent back to their respective townships.

Colonel Win Tint, a member of the Yangon Region Administrative Council, gave the released prisoners advice and sent them back to their respective townships by YBS vehicles. —MNA

Released protesters are leaving for their homes.

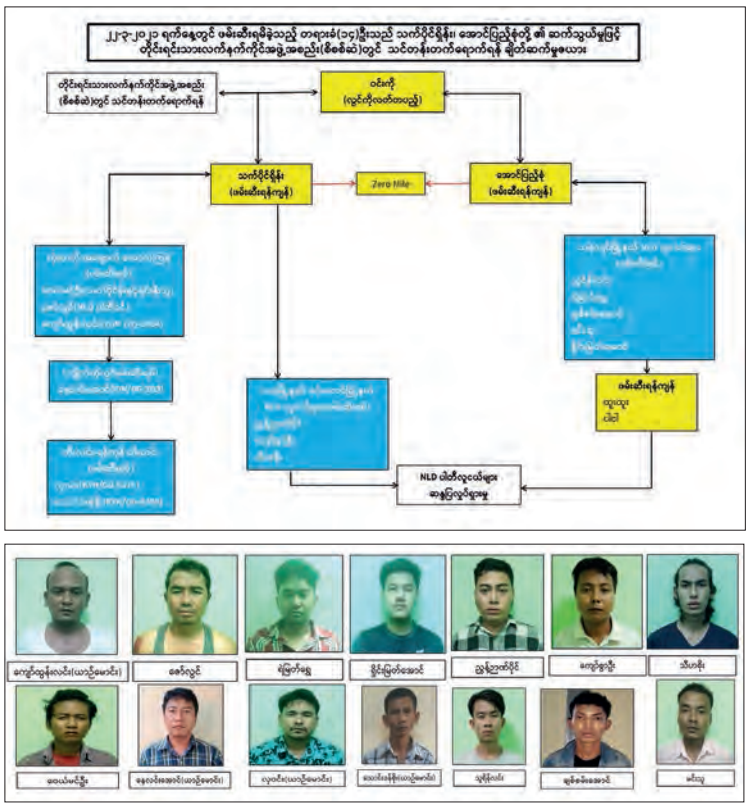
14 youths going to area of ethnic armed group arrested

ACCORDING to the information sent by a dutiful citizen that some youths who participated in the riotous protests would go to an ethnic armed group to attend the explosion course, security forces take more security measures especially in respective areas.

In so doing, security forces on duty at Zero Milepost in Hlegu Township at about 11 am on 22 March inspected KYN/GG-5378 Probox driven by Hla Win, 32, son of U Khin Nyunt of Taunggyi Village in Taungzun and KYN/GG-4388 driven by Thaung Dan Soe, 47, son of U Kyaw Hlaing from Chaung Pyan Village in Bilin Township, driving from Yangon to Hlegu. Chit San Maung, 24, son of U Than Tun Aung of Phayagone Ward, Thanlyin Township, Nyunt Nyan Paing, 23, son of U Win Nyunt of Dawei Street in Ward 25 of Dagon Myothit (South) Township, Thiha Soe, 21, son of U Soe Myint of Hleseik Village in Dala Township, Shine Myat Aung, 23, son of U Win Naing of No 198, Ward D, Thingangyun Township, Thurein Lin, 24, son of U Yin Tun of Maha Myaing KanU Kyaung Street, Kyaikdaewa Ward, Thanlyin Township, Min Thu, 32, son of U Kyaw Myint, Tarwa-Kanyinbin Village, Thanlyin Township, Ye Myat Shwe, 29, son of U Shwe Hla, Room-206, Building-3, Maha Bandoola Housing Complex C, Ward 17, Dagon Myothit (South) Township and Kyaw Swar Oo, 31, son of U Aye Thaw of Nweni Street in Ward 54, Dagon Myothit (South) Township were found abroad the cars. As they would go to the area of an ethnic armed group via Bilin Township, security forces on behalf of their families detained those youths not to be victims of politics and armed groups.

Based on further information, Wai Yan Min Oo, 31, son of U Win Cho of U Ponnya Street in Ward 16 of Hlinethaya Township, Kyaw Lin Tun, 47, son of U Kyaw Aye of Thone Hteik, Bogyoke Street, 1/12 Ward, Hlinethaya Township and Zaw Lwin, 44, son of U Thaung Kyi of Mahawthada Street in Ward 1, Hlinethaya Township were also detained together with YG-N/7Q-2854 Creta near the old bus terminal of Htauk Kyant in Mingalardon Township at 12:30 pm on 22 March.

According to the confessions of the youths, they are NLD members. They participated in the protests in Yangon City. Due to the incitement of Thet Paing Shein and Aung Pyae Sone from the group, they agreed to attend



Fourteen youths are arrested for an attempt to get explosion training from certain armed group.

the course of explosion in the area of an ethnic armed group. They were arrested by security forces while gathering at Zero Milepost.

A vehicle wishing to pick them up returned to Bilin. In the searching process, security forces arrested driver Nay Lin Aung, 35, son of U Khin Zaw of Kawkaduk Village in Bilin Township, together with GG-3513 Probox.

Nay Lin Aung confessed that he transported those who evaded from Yangon due to various reasons to Myawady by taking transport charges because of connection created by Hla Min, 40, of Laykikkaw Myothit in Myawady Township.

According to confessions of detainees, measures are being taken to arrest Hla Min, 40 of Laykikkaw Myothit in Myawady Township, Sithu Aung of Phaya Gyi Market 3rd street in Phayagone Ward of Thanlyin, Nanda Aung of Phaya Gyi Market 1st street in Phayagone Ward of Thanlyin, Thiha of U Pyaw Nyaungbin street, Phayagone Ward of Thanlyin, Soe Gyi of Malakar street in Phayagone Ward of Thanlyin, Aung Pyae Sone, in-charge of NLD youth work group, Tarwa Village, Kanyinbin 3rd street, Thanlyin, Htoo Htoo of Letyetsan Village in Thanlyin, Wah Wah of Phaya Gyi 2nd street in Phayagone Ward, Thanlyin, Win Ko of NLD youth work group, Natsingon 3rd street, 15-foot ward, Thanlyin, Than Toe Aung, 27, head of NLD information section, the street near Sawbwa bus stop, one storey building, Letyetsan Village, Thanlyin, Phyo Lay. 25, head of NLD people strata section, Phayagone Village, Maggin street, Thanlyin, U Tin Win, 55, NLD township organizer, Dagon Myothit (South) Township and Thet Paing Shein, in-charge of NLD youth work group of Wireless, Mingalardon Township.

Hence, deterrent action will be taken against those who harmed peace and stability of the State and the rule of law, under the law. —MNA

Handguns and ammunition used in riots confiscated in Bilin, Mon state

Two rioters are arrested and handguns and ammunition seized.

ACCORDING to a Myanmar Police Force statement, handguns and ammunition to be used in the riots were confiscated along with the suspects yesterday morning in Bilin Township, Mon State.

Upon the information received of Naing Win (a) Kala, 28, son of U Pyi Thein, carrying handguns, the security forces raided the house of 26-year-old Aung Ko Ko Myint, son of U Thein Han, a resident of Thida Auk Street, Kanthayar ward in Bilin Township and one handgun that was 4 feet 5 inches long; a wooden bar about 2 feet 6 inches long; one steel spring, about 3.5 inches long; one piece of plastic pipe used to make an 8-inch pistol were confiscated.

The police forces continued searching the house of Tun Zaw Oo, 28, son of U Tin Oo, on the street and confiscated one handgun and 64 handmade ball ammo.

Naing Win (a) Kala and Tun Zaw Oo, who were armed with handguns, have been arrested and are being investigated for legal action and plans are underway to arrest Aung Ko Ko Myint, who is on the run. — MNA

Punishments sentenced to detainees involved in riots in Shwepyitha

THE military tribunal under the martial law on 22 March sentenced 20 years' imprisonment with labour each to Min Htet (aka) Lin Htet Paing, son of U Than Tun and Hla Win, son of U Sein Maung, who were arrested in riots in Shwepyitha Township of Yangon Region, under Article 436 of the Penal Code for setting fire to the building of Solamoda garment factory on 16 March and three years' imprisonment with labour each to Aung Tun (aka) Hsa Mi, Aung Thet Paing (aka) Pi Chay and Win Ko Ko under Article 404 of the Penal Code for buying materials from five unknown persons who were believed to steal these materials from Myanmar Hong Pong Mechanical Electrical Engineering Co Ltd Factory on 14 March and accepting these materials without innocent attitude.

Order of martial law was imposed on 14, and 15 March as garment factories and basic education high schools were set on fire in Hlinethaya, Shwepyitha and Dagon Myothit (North, South and Seikkan) townships in Yangon Region and hindrances were committed to firefighting. Twenty-three kinds of crimes to be heard by military tribunals were announced in the townships involved in the imposition of martial law order. Military tribunals will be formed to effectively and rapidly take action against those lawbreakers. — MNA

Announcement of Union Election Commission
23 March 2021

1. Regarding the Multiparty General Election held on 8 November 2020, the Union Election Commission has inspected the voter lists and the casting of votes of Yedashe, Ottwin and Pyu townships in Bago Region.
2. Findings in each township were as follows:

Findings on voter lists in each township

Sr	Township and numbers of polling stations	Township sub-commission	List from Immigration department	Those involved in voting list without citizenship scrutiny cards	Those involved in voter list more than three times holding one CSC	Those involved in voter list more than two times holding one CSC
1	169 polling stations in Yedashe township of Bago Region,	167,020	143,543	38,669	1,869	18,960
2	153 polling stations in Ottwin township of Bago Region	132,368	114,404	23,840	9,458	15,430
3	214 polling stations in Pyu township of Bago Region	210,688	195,775	42,189	26,238	2,638

3. The Union Election Commission has inspected the withdrawal/receipt/use/remaining of ballot papers used for Pyithu Hluttaw Election of Yedashe, Ottwin and Pyu townships in Bago Region, together with the respective township election sub-commission, head of police force, Immigration and Population and administrator according to the Hluttaw Election Law Section 53.
4. According to the ground inspection, a total of 536 polling stations of these three townships took out 571,508 ballots and used 347,347. It left 211,271 ballots instead of 224,161. The difference was 29,622 ballots and it found 16,732 extra ballots. The extra/shortage ballots and illegal extra ballots were found at respective poll stations. The extra ballots were found and so the ballots were illegally printed. The findings in each township are as follows:

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw election in each township

Sr	Township	Total polling station	Withdrawal	used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Yedashe	169	187,700	118,621	69,079	65,685	5,556	2,162
2	Ottwin	153	154,708	90,169	64,539	60,615	15,461	11,537
3	Pyu	214	229,100	138,557	90,543	84,971	8,605	3,033
	Total	536	571,508	347,347	224,161	211,271	29,622	16,732

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Yedashe Township

5. According to the inspection, a total of 169 polling stations in 17 Wards and 48 village-tracts of Yedashe Township took out 187,700 ballots and used 118,621. It left 65,685 ballots instead of 69,079. The extra/shortage ballots were found as follows:

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/Village-tract ballots	177,550	116,759	60,791	55,635	5,556	400
2	Township advance ballots	1,862	1,862				
3	Township remaining ballots	8,288		8,288	10,050		1,762
Total		187,700	118,621	69,079	65,685	5,556	2,162

6. It found 5,556 ballots missing together with 400 extra ballots at 169 polling stations in 17 Wards and 48 village-tracts of Yedashe Township. The township election sub-commission have 10,050 ballots instead of 8,288 it found 1,762 extra ballots.
7. Findings in Yedashe Township were as follows:

Sr	Ward/village tract	Total polling stations	Withdrawal	Used	Exact Remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Ywa Ma	1	2,150	1,501	649	649		
2	Zay	1	1,100	744	356	356		
3	Pay Kone	1	2,300	1,548	752	752		
4	Myo Hla (3)	2	2,700	1,781	919	919		
5	Myo Hla (4)	2	2,100	1,254	846	596	250	
6	Myo Hla (5)	2	3,250	2,430	820	820		
7	Boe Taw Kone	2	3,100	2,064	1,036	1,036		
8	Pi Tu	2	1,600	1,055	545	545		
9	War Yone Taw	3	1,800	1,325	475	475		
10	Ke Lin Seik	2	1,650	1,079	571	571		
11	Kywe Rai Pyin	4	3,400	1,928	1,472	1,472		
12	Sin Khway	4	2,500	1,639	861	761	100	
13	Nyaung Pin Thar	4	2,650	1,803	847	847		
14	In Dine	2	3,200	2,009	1,191	1,191		
15	Doe Tan	4	3,700	2,651	1,049	949	100	
16	Mi Chaung Aing	4	2,750	1,707	1,043	743	300	
17	Ngargyi Kwae	2	3,950	2,548	1,402	1,402		
18	Shwe Ka Zaung	2	3,250	2,174	1,076	1,026	50	
19	Kwan Ohn	2	1,400	783	617	467	150	
20	Si Pine	2	2,400	1,572	828	828		
21	Kyait Pa Tee	2	1,300	587	713	613	100	
22	Swar Yama	2	1,900	1,309	591	591		
23	Padauk Kone	3	2,950	1,772	1,178	1,072	106	
24	Na Kyat	1	1,250	827	423	423		
25	Kyar Inn Kone	3	3,700	2,449	1,251	1,251		
26	Katku	3	3,150	2,165	985	735	250	
27	Wel daunt	2	1,500	1,059	441	441		
28	Daunt Inn	2	1,950	1,114	836	686	150	
29	Sap thay	2	2,400	1,627	773	773		
30	Zaya Thein	3	3,800	2,547	1,253	1,253		
31	Ye Kone	4	5,950	3,747	2,203	1,953	250	
32	Phayar Kone (myo hla)	2	3,600	2,290	1,310	1,260	50	
33	Bo Tae	1	1,750	1,283	467	467		
34	Shwe kyet Yet(south)	1	1,900	1,217	683	683		
35	Shwe Kyet Yet(north)	1	1,650	1,236	414	414		
36	Swar Myauk Pai	4	5,900	3,974	1,926	1,426	500	
37	Swar Taung Pai	2	3,950	2,425	1,525	875	650	
38	Yay Ni (1)	2	2,650	1,683	967	417	550	
39	Yay Ni (2)	1	2,000	1,381	619	619		
40	Yay Ni (3)	1	2,550	1,773	777	777		
41	Yay Ni (4)	3	3,900	2,877	1,023	823	200	
42	Myo Hla (1)	3	2,450	1,678	772	772		
43	Myo Hla (2)	2	2,150	1,466	684	584	100	
44	Khin Tan Gyi	4	2,200	1,475	725	625	100	
45	Kyan Tha Nwe	6	4,550	3,185	1,365	1,415		50

46	Pauk Chaung	2	2,000	1,169	831	781	50	
47	Padauk Khin	3	2,250	1,402	848	698	150	
48	Thapyay Tan	2	1,700	1,149	551	551		
49	Zalout Gyi	2	1,350	983	367	367		
50	Kwin Gyi	2	2,050	1,174	876	626	250	
51	Kone Gyi	4	2,850	1,808	1,042	892	150	
52	Thaing Wa	6	4,400	2,737	1,663	1,313	350	
53	Gonemin Kwin	4	3,050	2,150	900	900		
54	Swarminn Lan	7	4,300	3,470	830	1,180		350
55	Sagway(mayoek-hone)	4	2,900	1,649	1,251	1,051	200	
56	Yay Ngan	2	1,900	1,320	580	580		
57	Phayar Kone	1	850	461	389	389		
58	Thitpok Pin	2	2,600	1,671	929	929		
59	San Taw poet	4	2,850	1,765	1,085	1,085		
60	Lone Yan	2	1,850	1,304	546	546		
61	Ott Po	2	2,650	1,669	981	981		
62	Chaung Ma Gyi	1	1,150	681	469	469		
63	Nat Taung	2	2,750	1,738	1,012	1,012		
64	ThaGa Ya	8	10,600	6,691	3,909	3,459	450	
65	Daung Nan	1	1,500	1,027	473	473		
	Ward Total	169	177,550	116,759	60,791	55,635	5,556	400
	Township advance ballots		1,862	1,862				
	Township remaining ballots		8,288		8,288	10,050		1,762
	Township Total	169	187,700	118,621	69,079	65,685	5,556	2,162

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw election of Ottwin Township

8. According to the inspection, a total of 153 polling stations in 11 Wards and 40 village-tracts of Ottwin Township, took out 154,708 ballots and used 90,169. It left only 60,615 ballots instead of 64,539. The extra/shortage ballots were found as follows:

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/Village tract ballots	153,542	89,297	64,245	56,997	15,461	8,213
2	Township ballots	1,166	872	294	294		
3	Return ballots				3,324		3,324
	Total	154,708	90,169	64,539	60,615	15,461	11,537

9. A total of 15,461 ballots were missing in 25 village-tracts and 8,213 extra ballots in 26 village-tracts of Ottwin Township.

10. It was found that there were no receipts of ballot papers nor any remaining ballot books after inspection at the polling station (7) in Pauktaw village-tract of Ottwin Township. Moreover, it was inspected that there were 3,324 ballots of certain wards/village-tracts returned to the township election sub-commission.

11. Findings in Ottwin Township were as follows:

Sr	Ward/Village tract	Total polling stations	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Bago Lan	1	2,335	1,664	671	786		115
2	Khaung Yan	4	4,762	2,790	1,972	1,260	712	
3	Wel Daunt	5	4,250	2,959	1,291	1,491		200
4	Thayet Pin Maung Hnama	3	2,550	1,530	1,020	1,170		150
5	Kyaung Shit Sel	3	3,856	3,593	263	1,507		1,244
6	Nyaung Pin Gyi	3	3,800	2,595	1,205	1,155	50	
7	Ohn Pin	4	3,795	2,289	1,506	1,511		5
8	Kywel Gan	4	4,050	2,582	1,468	1,568		100
9	Taw Pu	6	4,500	2,644	1,856	1,652	204	
10	Tan To	1	1,050	759	291	341		50
11	Pauk Taw	16	11,594	5,742	5,852	5,008	844	
12	Nat Sin Kone	2	2,100	1,358	742	642	100	
13	Uyin Taw	5	4,450	2,769	1,681	1,931		250
14	Kyangin	2	1,500	667	833	534	299	
15	Kyat Tet Nyaung Pin	3	2,800	1,659	1,141	1,641		500
16	War Tee	5	6,000	4,162	1,838	2,037		199
17	Tharga Ya	3	2,250	1,441	809	609	200	
18	Talout Kone	1	1,300	1,000	300	350		50
19	Shwe Laung	5	4,500	2,915	1,585	2,535		950
20	Mel Kone	1	1,500	1,121	379	429		50
21	Kathit Tan	1	1,450	1,061	389	377	12	
22	Zay	1	1,750	1,197	553	453	100	
23	Kyart thongin (1)	1	2,150	1,564	586	736		150
24	Kyart thongin (2)	1	2,800	1,713	1,087	787	300	
25	No (1) Ward	2	3,100	19,81	1,119	1269		150
26	No (2) Ward	3	2,350	1,616	734	926		192
27	No (3) Ward	1	1,350	934	416	516		100
28	No (4) Ward	1	1,600	1,106	494	694		200
29	No (5) Ward	2	1,050	647	403	607		204
30	Tel Gyi Kone	2	1,950	1,419	531	631		100
31	Hpara Hnasu	3	2,150	1,414	736	1,586		850
32	Taung Nyo	2	1,600	1,050	550	600		50
33	Nyaung Chay Htauk	4	5,100	3,831	1,269	2,411		1,142
34	Myay See	2	1,800	1,197	603	1,003		400
35	Hnapyaw Taw	3	1,700	1,038	662	1,262		600
36	Tin Kouttan	4	4,037	1,569	2,468	1,420	1,048	
37	Ze Phyu Thoung	4	3,926	1,710	2,216	1,294	922	
38	Gway Touk Khin	2	2,318	1,160	1,158	940	218	
39	Myat Ni Kwin	4	4,078	1,531	2,547	1,209	1,338	
40	Kan Kalay	2	2,988	1,898	1,090	1,302		212
41	Gon Min Tar	3	3,452	1,877	1,575	973	602	
42	Nyaung Lwint	3	2,954	1,349	1,605	747	858	
43	Let Suit Kya	4	3,978	1,599	2379	851	1,528	
44	Hpara Kalay	2	2,016	942	1,074	452	622	
45	Indine	2	2,032	1,003	1,029	497	532	
46	Si Sone Kone	2	2,097	876	1,221	623	598	
47	Swal Lei Chaung	4	3,953	1,562	2,391	1,388	1,003	
48	Ban Bway Kone	3	3,268	1,538	1,730	962	768	
49	Ott Po	2	2,100	968	1,132	732	400	
50	Nyaung Kone	2	1,684	354	1,330	496	834	
51	Yay Oh Sin	4	3,819	1,354	2,465	1,096	1,369	
	Village-tract ballots	153	153,542	89,297	64,245	56,997	15,461	8,213
	Township advance ballots		1,166	872	294	294		
	Return ballots					3,324		3,324
	Township Total ballots	153	154,708	90,169	64,539	60,615	15,461	11,537

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw election of Pyu Township

12. According to the inspection, a total of 214 polling stations in 18 Wards and 58 village-tracts of Pyu Township, took out 229,100 ballots and used 138,557. It left only 84.,971 ballots instead of 90,543. The extra/shortage ballots were found as follows:

Sr	Ward/Village tract	Total polling stations	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on thw Ground	
						Missing	Extra
1	Village-tract ballots	223,100	137,148	85,952	79,405	8,605	2,058
2	Township ballots	6,000	1,409	4,591	4,591		
3	Return ballots				975		975
	Total	229,100	138,557	90,543	84,971	8,605	3,033

SEE PAGE-10

25 MARCH 2021
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

25 MARCH 2021
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Ethnic rights strategy key to ensuring people enjoy equal rights

PEACE is the sine qua non for our country, which is a union and home to diverse ethnic races.

For the perpetuation, peace, and development of the Union, we need to build unity among our ethnic people. To build unity, equitable opportunities or equal rights are necessary. That's why our country is now marching towards the goal of establishing a federal democratic Union, which can guarantee equal rights to all people, protect their rights, and promote the spirit of responsibility among the people.

> The role of the ethnic rights strategy would be vital to ensuring full rights to ethnic people of the Union.

The strategy for the rights of ethnic races of our country which is being drafted is aimed at providing equal citizenship rights and the rights guaranteed by the Constitution to all ethnic people and will ensure the objectives of the protection of the ethnic rights law and success of the sustainable development plan.

It is found that this strategy is necessary for all ethnic people to have rights guaranteed by the law. As far as we implement the sectors by this strategy, the development gaps between the regions of ethnic people will be narrowed year by year. The drafting of the strategy needs to be in line with the policy and expectations of the government.

It is known to all that ethnic affairs issues are playing an important role in building a federal democratic country.

We need to intensify the efforts for fulfilling the inspirations of the ethnic people and for ensuring the strategy to have objectives that should be included. Besides, we should not forget that the strategy must be implemented successfully in a 10-year period from 2021 to 2030 to ensure that the needs of the people in every region could be fulfilled fully in that period.

The role of the ethnic rights strategy would be vital to ensuring full rights to ethnic people of the Union.

We all are living on the same land and drinking the same water. We all are travellers on the same boat. The resources we all rely on for our livelihood are the same. This reflects that our country is a Union.

All the people and officials in the respective sectors are obliged to contribute to building an ideal country that ensures all ethnic people of the Union enjoy equal rights.

As Covid rages, world risks losing TB gains

IN the year since Covid-19 flipped the world on its head, diagnosis and treatment of another serious lung disease -- tuberculosis -- has plummeted, leaving experts fearful that progress in tackling that pandemic will be lost.

Tuberculosis is treatable and easily diagnosed yet until Covid-19 emerged it was the world's biggest infectious killer, leading to 1.4 million deaths each year and infecting more than 10 million people.

While TB has been with humans for millennia, the progress towards eradicating this preventable disease has been painstaking, with the overwhelming majority of cases occurring in developing nations.

In the run-up to World Tuberculosis Day on Wednesday, the Stop TB Partnership warned that lockdowns and healthcare interventions prompted by Covid-19 had seen a 23-per cent drop in TB treatment and diagnosis.

That essentially sets the world 12 years back in its fight to eradicate the global killer.

"Twelve years of impressive gains in the fight against TB, including in reducing the number of people who are missing from TB care, have been tragically reversed by another virulent respiratory infection," said Lucica Ditiu, executive director of the Stop TB Partnership.

Tuberculosis is treatable and easily diagnosed, yet, until Covid-19 emerged, it was the world's biggest infectious killer. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

"In the process, we put the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in jeopardy."

Worse than feared

At the start of the pandemic, modelling by Johns Hopkins University showed that a three-month lockdown followed by 10 months of health service disruption would lead to an additional 6.3 million TB cases by 2025.

In the same period, 1.4 million people would die from the disease, the model showed.

Experts now acknowledge the situation is far worse than the one envisaged in the Johns Hopkins' simulation.

Statistics from the nine highest incidence countries -- Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, South Africa, Tajikistan and Ukraine -- showed TB diagnosis and treatment has already declined by a total of one million people.

And new studies from India and South Africa shows that people suffering with TB are three times more likely to die if infected with Covid-19.

"The effects of Covid-19 go far beyond the death and disease caused by the virus itself," the World Health Organization's Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said this week.

"The disruption to essential services for people with TB is just one tragic example of the ways the pandemic is disproportionately affecting some of the world's poorest people, who were already at higher risk for TB."

Jose Luis Castro, president and CEO of global health organization Vital Strategies, told AFP that the impact of Covid-19 on TB would be felt "for a long time to come".

"Covid-19 has demonstrated just how interconnected we all are," he said.

"No one is safe until we are all safe. We can see our fragility and vulnerability to a deadly virus that is very, very easily passed from person to person. That's a new experience for most people."

'Abysmal funding'

According to WHO figures there are currently over 75 candidate Covid-19 vaccines either on the market or in development.

This time last year, there were none.

The Stop TB partnership says that while there is a newer TB vaccine in the works, at current funding levels it won't come online until 2027 at the earliest.

By that time, millions more will have died.

Castro said that funding towards a new TB vaccine currently stands around $100 million -- one tenth as much as is given to HIV vaccine research.

"We will never develop a pipeline for effective TB vaccines with the abysmal current level of funding," he said.

Thokozile Phiri Nkhoma, a Stop TB Partnership board member and community representative, drew the comparison between the world's response to two distinct respiratory illnesses.

"After less than a year, a vaccine was developed and is now being deployed to help contain and hopefully end Covid-19," she said.

"But although TB has been around since the time of the pharaohs, the only approved vaccine is 100 years old and doesn't fully work. First-line TB treatment is several decades old and drug resistance is on the rise.

"The millions of people with TB who are not found and treated remain at risk of spreading the disease."

SOURCE: AFP

1 in 3 Covid survivors suffer long-term health issues: review

AT least one in three patients hospitalized with Covid-19 suffer long-term health issues including multiple organ problems and deteriorated mental health, according to a review of studies looking at the lasting impact of the disease.

Published in the journal Nature Medicine on Monday, the review looked at the frequency of symptoms among Covid "long-haulers", the most common of which include fatigue, shortness of breath, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Authors of the research said the data pointed to an underappreciated health emergency that governments needed to study more closely and find ways to manage.

"Given the millions of people infected by SARS-CoV-2 globally, the long-term cost on physical, cognitive and mental aspects of health still remain to be seen," lead author Kartik Sehgal, a medical oncologist at Boston's Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, told AFP.

"We may be capturing only the tip of the iceberg."

While severe Covid-19 infects patients' lungs -- leaving many with long term breathing issues -- studies have shown that the virus also attacks other organs, leading to a variety of complications including cardiovascular illness and chronic inflammation.

Sehgal and colleagues reviewed nine long-term studies from Europe, the United States and China and found that several patients reported multiple organ problems months after they were discharged from hospital.

Overall, they found that 30 per cent of patients studied reported at least one symptom, such as fatigue, shortness of breath and psychiatric conditions.

One study in Italy of 143 patients found that nearly 90 per cent reported lingering symptoms 60 days after they recovered from initial Covid-19 infection.

The most common symptoms were fatigue (53.1 per cent), shortness of breath (43.4 per cent), joint pain (27.3 per cent) and chest pain (21.7 per cent).

In total, more than half of patients experienced multiple symptoms two months after leaving hospital.

Three studies from France, Britain and China showed that between 25-30 per cent of patients reported sleep disturbances weeks after recovering from Covid-19.

And approximately 20 per cent of patients had reported hair loss, according to results from multiple studies.

'Medical needs don't stop'

The results regarding mental health were perhaps equally concerning.

In a cohort of 402 survivors in Italy one month after they were hospitalised, 56 per cent tested positive for at least one psychiatric condition such as PTSD, depression or anxiety.

Representative image. **CREDIT: ISTOCK**

The authors said that around 30 percent of patients had developed PTSD after being hospitalized with Covid-19.

"It is important to not forget about the mental health effects of long-Covid-19, while taking care of the physical symptoms, as they can be easily missed," said Sehgal, who is also an instructor at Harvard Medical School.

The researchers called for further investigation into long-Covid, and the wider establishment of clinics to treat people with lingering, life-altering symptoms.

Sehgal said he hoped the research showed that simply surviving Covid-19 is not necessarily a satisfactory health outcome.

SOURCE: AFP

Objectives of 76th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

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

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

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

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

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Transfer and appointment of Head of Service Organization

U Thant Zaw, Director-General of Prevention and Investigation Department of the Anti-Corruption Commission is transferred and appointed by the State Administration Council as Director– General of Tax Appellate Tribunal of the Ministry of Union Government Office.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 4:00 pm Wednesday 24 March, 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 25th March, 2021: Rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Yangon, Ayeyarwady, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, (Southern and Eastern)Shan, Kayah, Kayin, Mon States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states.

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Taninthayi Region and Kayin, Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 25th March, 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 25th March, 2021: Partly cloudy

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 25th March, 2021: Partly cloudy.

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Announcement of Union Election Commission

FROM PAGE-7

13. It was found that there were 8,605 shortages of ballots at several polling stations of 50 wards/village-tracts, and 2,058 ballots were extra-used at certain polling stations of 13 wards/village-tracts in Pyu Township. It was also inspected that there were 975 ballots of certain wards/village-tracts returned to the township election sub-commission.

14. Findings in Pyu Township were as follows:

Sr	Ward/Village tract	Total polling stations	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on thw Ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Thein Kone	2	3,100	2,017	1,083	983	100	
2	Oak Hpyet	1	1,750	928	822	522	300	
3	Htan Kone	1	2,050	1,374	676	627	49	
4	Butar (north)	1	1,700	1,245	455	555		100
5	Butar (south)	2	4,000	2,570	1,430	1585		155
6	Zay	1	1,000	707	293	294		1
7	Myoma (east)	1	1,250	848	402	352	50	
8	Myoma (west)	1	3,400	2403	997	147	850	
9	Yone	1	800	579	221	271		50
10	Say Yone	1	2,300	1,708	592	592		
11	Ward(1) Zayawadi	4	6,300	3,857	2,443	2,293	150	
12	Ward(2) Zayawadi	3	4,700	3,158	1,542	1,442		
13	Ward(3) Zayawadi	3	2,900	1,662	1,238	1,088	150	
14	Ward(4) Zayawadi	3	3,250	2,207	1,043	943	100	
15	Jay Pu	4	3,600	2,080	1,520	1,371	149	
16	Thardu Kan	6	4,900	2,791	2,109	1,959	150	
17	Le Pyin Gyi	6	5,000	3,065	1,935	2,885		950
18	Pyaung Thay	2	2,550	1,589	961	971		10
19	Patta	2	1,300	985	315	265	50	
20	KyatPown Chaung	2	2,500	1,518	982	882	100	
21	Ye Shan Gyi	2	2,250	1,497	753	653	100	
22	Min Kan Yoe	4	4,250	2,692	1,558	1,458	100	
23	Leik Thay	2	3,000	1,678	1,322	1,272	50	
24	Nga Kaung Inn	4	2,200	1,218	982	682	300	
25	Ze Khone	3	2,200	1226	974	726	248	
26	Wel Gyi	4	4,600	2,553	2,047	1,737	310	
27	Kyar Thoung	4	2,500	1,407	1,093	943	150	
28	Kyu Inn	6	4,150	2,398	1,752	1,656	96	
29	Thit Chauk Khin	1	1,550	1,004	546	596		50
30	Ame Khaung	4	4,400	2,716	1,684	1,628	56	
31	Takhone Tai	3	4,050	2,569	1,481	1,681		200
32	Tharyar Kone	2	1,200	808	392	342	50	
33	Pyu	3	8,700	5,642	3058	2,956	102	
34	Ywar Tan Shae	3	3,450	2,086	1,364	1,112	252	
35	Ka Nyut Kwin East (1) Ward	2	3,950	2,423	1,527	977	550	
36	Ka Nyut Kwin East (2) Ward	2	4,550	2,702	1,848	1,748	100	
37	Ka Nyut Kwin West (1) Ward	2	4,300	2,328	1,972	1,622	350	
38	Ka Nyut Kwin West (2) Ward	2	4,000	2,373	1,627	1,627		
39	Ot Phyat	4	4,250	2,747	1,503	1,503		
40	Kyar Inn	2	2,200	1,519	681	611	70	
41	Hla Thin Maung	3	2,000	1,233	767	717	50	
42	Leik Paw	2	1,700	1,094	606	606		
43	Kyaw Hla	3	3,450	2,151	1,299	1,351		52
44	Akyat Inn	2	2,400	1,705	695	695		
45	Ban Laung	3	3,750	2,338	1,412	1,262	150	
46	Nyaung Karyar	5	2450	1494	956	806	150	
47	Chaung Gauk	2	1,700	1,040	660	560	100	
48	Zahyar	4	3,450	2,069	1,381	1,531		150
49	Saik Tan Khin	1	1,850	1,234	616	557	59	
50	Thit Pat	2	1,750	935	815	707	108	
51	Nyaung Pin Thar	9	9,950	6,136	3,814	4,014		200
52	Khin Tan Gyi	3	2,650	1,567	1,083	933	150	
53	Chin Khin	3	3,250	2,102	1148	1,148		
54	Kyee Yoe	4	2500	1,500	1,000	904	96	
55	Pauk Zalout	2	1,350	853	497	397	100	
56	In Pin Thar	2	1,350	1,085	265	215	50	
57	Kanyin Dai	7	3,350	1,941	1,409	1,109	300	
58	Myin Pin	5	2,850	1,636	1,214	1,064	150	
59	Tharmin Kwin	3	2,200	1262	938	1,038		100
60	Phaya Lahar	2	2,850	1,873	977	977		
61	Thapyay Lahar	5	3,250	1,981	1,269	1,169	100	
62	Ngamyit Chin	1	1,000	575	425	425		
63	Khin Gyi	3	1,500	968	532	572		40
64	Minn Lin Ku	2	2,050	1,146	904	904		
65	Thayet Kone	1	600	339	261	261		
66	Khway Pyar	1	1,350	831	519	469	50	
67	Kyun Kone	2	2,350	1,357	993	643	350	
68	Soe Pone Kwin	1	850	588	262	262		
69	Kinpon Chyone	4	2,950	1,792	1,158	699	459	
70	Natoe Khin	2	2,200	1,241	959	609	350	
71	Hlay Done	2	1,650	957	693	593	100	
72	Let Tet Gyi	2	2,150	1,419	731	581	150	
73	Zalout	2	2,200	1,344	856	856		
74	Mate Thalin	3	2,450	1,385	1,065	814	251	
75	Mya Bago	6	4,750	2,839	1,911	1,711	200	
76	Kyee Manoe	4	4,900	2,261	2639	2,689	50	
	Village-tract ballots	214	223,100	137,148	85,952	79,405	8,605	2,058
	Township advance ballots		6,000	1,409	4,591	4,591		
	Return ballots					975		975
	Township Total		229,100	138,557	90,543	84,971	8,605	3,033

Union Election Commission

Cherry ferry boats run as usual for convenience of commuters

YANGON (Pansodan-Dala) ferry boat service is the only transport option for the local people from Southern Yangon—Dala, Twantay, Kawhmu and Kungyangon townships to link with the commercial hub Yangon. The number of passengers has been dropping significantly since the outbreak of COVID-19. Cherry ferry boats are operating as usual for the convenience of the passengers, according to the Inland Water Transport (IWT) (Delta Division).

"Earlier, the Pansodan-Dala ferries were daily packed with over 30,000 commuters. After COVID-19, the declining number of ferry commuters rendered the ferries running less frequently. However, the ferry service has not stopped for the convenience of the passengers. During the Thingyan festival, the ferries will be running daily with a new schedule," said U Hla Win Naing, the assistant general manager from IWT Delta Division.

The cherry ferries transported about 5,233 commuters on 19 March, 3,771 commuters on 20 March and 4,025 commuters on 21 March.

Although the number of passengers has declined recently, the ferries provide their transport services with 35 routes on weekdays and 22 routes on weekends for the passengers. Besides, the Yangon River is yearly covered with fog in March. So, the ferries have to wait until the vision is clear.

Before the pandemic outbreak, the ferry service has been running 46 times a day between 5:30 am and 9:30 pm for over 30,000 commuters approximately. The ferry service is also generating an income of over K3 million daily.

Cherry boats allow the monks and nuns to ride free of charge. The ferries collect only K 100 per local passenger and K 4,000 per foreigner passenger.

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) donated and handed over the three cherry ferries, passengers' W/Cs and two jetties in Dala Port on 15 November 2014. It is one of the crowded places in the city. — Naing Lin Kyaw (IPRD)/GNLM

Security forces seize homemade weapons

(Top left) Rioters are arrested with homemade weapons. (Top right) Homemade riot-related materials. Those arrested are seen with homemade weapons.

THE security forces conducted an investigation to seize the riot equipment and homemade arms. The police arrested Maung Mya, son of U Than Dein, who lives in Aung Thabyay street in No (9) Ward of Lashio in the evening of 23 March together with homemade arms including air guns, gas bottle, catapults and marbles.

Similarly, the security forces seized iron shields, wooden shields, fibre shields and fibre hats from the back alley of Dhamma Seindar street, Ma Hlwa Gone street and Awbar street of Tamway township on the morning of 23 March while other shields and wooden stick were found in the building of Friday soon donation team located at the corner of Myo Thit 2nd street and Kyauk Yay Twin street in the evening.

The security forces also examined a man identified as U Than Zin Win, son of U Win Maung, who lives in South Okkalapa Township, in front of KBZ bank near Kyaikkasan and Banyar Dala streets and found incitement materials to commit riots, money collecting and cash assistance evidence in his phone and so he was detained.

Moreover, the security forces arrested Kyaw Lin Soe (aka) Kalar Gyi, son of U Aye Soe in War Taw Soon Village-tract in Ayeyawady Region together with his created arms. They also arrested Kyaw Thet Aung (aka) Thet Aung, son of U Kyaw Aye from Kyaung Shar Village, together with jingalis and pieces of vinyl.

They also seized riot materials and equipment, including pieces of vinyl at the house of Ko Ko Oo, who lives in Myaungmya township, and jingalis about five ft from the Amyaung village administration office of Pyapon, and they arrested Aye Aung, son of U San Tin his workplace in Dedaye Township together with spears and other riot-related materials.

The security forces also raided Punna Gone Village in Shwebo Township of Sagaing Region according to the tip-off that the violent people conduct training for 200 villagers. Then, they detained U Hlaing Gyi, aged 48, son of U Poe Phu from that village and U Aung Thein, aged 52, son of U Tin Sein from Seik Khum Village, together with riot arms.

Moreover, the security forces arrested Maung Maung Lwin, son of U Net and owner of Metta Lwin Pyin Gas Sales, together with riot equipment and arms in Chin State, and Maung Kyar Htwar, son of U Kyi Nyo from Magway Region, Wai Linn, son of U Ba Kyi and Zin Ko, son of U Han Win from Hantharwady Village, Ma Myat Nwe Win, daughter of U Htay Shwe from Myoma Taung Gone Ward were also arrested together with their homemade weapons.

Similarly, the security forces seized crossbows, knives, axe, pieces of vinyl bearing CDM letters at the house of Zaw Gyi, son of U Aung Tun at No (2) Ward of Ohn Taw Ward in Taungdwingyi. They arrested five men, including Htay Nyunt Hlaing, son of U Sit Tol. They were having meals at Mya Myint Mo restaurant beside Myo Thit road and the catapults and knives.

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

Terrorists attack Road Transport Administration Department by firebomb in Insein

Insein Road Transport Office seen after rioters attacked with kerosene bottles. **PHOTO: MNA**

TERRORISTS attacked the Road Transport Administration Department with a firebomb in Insein Township, Yangon Region, according to the Statement of the Myanmar Police Force.

The event happened in the early morning yesterday, around 4:05 am. Two men from a Land Cruiser car threw the firebomb for no reason to the department situated on Insein Road, Gyogon ward (west), Insein Township and drove towards Mayangon Township.

The fire was extinguished at 4:10 am with the destruction of one hand-washing basin, three billboards, two pieces of vinyl and one trash can inside the RTAD.

A joint team of security forces inspected the scene as soon as the information received and found eight cans of Myanmar Beer and three kerosene bottles used in the shooting. The police are investigating to take legal action against those who used firearms for no reason.—MNA

Sale of toddy-palm chair declines in Kyaukpadaung

Dy-palm chairs sold well. How ever the sale of toddy-palm charm has dropped significantly this year because there are few local tourists.

THE Indaw Kyay village in Kyaukpadaung Township is being engaged in toddy-palm chair making business.

The local people are manufacturing many toddy palm chairs. This year, the toddy-palm chair's demand has dropped significantly, said U Win Naing, a toddy-palm chair maker.

The Indaw Kyay village is manufacturing toddy-palm chairs, palm tables and palm boxes. The village is located on Kyaukpadaung-Meiktila road, and it is five miles far from Kyaukpadaung town.

The village collects the toddy-palm yearly and is making many toddy-palm chairs. They are generating family income from selling the toddy-palm chairs.The toddy-palm chairs from Indaw Kyay village are shown on the road.

The local people visiting Bagan-Nyaung-U archaeological site stop their car and buy the chairs when they go back to their place.

Last year, the toddy-palm chairs sold well. However, the sale of toddy-palm charm has dropped significantly this year because there are few local tourists.

The palm chair makers are buying the branches of toddy palm for K50 per one to make the toddy-palm chairs.

Other materials such as hammers and nails are needed to make the toddy palm chairs. They sell a chair for K4,500 for a normal chair and K6,000 for a reclining one.

The price of toddy boxes is dependent upon the size and the design.

This year is one of the bad sales of the toddy palm chairs in Indaw Kyay village in Kyaukpadaung Township, U Kyaw Kyaw Naing explained. — Ko Htein (KPD)/GNLM

Myawady border trade rises above US$600 mln as of 12 March

THE border trade through Myawady between Myanmar and Thailand climbed up to US$600.5 million between 1 October and 12 March in the current financial year 2020-2021, reflecting an increase of $50.8 million as against a year-ago period.

The trade through the Myawady border stood at $549.7 million in the corresponding period of the last FY 2019-2020.

Myawady-Maesot border trade has remained mal, although Thailand ordered restrictions in Maesot, according to the 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 experienced trade suspension via Myawady in October 2020. 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.

At present, the Myawady border does not have trade barriers except transaction problem triggered by the shutdown of the private banks, said U Min Khaing, chair of Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

"Trade is regularly flowing in and out of the country. What a problem is that we cannot claim income through a legitimate financial market during the meantime.

Now, the trade is carried out through hundi operators. The closure of formal financial markets except the state-owned banks render the cash flow difficulties," U Min Khaing said.

Hundi business is weak to protect transactions and less secure. Additionally, they charge too much for services, U Min Khaing stressed.

Myanmar is currently shipping about 5,000-6,000 tonnes of corns to Thailand through the Myawady border every day.

Myanmar is allowed for corn export between 1 February and 31 August with Form-D, under zero tariff.

Myanmar corn exports were exempted from tax between February and August. Thailand imposed a 73-per-cent tax on corn import to protect their growers' rights if the corns are imported during the corn season of Thailand, as per the notification of the World Trade Organization regarding corn import of Thailand.

The border trade between Thailand and Myanmar between 1 October and 12 March in the current FY plunged to US$1.57 billion from $1.9 billion registered in the year-ago period, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

During the last year, Myanmar has increasingly exported corns to Thailand through the Myawady border gate.

Myanmar's corn exports to Thailand significantly soared to over 1.2 million tonnes through border gates between Myanmar and Thailand during October and May period in the 2019-2020FY, an official of the Ministry of Commerce said.

There are seven border posts between Myanmar and Thailand, Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Htikhee, Myeik, Mawtaung and Maese.

The majority of the border trade with Thailand is conducted via Myawady.

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. — KK/GNLM

Domestic gold price up by K80,000 within three weeks

ACCORDING to the domestic market, the price of precious pure gold metal increased by K80,000 per tical (0.578 ounces, or 0.016 kilograms) in the past three weeks.

The price stood at only K1,302,000 per tical on 4 March, and then, it tremendously soared to K1,385,000 per tical on 23 March, the gold traders said.

However, the rate has not reached the maximum of above K1,400,000 per tical registered in February.

The international gold price was pegged at around US$1,700-1,736 per ounce in March, despite a sharp rise in the domestic market. In January 2021, the gold price was ranged between the minimum of K1,316,000 per tical (28 January) and the maximum of K1,336,000 per tical (6 January). It reached an all-time high of K1,410,000 per tical on 3 February and hit the minimum of K1,340,000 per tical on 2 February.

According to gold traders, the local gold reached the lowest level of K1,310,500 (2 September) and the highest level of K1,314,000 (1 September). In October, the rate ranged between K1,307,800 (30 October) and K1,316,500 (21 October). The rate fluctuated between the highest of K1,317,000 (9 November) and the lowest of K1,270,000 (30 November). In December, the pure yellow metal priced moved in the range of 1,280,000 (1 December) and 1,332,000 (28 December).

With global gold prices on the uptick, the domestic price hit fresh highs last year, reaching K1,000,000 per tical between 17 January and 21 February, crossing K1,100,000 (22 June to 5 August), climbing to over 1,200,000 (7 August-4 September), and then reaching a record high of K1,300,000 on 5 September 2019. —NN/GNLM

The price stood at only K1,302,000 per tical on 4 March, and then, it tremendously soared to K1,385,000 per tical on 23 March.

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Congress to grill US internet giants over disinformation

THE heads of Facebook, Google and Twitter will testify before Congress Thursday on disinformation, following a tense US election, Capitol attack and rise of a new administration seemingly intent on doing battle with Big Tech.

The remote video hearing will be the fourth for Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg and Twitter's Jack Dorsey since last July and the third for Google's Sundar Pichai: evidence of how the companies' vast economic and political power has landed them squarely in the crosshairs of Democrats and Republicans alike.

"Whether it be falsehoods about the Covid-19 vaccine or debunked claims of election fraud, these online platforms have allowed misinformation to spread, intensifying national crises with real-life, grim consequences for public health and safety," said the heads of the two Congressional subcommittees holding the hearing, in a statement.

A recent backlash against the tech behemoths, which dominate key economic sectors, has intensified as their influence has grown during the coronavirus pandemic.

"I don't expect more than theater" at the hearing, said analyst Carolina Milanesi of market research firm Creative Strategies. —AFP ■

Google's Sundar Pichai, Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg and Twitter's Jack Dorsey will testify before Congress, squarely in the crosshairs of Democrats and Republicans alike. **PHOTO: AFP**

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Netanyahu's Likud in lead following Israel vote: exit polls

PRIME Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party was on track to win the most seats in Israel's fourth election in two years, exit polls showed Tuesday, but he was not guaranteed a governing majority.

Initial projections from Israel's three main broadcasters gave Likud between 31 and 33 seats in the Knesset, far outpacing nearest rival Yesh Atid, a centrist party projected to take between 16 and 18 seats.

Likud's tally, along with the support earned by its right-wing religious allies, gives the pro-Netanyahu bloc an estimated 53 or 54 seats, according to the initial projections which are subject to change. But 61 seats are required for a majority in the country's 120-member parliament, the Knesset. The parties opposed to Netanyahu were projected to win 59 seats. The surveys indicate Netanyahu could secure a right-wing majority coalition with support from his former protege and defence minister Naftali Bennett, leader of the religious nationalist Yamina party.—AFP ■

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party was on track to win the most seats in Israel's fourth election in two years, exit polls showed Tuesday, but he was not guaranteed a governing majority. **PHOTO: AFP**

Fujimori plans to 'save Peruvians' if elected president

DESPITE facing a potential 30-year prison sentence for corruption, Keiko Fujimori is determined to follow in her father's footsteps and claim Peru's presidency at the third attempt.

The 45-year-old, who failed already in 2011 and 2016, says she wants to "save Peruvians from death and hunger" if successful this time around in the April 11 general election.

But she'll have to stay out of prison to do that, and two weeks ago prosecutors said they would seek a 30-year jail term for Fujimori, who is accused of accepting $1.2 million in illicit funding for her previous presidential bids.

She has already spent 16 months in pre-trial detention and since her release by a judge in May 2020 her thirst for power has not abated.

"My intention is to save Peruvians from the death and hunger that is happening in our country," Fujimori told AFP from her home in an upmarket neighborhood east of the capital Lima.

She feels the country's current pandemic-inflicted travails are similar to the situation her disgraced father Alberto Fujimori faced when he took power in 1990.

Peru has suffered more than 50,000 deaths from Covid-19 and registered over 1.4 million infections amongst the population of 32 million.

"The health and economic tragedy reminds me of the years of terrorism and economic crisis. It's a very dramatic situation and Fujimorism has shown it has the ability to take our country forward in such difficult moments," said Keiko Fujimori.

During a decade in power, Alberto Fujimori was credited with solving Peru's twin problems of hyperinflation and the terrorism wrought by the far-left Shining Path rebels.—AFP ■

Keiko Fujimori, leader of the Popular Force party and daughter of imprisoned former Peruvian president Alberto Fujimori, says she will pardon her father if elected. **PHOTO: AFP**

Massive container ship blocks Suez Canal

The Suez Canal is one of the world's most important trade routes, providing passage for 10 percent of all international maritime trade. **PHOTO: AFP**

A giant container ship has blocked the Suez Canal in Egypt, tracking websites showed Wednesday, bringing marine traffic to a shuddering halt along one of the world's busiest trade routes.

A photo posted Tuesday showed the Taiwan-owned MV Ever Given, a 400-metre- (1,300-foot-)long and 59-metre wide vessel, lodged sideways and impeding all traffic across the waterway as excavation trucks struggled to dig it out.

Shipping website Vessel Finder said the ship was bound for Rotterdam in the Netherlands, and it is unclear why the supertanker has stopped moving.

Over 150 years old, the Suez Canal is one of the world's most important trade routes, providing passage for 10 per cent of all international maritime trade.

Nearly 19,000 ships passed through it last year with a total tonnage of 1.17 billion, according to the Suez Canal Authority (SCA).

It has been a boon for Egypt's struggling economy in recent years, with the country earning $5.61 billion in revenues from the canal last year.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

N. Korea fired two missiles in first test under Biden: US, South

NORTH Korea fired two short-range missiles just days after a visit to the region by the top US defence and diplomatic officials, but President Joe Biden said they were not a serious provocation.

It was nuclear-armed North Korea's first launch since his inauguration -- Pyongyang has been biding its time since the new administration took office, not even officially acknowledging its existence until last week.

Washington is reviewing its approach to Pyongyang after a tumultuous relationship between president Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, which went from trading insults and threats of war to a diplomatic bromance and several meetings, but made no substantive progress towards denuclearization.—AFP ■

Archives uncover forgotten names of Auschwitz inmates

EWA Bazan, an archivist at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum, compares her work on newly-accessible records to piecing together a "puzzle" that is revealing new names and stories of the Nazi death camp's inmates. Ninety percent of the notorious camp's files were destroyed by its guards before they fled but a recently completed two-year collaboration with the Arolsen Archives in Germany is bringing new information to light.

"We didn't know what to expect when we started the project," Bazan told AFP, barely hiding her emotion.

The patient, humble research carried out by Bazan and her colleagues has uncovered the previously unknown identities of an estimated 4,000 camp inmates as well as information about 26,000 others.

Currently, the identities of around 300,000 inmates out of the 400,000 estimated to have been held at the camp are known.—AFP ■

India opens up faltering vaccine drive to all over-45s

INDIA announced Tuesday it will open its vaccination drive to all over-45s from April 1 in a bid to boost its massive but flagging inoculation drive as infections rise.

India has so far vaccinated nearly 50 million people but the programme to inoculate 300 million people by the end of July is behind schedule, experts say.

Until now only "frontline" workers in healthcare and other areas, together with people over 60 and those over 45 with co-morbidities, have been eligible for either the AstraZeneca vaccine or a homegrown Bharat Biotech shot.

"Following scientific and (Covid19) task force advice, the cabinet today decided to open vaccinations for everyone over 45 years from April 1," Prakash Javadekar, information and broadcast minister, told reporters.

Javadekar also announced that state governments had been directed to provide the second dose four to eight weeks after the first, compared to an earlier regime of four to six weeks.

Experts say that many people are reluctant to get vaccinated for a variety of reasons including safety concerns and apathy about the pandemic after a sharp fall in infections since September. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was vaccinated on March 1, has issued several appeals in recent days asking "all those who are eligible to take the vaccine."

"Together, let us make India Covid-19 free!" he said on Twitter earlier this month.

The number of infections has been rising again in recent weeks, and several regions have been reimposing restrictions on gatherings and activity. —AFP ■

A worker sets up a poster at a coronavirus vaccination centre in Mumbai on Friday, with the Indian government aiming to inoculate around 300 million people by July. **PHOTO: AFP**

Overwhelmed Miami Beach extends spring break curfew

Diane, a nurse from Houston, Texas, sunbathes at the beach next to her husband, both wearing facemasks, in Miami Beach, Florida on June 16, 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE US city of Miami Beach, overrun by crowds of spring break tourists throwing Covid caution to the wind, has extended a state of emergency to stem the chaos -- drawing accusations of unfairly tough tactics against mostly Black revelers.

Video and photos on social media show half-naked women twerking on the roofs of cars, men offering them wads of bills and a crowd of tourists huddled side by side, dancing and passing bottles from hand to hand -- plus brawls, gunshots fired in the air and stand-offs with police.

"A lot of times when spring breakers come, whether they're black, white or whatever, there is some sort of anarchy," Retha Boone-Fye, program director for the Black Affairs Advisory Board of Miami-Dade County, told AFP, saying the city had every right to expect visitors to behave. "Where we part ways is the way that the black visitors are dealt with," she said.

On Saturday city manager Raul Aguila imposed a nighttime curfew on the most touristy streets of South Beach, the centre of the party, and ordered the closure of the three bridges that connect the island with Miami from 10:00 pm to 6:00 am.

Commissioners Sunday authorized Aguila to keep the emergency in place until April 13, the end of the annual university vacation period that draws thousands of students each year -- but the emergency measures, valid Thursday through Monday, are not easy to implement.

On Saturday and Sunday nights, there were images of dozens of police cars trying to evict the crowd of reveulers, sometimes throwing pepper spray projectiles. —AFP ■

IFA to launch Pro Futsal League semifinals this week

THE semifinals of the Pro Futsal League will be held on 27 March 2021 in Indonesia, according to the statements with the Indonesian Football Association and ASEAN Football Federation (AFF).

A total of four teams: Black Steel Manokwari, Vamos Mataram, SKN FC Kebumen and BTS are meeting in the semifinals.

Black Steel Manokwari FC will challenge BTS FC while SKN FC Kebumen will take on Vamos Mataram FC.

SKN FC was undefeated as they picked up 37 points while BTS grabbed 32 points from 14 matches played.

"Group A saw Black Steel Manokwari confirming their slot to the next round as group winners while defending champions Vamos Mataram made the grade as the runners-up.

Black Steel remained undefeated throughout the group stage to amass 40 points against Vamos' 31 points," football authorities said about the semifinalist history in the group stages.

"We are ready to take on anyone in the semifinals," said Black Steel Manokwari team manager Ikka Puspita.

"We have to maintain the spirit and make sure that we finish the season on a high note," the team manager added. — GNLM ■

Gym and nutritionists: inside South Korea's T1 eSports empire

Dozens of gamers train at the T1 building in Seoul. **PHOTO: AFP**

A Nike-sponsored gym, support staff including nutritionists and English language classes are all part of the set-up at T1, one of the world's top eSports organizations, where around 70 gamers are looking to emulate its highest-profile member, League of Legends giant Faker.

Explosive growth has turned competitive video gaming into an increasingly professional sport, with a youthful, ever-growing fan base that appeals to sponsors and advertisers.

Players — mostly in their 20s or even teenagers — can attract a global following to rival stars in traditional sports, with the best making millions of dollars in salaries and prize money.

South Korea is a leading power in eSports and in a brand new, 10-storey building in Seoul's expensive Gangnam district, dozens of T1's professional and budding gamers train, following a routine similar to mainstream sports. "We have a gym, a cafeteria, chefs... everything that these young players need to perform their best," said John Kim, the organisation's chief operating officer. The routine is intense: around 10 hours a day with coaches and trainers, strategising and polishing their skills for the next match.

Promotional photos show the team in uniform, half of them in glasses and most with identical pudding-basin haircuts. —AFP ■

Bale expects Real return after Spurs loan

GARETH Bale said Tuesday that he plans to resume his Real Madrid career once his loan at Tottenham expires at the end of this season.

Wales forward Bale returned for a second spell with Tottenham in September after being frozen out by Real manager Zinedine Zidane.

He has endured a difficult time back in the Premier League, plagued by fitness issues, inconsistent form and a dispute with Tottenham manager Jose Mourinho over his readiness for an FA Cup tie at Everton. The 31-year-old's Madrid contract runs until the end of the 2021-22 season and he revealed he will head back to Spain after the delayed Euro 2020 this summer. "There's no distraction for me," Bale told a press conference. "I think the main reason I came to Spurs this year was to play football first and foremost.

"Going into the Euros I wanted to be match-fit. The original plan was to do a season at Spurs and after the Euros still have a year left at Real Madrid.

"My plan is to go back, that's as far I have planned." Mourinho said earlier this month that Bale's future beyond the end of the season was a matter for Real. —AFP ■

Gareth Bale said Tuesday that he plans to resume his Real Madrid career once his loan at Tottenham expires at the end of this season. **PHOTO: AFP**

Man City to install rail seats that could become safe-standing area

Some rail seating has already been installed at Premier League club Wolverhampton Wanderers. **PHOTO: AFP**

MANCHESTER City are to install more than 5,000 rail seats at the Etihad Stadium in order to take advantage of any potential change in the law to allow safe standing.

The work will take place before the start of the 2021/22 season, meaning there will be no disruption for supporters, who by then are expected to be able to return to matches after the coronavirus lockout.

Rail seats can be folded away and locked in position to create a safe-standing area with barriers.

All-seater stadiums have been mandatory in the top two tiers of English football since the 1994/95 season following recommendations on safety made in the Taylor Report.

The report was commissioned after the 1989 Hillsborough disaster, which resulted in the deaths of 96 Liverpool fans after crushing on the standing-only terraces before their FA Cup semi-final against Nottingham Forest.

But there has been a renewed push in recent years for safe standing to be brought back.

City, poised to win a third Premier League title in four seasons, believe introducing the rail seats now will enhance safety in an area already affected by persistent standing on matchdays. —AFP ■