Announcement of Union Election Commission  
11 April 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 Kyaukpyaung and Mahlaing townships of Mandalay Region.
2. Findings in respective townships were as follows:

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Passenger trains run along Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay routes

MYANMA Railways has launched the Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon passenger trains since 4 April.

The No (8) down Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon passenger train ran at 6 am yesterday for travellers’ convenience during the Thingyan holiday.

A total of 42 upper-class/ordinary class passengers boarded the train from the Nay Pyi Taw station and the stations along the route following the COVID-19 rules.

Similarly, the RBE passenger train for the Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay course departed yesterday morning. A total of 32 passengers boarded the train from the Nay Pyi Taw station and the stations along the way and arrived at Mandalay in the afternoon.

For the people who will return home on 19 April, the No (7) up train from Yangon will depart at 8 am and arrive at 8 pm at Nay Pyi Taw.

Myanma Railways will increase the number of trains and provide their services as the number of passengers increases. People can reportedly take the train for the Yangon-Mawlamyine-Yangon route safely. – MNA

A total of 42 upper-class/ordinary class passengers boarded the train from the Nay Pyi Taw station and the stations along the route following the COVID-19 rules.
Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Nine Objectives

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

2. Economic affairs
   (a) Further development of production based on agriculture and livestock breeding through modern techniques and all-round development of other sectors of the economy as well
   (b) Stability of market economy and inviting international investments to develop the economy of entire ethnic people
   (c) Encouragement of local businesses to create employment opportunities to be able to produce many products of the State

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

Five future programmes of State Administration Council

1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted to carry out tasks that should be done, including inspection of voting lists in accordance with the law.

2. Effective measures will be taken for the prevention of current infectious COVID-19 with added momentum.

3. Efforts will be made to recover businesses that faced loss caused by COVID-19 in various ways as quickly as possible.

4. Emphasis will be placed on restoring eternal peace in the entire nation in line with agreements from the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) as much as possible.

5. When missions will be accomplished in accord with provisions of the state of emergency, a free and fair multiparty democracy election will be held in accordance with the Constitution (2008), and further tasks will be undertaken to hand over State duty to the winning party meeting the standards of democracy.

18th Rakhine traditional Thanaka grinding festival, ceremony of sacred bathing of Buddha Images celebrated in Yangon

The association chairperson and officials are re-freshening the Buddha images with the scented water.

Then, the chairperson of the association and officials poured the scented water on the Buddha images.

“We hold Rakhine traditional water festival with three stages. In the first stage, we organize Thanaka grinding ceremony; the second one is the sacred bathing of Buddha Image, and the third one is playing water in line with our Rakhine tradition and culture. On the morning of Thingyan Akyo Day, Rakhine Literature and Culture Association (Yangon) Chairperson Daw Saw Khin Tint briefed the holding of the Rakhine traditional Thingyan festival.

Then, the chairperson of the association and officials poured the scented water on the Buddha images.

“We hold Rakhine traditional water festival with three stages. In the first stage, we organize Thanaka grinding ceremony; the second one is the sacred bathing of Buddha Image, and the third one is playing water in line with our Rakhine tradition and culture. On the morning of Thingyan Akyo Day, Rakhine Literature and Culture Association (Yangon) Chairperson Daw Saw Khin Tint briefed the holding of the Rakhine traditional Thingyan festival.

THE 18th Rakhine traditional Thanaka grinding festival and ceremony of sacred bathing of Buddha Images were held at Rakhine Religious Hall located in the eastern stairway of Shwedagon Pagoda in Bahan Township of Yangon Region yesterday.

During the ceremony, Rakhine Literature and Culture Association (Yangon) Chairperson Daw Saw Khin Tint briefed the holding of the Rakhine traditional Thingyan festival.

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The Tatmadaw took over the State duty due to the assignment of the Pro Tem President. It was not Coup D'état

THE Union Election Commission did not address such problems. After forming the new Union Election Commission, voter lists were scrutinized in 98 townships of 10 regions and states. Such scrutiny showed about four million voter lists between the list of township election sub-commissions and the immigration department. More than one million persons without citizenship scrutiny cards cast votes. More than 9 million of over 14 million ballot papers were used, and more than 5 million ballot papers were lost. Although the Tatmadaw sent a letter to solve the problems by holding the State Defence and Security Council meeting, the reason was showed not to do so under the law. They did not accept the postponement of the Hluttaw and the assignment of a third party to inspect the voting frauds. Hence, the Tatmadaw took over the State duty due to the assignment of the Pro Tem President. It was not Coup D'état.

(Excerpt from the speech to Union-level personnel, Union ministers, the chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council, chairpersons of Region and State Administration Councils and chairpersons of Self-Administered Zones and Division Administration Bodies made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 7 April 2021)

Union Minister U Shwe Lay inspects construction of extended hospital in Monywa

UNION Minister for Construction U Shwe Lay inspected the renovation of the Yangon-Nay Pyi Taw Mandalay expressway, the Sagaing-Monywa route built by the BOT system and the construction of the extended 5-storey building in the People’s Hospital in Monywa on 12 April.

The Union Minister held a meeting with Sagaing Region Administration Council Chair- man U Maung Maung Lin and the council members, Commander of the North-West Com- mand Brig-Gen Phyo Thant and officials to discuss the successful completion of the extended 5-storey building at the Monywa People’s Hospital. At the meeting, the Union Minister stressed the need to systematically use the funds according to the financial rules and regulations and coordinate with relevant departments to complete the construction works in time and be a high-quality hospital as per the hospital characteristics. He said the hospital would not only benefit the people in Monywa but also the people of the surrounding regions and states, adding that efforts will be made for the development of the region and ease of trans- portation for the People’s with improved bridges and roads. The Union Minister added all the bridges on the Monywa-Yargyi-Kalay- wa road; plans to upgrade the bridges on Kalewa-Kyigone-Ta- ma road, and the plans to up- grade small wooden bridges in the region to be constructed as RC bridges depending on the availability of funds.

The meeting discussed activities being carried out on time for stability and peace in the Sagaing Region, the bridge destruction by a group of un- scrupulous people and the security provision when repairing bridges. Preparation for the construction of the extended hospital and the Union Minister coordinated the meeting.

The Union Minister and departmental staff families collectively donated K2.5 mil- lion to the Monywa People’s Hospital. — MNA

All Mon Region Ramanya Dhamma Cariya holds 39th Ramanya Nikaya Pariyatti Test

ALL Mon Region Ramanya Dhamma Cariya set the 39th Ramanya Nikaya Pariyatti Test at 12 exam centres in Mon State, Kayin State and Tanin- thayi Region between 13 and 15 March following COVID-19 health rules. A total of 2,035 monks, nov- ices and nuns took the 39th Ra- manya Nikaya Pariyatti Test. It contains Dhamma Cariya, Dhamma Cariya (Pali honours), Dhamma Cariya (Myanmar honours), Pahtama Pyan (pri- mary, Pahtamange, Pahtama- lat and Pahtamagyi). Of them, 752 monks, novices and nuns passed the exam.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture sent the “Guna Puja certificate” to the All Mon Region Ramanya Dhamma Cariya Team for holding the test yearly. — MNA

Request to Public

1. Democracy practices have granted the public for 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 of human rights, some persons are now under pressured, harassed and threatened in breaching the laws. Undisciplined acts could lead to tarnish the image of democracy.

2. For preventing destructive actions against stability of the state, safety of the public and rule of law, it is also required to 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.
A Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Than Hlaing attended the 64th meeting of the Narcotics Drugs Commission held in Vienna, Austria, from 12 to 16 April via video conferencing.

At the meeting, the Deputy Minister said Myanmar had made various efforts to eradicate drugs as a national duty. Special anti-drug operations are being carried out annually. Referring to the annual report in collaboration with UNODC, he said poppy cultivation and opium production are declining every year. As drug production is also linked to internal peace, the Myanmar government is working for lasting peace in the whole country.

Deputy Minister Lt-Gen Than Hlaing attends 64th narcotics commission meeting

Military medical corps provide healthcare in township hospitals

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

The Tatmadaw medical team continued to provide healthcare services such as surgery, dental and oral healthcare, osteoporosis, obstetrics, otorhinolaryngology, gynaecology, hypertension and heart disease to the patients in healthcare services difficulties in Nyaung-U District People’s Hospital, Thazi Township People’s Hospital, Thayarwady District People’s Hospital, Donzayit hospital in Shwegyin Township and People’s Hospital in Latpadan township yesterday.

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

Military hospitals continue providing healthcare to civilians

MILITARY hospitals in the townships of regions and states keep providing medical treatments to the people to solve their healthcare services difficulties. A total of 138,530 outpatients and 4,036 inpatients reached these hospitals from 3 February to date.

Senior medical experts, medics and nurses have conducted 6,590 major operations and 3,996 minor operations. The senior doctors treat serious cases. These hospitals managed for the birth of 8,610 babies while bringing 8,610 pregnant women to the respective military hospitals. Of those, 3,424 cases are done in caesarean section and 5,186 cases in ordinary delivery. Officials from the respective commands also provided the patients with foods, and medical workers were provided with cash assistance. — MNA

Tomato price soars to K1,200 per viss

THE price of tomato has risen sharply to over K1,200 per viss from K600 per viss in Kyauk Padaung township, Mandalay region, said U Maung Zaw, a tomato grower from Lae Gwa village, Kyaukpadaung.

Thus, the growers have been making handsome profits, growing tomatoes.

“Kyaukpadaung township farmers are growing the tomato with the use of irrigation water. Firstly, each tomato seed is planted in each bag. After 15 days of planting, the nursery tomato plants are transplanted to the ground and given irrigation water. Then, the plants start to bloom and bear fruits after one month. The tomato plant in Kyaukpadaung township is being grown with the use of irrigation water. Most of the growers use the tomato seeds with the brand names—triple seven and triple one. Tomato can be grown in any place in water-resistant and strong weather condition,” said U Min Nyo, a grower from Mone Gone village.

In the harvest season, the tomato could yield every two days. The tomato traders come to buy the tomatoes in the farmland. Then, the traders sell them back in the Myoma market in Kyauk Padaung town. The price of tomatoes has abruptly soared to K1,200 per viss from K600 per viss. The street vendors are selling tomatoes for around K1,000 per viss. Some are selling them even for K1,200 per viss.

Now, the tomato growers are happy, making a good profit. It is also an unexpected price for tomato farmers, according to the local farmers.— Ko Hein (KPD)/GNLM
Findings on voter lists in each township

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Township</th>
<th>Total polling station</th>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Exact remaining</th>
<th>Remaining on the Ground</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>171,378</td>
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<td>72,106</td>
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Findings on ballot papers used for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Kyaukpadaung Township

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<th>Township</th>
<th>Total polling station</th>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
<th>Used</th>
<th>Exact remaining</th>
<th>Remaining on the Ground</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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<td>257,893</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in each township

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Township</th>
<th>Total polling station</th>
<th>Withdrawal</th>
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<th>Exact remaining</th>
<th>Remaining on the Ground</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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<td>257,893</td>
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Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Mahlaing Township

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Findings on voter lists in each township

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<th>Sr</th>
<th>Ward/ Village-Tracts</th>
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<th>Used</th>
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### Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Mahlaing Township

#### Withdrawal

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#### Remaining on the ground

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#### Difference

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<th>Ward/village-tract ballots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ward/village-tract ballots</td>
<td>3,738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Township advanced ballots</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Township remaining ballots</td>
<td>1,146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Township Total</td>
<td>5,234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Missing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Ward/village-tract ballots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ward/village-tract ballots</td>
<td>1,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Township advanced ballots</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Township remaining ballots</td>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Township Total</td>
<td>1,635</td>
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</table>

#### Extra

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ward/village-tract ballots</td>
<td>615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Township advanced ballots</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Township remaining ballots</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Township Total</td>
<td>966</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. A total of 210 polling stations in 52 Village-Tracts in 4 Wards of Mahlaing Township of Mandalay Region took out 138,979 ballots and used 97,208 ballots. It left 39,529 ballots instead of 41,771. The extra/shortage ballots and illegal extra ballots were found at respective poll stations. Findings were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Ward/village-tract ballots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ward/village-tract ballots</td>
<td>34,183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Township advanced ballots</td>
<td>30,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Township remaining ballots</td>
<td>1,146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Township Total</td>
<td>35,024</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. It found 7,378 missing ballots and 350 extra ballots at 210 polling stations in 52 Village-Tracts in 4 Wards of Mahlaing Township. If it found 8,744 remaining ballots instead of 75,88 at the township election sub-commission and so the extra ballot was 1,146.

10. Findings were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Ward/village-tract ballots</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ward/village-tract ballots</td>
<td>1,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Township advanced ballots</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Township remaining ballots</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Township Total</td>
<td>1,635</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Those spreading false news to affect State stability charged under Section 505-A

THE following celebrities and people have been charged under Section 505-A of the Penal Code for intentionally committing incitements to the government employees to join CDM to affect government mechanism and for spreading information showing their support for unlawful CRPH including fake news and other information to unrest riots and threaten the public on the social media.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Account name</th>
<th>Profile</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Section of Penal Code</th>
<th>Photo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Phyu Phyu Kyaw Thein</td>
<td>Phyu Phyu Kyaw Thein</td>
<td>Bahan Township, Yangon Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Htet Eaint(a)</td>
<td>Htet Eaint(a)</td>
<td>Thawunna, Yangon Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ko Nyi Nyi</td>
<td>Ko Nyi</td>
<td>Dagon Myothit (South) Township, Yangon Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Shwe Yee</td>
<td>Shwe Yee</td>
<td>Mawlamyine Township, Mon State</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yoon Thiri Shwe Sin</td>
<td>Yoon Thiri Shwe Sin</td>
<td>Toungoo Township, Bago Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Neonatal Chef</td>
<td>Kyaw Zwar Chan Myae</td>
<td>Mingaladon Township, Yangon Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Myo Win</td>
<td>Myo Win</td>
<td>Thingangyun Township, Yangon Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Aaron Kyaw Thet</td>
<td>Kyaw Thet</td>
<td>Kyauktada Township, Yangon Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>M Zaw Aung</td>
<td>Zaw Aung</td>
<td>Pathein Township, Ayeyawady Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Khine Khine Win</td>
<td>Khine Khine Win</td>
<td>Mahaaungnye Township, Mandalay Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sandaku Zaw</td>
<td>Sandaku Zaw</td>
<td>Katha Township, Sagaing Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Henry Htet Aung Myat</td>
<td>Htet Aung Myat</td>
<td>Dagon Myothit (South) Township, Yangon Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Snow Kophyo</td>
<td>Ko Phyo</td>
<td>Lewe Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Hayman Thu Thu Aung</td>
<td>Hayman Thu Thu Aung</td>
<td>Kamayut Township, Yangon Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Yan Naing</td>
<td>Dr Yan Naing</td>
<td>Pyinmana Township, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Myint Mo San</td>
<td>Myint Mo San</td>
<td>Hlie Township, Yangon Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Nan Akary</td>
<td>Nan Akary Soe</td>
<td>Chammyathazi Township, Mandalay Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Zaw Htet</td>
<td>Zaw Myo Htet</td>
<td>Bahan Township, Yangon Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Kaung Khant Hein</td>
<td>Kaung Khant Hein</td>
<td>Ngazun Township, Yangon Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Han Lin Oo</td>
<td>Han Lin Oo</td>
<td>Chanayethaz-an Township, Mandalay Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td><img src="https://example.com" alt="Photo" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Action will be taken against those who admit the offenders, and list of remaining offenders will be released. —MNA

9 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 13 April, total figure rises to 142,605

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 142,605 after 9 new cases were reported on 13 April 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, 131,874 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA
In my view, Spinoza’s postulate (‘Every natural event is pre-determined who will believe it? [the words or is it the Biblical ‘The creation of the Earth 4,500 million years (plus or minus a few hundred million years) ago? (Due to no fault of his Spinoza was not privy to the historic present and future)’ as this writer postulated, wrote Spinoza, a stone that ‘stood’ that would think he is ‘marched’ out of its own depth) 
 Generally. Those wishing to enjoy the water splashing festival need to wear surgical masks and gloves without fail and then wash their washes with water and soap or hand sanitizer.

They must take enough distance to each other especially as foot in the minimum of physical distance to avoid close contact occurring during the festival.

Moreover. if they suffer from symptoms of Covid-19 such as, a cough, a sore throat, a sudden loss of smell and taste, they need to inform nearby health care units about such symptoms and should take medical treatments in time.

At the festival, all the people need to abide by preventive measures of the pandemic strictly.

The infection rate may rise at the crowds according to the nature of the virus. As such, all the people need to abide by preventive measures of the pandemic strictly.

Health guidelines, important for Thingyan revellers

Myanmar Thingyan, one of the traditional festivals, falls in mid-April yearly before Myanmar New Year Day.

Myanmar people, young and old, are eager to enjoy the water throwing festival by treating refreshment to each other for Thingyan.

The festival, the Ministry of Health and Sports issued health guidelines recently because events on infection of Covid-19 continue in Myanmar.

The infection rate may rise at the crowds according to the nature of the virus. As such, all the people need to abide by preventive measures of the pandemic strictly.

Generally, those wishing to enjoy the water splashing festival need to wear surgical masks and gloves without fail and then wash their washes with water and soap or hand sanitizer.

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Record of Press Conference (4/2021) held on 9 April 2021 by the State Administration Council’s Information Team

CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY

13. Firstly, U Maung Maung Tun, reporter of Voice of Myanmar (VOM), asked where the ballot papers were printed. How many numbers of ballots were printed? Who is the supervisor of this process? Was it conducted under a tender system or by UEC?

14. UEC member U Khin Maung Oo explained that relevant matters are also presented in former press conferences. All the ballots of 2010 and 2015 elections and by-elections are also ordered at the Ministry of Information as they are important. The order numbers were 139,331,120. The UEC also cooperated in this printing process. The ballots were printed in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw Taktin. The printing staff of MoI and director-level representative of UEC monitored the processes, including examining the ballot papers and also jointly granted the ballots.

15. Dr Zaw Than, reporter of Sankei Shimbun news agency, said he noticed the question of another reporter regarding the PR system of UEC in the former press conference. He asked about the potential of the PR system and how would the circumstance change if that system has good potential?

16. U Khin Maung Oo replied that Myanmar is currently adopting the FPTP system. When the officials met with the political party on 26 February 2021, the parties answered that a PR system is convenient with the country. Such a case was also briefed in the previous conferences. The officials also informed the political parties to send the papers regarding with PR system. Meanwhile, three political parties replied to them with documents about this system. The PR system is not a new one. A Hluttaw MP also urged the Hluttaw to decide for using PR system and carry out law amendment processes and UEC to practice the PR system during the first Amyotha Hluttaw session. The motion was accepted at Amyotha Hluttaw, and a commission on the PR system was formed. There were also reports to the commission. About ten political parties submitted letters to use the PR system instead of the FPTP system in the first Hluttaw Term. The PR system means the broad area of the constituency and designates the numbers of candidates. Then, the system selects the representatives in a ratio based on the votes of the candidates of political parties or independent candidates. There are various PR systems in the world.

There are about three systems mainly used in 80 countries. Therefore, the country should use a system that conforms with the Constitution, forming a government and political affairs. The three PR systems are Party List Proportional Representation System, Mixed Member Proportional System and Single Transferable Vote (STV). Among these three systems, the first two are mostly common. The final one is not widespread in use for some issues like calculating or complexity. If the PR system is used, one should study such necessary things as the Constitution, whether they are in conformity with the Hluttaw Election Law; whether they are needed to be amended, effectiveness on self-administer division and zones according to the 2008 Constitution, the situation of Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyotha Hluttaw, Region/State Hluttaw to adapt the PR system, designation of constituencies which are convenient with PR system, calculation system on the ratio of parties and representatives, and voting results.

There are also procedures for it. It needs to hold coordination meetings with the relevant department and stakeholders like parties, civilian organizations. It needs to draft, amend and release the law and rules. It needs to provide pieces of training to the members of the sub-commission and poll heads. It also should raise public awareness for the voters. In practical sectors, systematic measures play a crucial role. In conclusion, the system, which is suitable for the country and is simple to understand for the voters, should be used. The initial findings are currently displayed, and efforts are being made by cooperating with the relevant political parties and organizations.

In conclusion, the system, which is suitable for the country and is simple to understand for the voters, should be used. The initial findings are currently displayed, and efforts are being made by cooperating with the relevant political parties and organizations.

by negotiating with the parties? When will the UEC meet with the parties?

20. U Khin Maung Oo replied that the UEC Chairman has already discussed this issue during the meeting with the parties on 26 February. The PR papers are accepted, and the officials will discuss these papers during the next 2 or 3 months. Then, all will coordinate for this issue. Therefore, the progress in this period will be announced soon.

21. The Editor-in-Chief of Ye Ye Tauk Journal continued that the UEC did not face any democratic pathway for another reason. The point is that there were parties who ran in the election with foreign assistance. I will present one piece of evidence for this case. On 10 April 2019, US Ambassador Scot Marceul once said in his speech, “There is no support to Myanmar but the US provided $950 million to NLD during the stake-driving ceremony for the US Embassy Liaison Office in Nay Pyi Taw. Although I thought it was National Democratic Party and the party Chair U Soe Maung also opposed this issue. The next reason is that the US embassy provided $46 million in the election period. But that time, the UEC Chairman said they did not receive any financial assistance. Then, the NLD’s spokesperson said the processes are being conducted in the scope of government authority, and the government will manage this issue. In reality, Moesya Aung Shian of the government and is just representative of the party. He made a response in this case and talked about the financial management system of government. But there is no objection to UEC in this case. Therefore, these facts are the main reason that the country is far from a democratic pathway. How is the plan of the current UEC regarding these issues?

22. Then, U Khin Maung Oo said the Constitution stated Chapter 9 — Election, Chapter 10 — Political Parties and Chapter 11 — Provisions on the State of Emergency. But we are concerned with Chapter 9 and 10. In Constitution, it includes only six sections for political parties. Similarly, there are also Political Party Registration Law and Rules. In this law, a party must follow the stipulations of Section 6, and if they break Section 12, they have
PR system, including the Constitu-
tution and election law in a timely
manner: The outcomes and deci-
sions will also be announced to
the public later.
25. Editor-in-Chief of NP
News (National Post) U Kyaw
Myo Win said the SAC has al-
ready announced the holding of
the election. But what will hap-
pen if the people have no trust in
this election or do not accept
the holding of an election, or do
not cast their votes, or do most of
the parties not compete in the
election?
26. U Khin Maung Oo said
there are law and rules in every
process. There are also proce-
dures for election and work plans
to be conducted in the election
period. But they will be carried
out in line with the law and rules.
They also have full provisions.
27. Editor-in-Chief of NP
News (National Post) U Kyaw
Myo Win asked if the proper
numbers of people cast votes,
the election would be a successful
election.
28. U Khin Maung Oo
continued that the UEC will an-
nounce in accord with the election
process while other officials will
register the lists. But the UEC
has not faced such a situation yet,
and the previous elections were
also successfully held despite the
challenges. Therefore, the UEC
will carry out in accordance with
the law, rules and guidelines for
the coming election.
29. The journalist of Py-
daganu Daily Newspaper U Ko
Lwin said he would ask about
public healthcare regarding
CDMs. There are CDMs and Non-
CDMs currently. For example, if
there are many doctors like a
doctor from Kan Htoo Ma station
hospital of Taze Township,
how will the SAC appreciate them?
How will the SAC take action against
the healthcare staff who fail to enter their duties despite
the warnings of SAC?
30. Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun
said the Non-CDM doctor from
Kan Htoo Ma station hospital did
not join CDM not because of
the government but because of
the patients. The government also
in this sector. The government
employees should perform their
duties in professional ways.
31. Then, reporter U Ko
Lwin asked the quick arrest of
suspects under Section 586 and
other Sections is needed, and it
also needs to take actions against
them. Some of the constructive
manners can be seen in some
words and villages. Although the
suspects who commit incitement
to affect the stability of State
are announced in state-run newspa-
ers, MRTV and MWD, there are
very few numbers of audience. He
asked if there were plans to pub-
lish vinyl photos in each township.
32. Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun
appreciated his advice. He also
said there are also suggestions
regarding the cases occurring at
the low level. The SAC knows about
social bullying and threats. The
SAC knows everything is happen-
ing at the lower level. The officials
investigate the cases and seek
confirmations. He also admitted
that they could not offer complete
safety in these cases. But the SAC
is making efforts for safety and
work plans, cooperated areas and
sub-areas, implementation of de-
cisions made by submitting an
approval of fund. On the same day,
Union Minister for Investment
and Foreign Economic Relations
Aung Naing Oo attended the
ASEAN Economic Ministers
Meeting. He discussed the im-
portant role of private sectors
in the current economic situa-
tion. Cooperation work in processes
of ASEAN Business Advisory Coun-
cil in 2021, the commitment of
Myanmar to carry out the inter-
national agreements in accord
with the stipulated laws and to
safeguard the businesses allowed
in the former government term
and priority sectors in solving the
difficulties of permitted busines-
esc.

These are the cooperation work be-
tween the international countries and
the government's performance just
in March. Therefore, recognition or
non-recognition are just the words of
unscrupulous persons. The SAC has
the proper relationship between the in-
ternational countries and neighbouring
countries. The government exercises
independent and active foreign policy

14 APRIL 2021
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
NATIONAL
11

Media persons are viewing the homemade weapons used in riots.
Files opened against medical doctors who participated in CDM activity with attempts to deteriorate peace and stability of the State

THE following medical doctors have been charged under Section 505-A of the Penal Code for inciting State service personnel and health staff to participate in CDM activities, themselves participating in it, supporting CDM activities and CRPH unlawful association with the aim of deteriorating the State administrative machinery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Hospital</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Section of Penal Code</th>
<th>Photo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dr Naw Marthay (Professor)</td>
<td>People’s Hospital (1000-bed)</td>
<td>Zabuthiri Township</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dr Kyaw Zwar Lwin (Director)</td>
<td>Director Ministry of Health and Sports</td>
<td>Dawei Town, Thaninthayi Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dr Hlaing Moh Moh Thu (Medical Superintendent)</td>
<td>Sangha Hospital (200-bed)</td>
<td>Pyinnmana Town, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dr Maung Maung Chit (Medical Superintendent)</td>
<td>Kawa People’s Hospital</td>
<td>Monywa Town, Sagaing Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dr Ko Ko Naing (Medical Superintendent)</td>
<td>Htagaung People’s Hospital</td>
<td>Pathein Township, Mandalay Region</td>
<td>505-a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dr Thet Paing (Medical Superintendent)</td>
<td>Ye Town People’s Hospital</td>
<td>Thakayta Township, Yangon Region</td>
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<td>Dr Moe Kyaw Thu (Medical Superintendent)</td>
<td>Bilin Town People’s Hospital</td>
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<td>Dr Nay Min Myo Than (Medical Superintendent)</td>
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<td>Dr Khun Win Latt (Medical Superintendent)</td>
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<td>Dr Aung Naing Oo (Medical Superintendent)</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Dr El Zin Nyein (Township Medical Officer)</td>
<td>Lewe Town, Nay Pyi Taw</td>
<td>Lewe Township People’s Hospital (100-bed)</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Dr Aung Kyaw Thu (Specialist)</td>
<td>Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital (1000-bed)</td>
<td>Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Dr Htet Lin (Specialist)</td>
<td>Tatkon Township People’s Hospital (100-bed)</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Dr Mie Moe Sein Toe (Specialist)</td>
<td>Nay Pyi Taw General Hospital (1000-bed)</td>
<td>Zabuthiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Dr Swe Swe Hlaing (Specialist)</td>
<td>Bhamo Township People’s Hospital</td>
<td>Bhamo Township, Bhamo Township</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Dr Wah Wah Min (Specialist)</td>
<td>General Hospital (200-bed)</td>
<td>Bhamo Township, Bhamo Township</td>
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Among them, Dr Aung Kyaw Thu (specialist), Dr Htet Lin (specialist), Dr Mie Mie Sein Toe (specialist), Dr Swe Swe Hlaing (specialist) and Dr Wah Wah Min (specialist) participated in CDM activities without performing medical treatments at assigned hospitals but gave medical treatments at private hospitals/clinics according to the documentary photos.

As tasks are being carried out to arrest those medical doctors charged, action will be taken against the persons under the law for admitting those medical doctors, and work licences of the private hospitals/clinics which allowed them to give medical treatments will be closed. Deterrent action will be taken against owners of these hospitals/clinics under the law. Action will be taken against any health staff under the law for taking charges of providing healthcare services to the people and giving assistance to private hospitals/clinics with participation in CDM activities without discharging assigned duty. Severe action will be taken against owners of private hospitals/clinics which admit those medical doctors and health staff for supporting the CDM participants. — MNA

Riotous insurgents attack camps of security forces

ACCORDING to the Myanmar Police Force’s press release, crowds of riotous insurgen
cy attacked bases of security forces and members by taking advantage of surprise. At about 8:30 pm on 12 April, some 30 members of an armed insurgent group (under scrutiny) taking positions from east, north and west wings opened fire at Kinmunchaung police station in Kyauktaw Township.

Servicemen of the camp led by the camp leader performed counter-attack against the insurgents. At about 9:10 pm, the insurgent group retreated from the scene. In the incident, no servicemen and families were injured. At 9:15 am yesterday, in
surgents exploded a mine (under scrutiny) against a patrol convoy at the junction of Zay Road in Ayemyathar war. Four security personnel on board the patrol vehicle were injured and sent to the military hospital.

So, security forces performed appropriate security operation around the scene. At 10 am yesterday, some ten rioters attacked security forces on the duty of security at No 4 Basic Education High School in Ward 13 of Myingyan with the use of homemade guns, catapults and iron hooks. Counter-attacks of the security forces cracked down the rioters at 10:10 am. — MNA
Jaggery price in bear market this year

The jaggery price in Kyauk-padaung Township, NyaungU District, Mandalay Region remains bearish from the early toddy season.

Jaggery fetched only K1,200 per viss (a viss equals 1.6kg) in April, showing a small decrease of K200 as against last year. Regardless of Thingyan Festival, the demand is pretty weak this year.

The toddy palm tree that bears the fruits is the female tree, and that has the stalks of the fruit is male palm tree. Mainly the male palm tree gives more date sap than the female tree. The male palm tree season is going to expire, and the female palm tree season is going to start. Yet, the price is on the downward trend.

There is a vast area of toddy palm in NyaungU Township. However, the jaggery cannot keep up with the sugar business. Moreover, the local jaggery business is less popular among young people. Earlier, all the villagers solely relied on toddy palm cultivation. At present, the number of toddy palm farmer dropped by half, said a farmer U Soe Win.

The toddy palm tree climbing is a traditional business in Ngathayouk town in NyaungU District. The toddy palm tree climbers and jaggery makers closely observe the market to produce the jaggery.

Jaggery price is declining. The local people from the central part of the country are struggling to survive from the production of jaggery and palm juice only. Sometimes, palm fruits are used as snacks as well as fruit. It was believed as a product with a low grade. Some trees were even cut down to use as firewood in the previous years. — KPD/GNLM

MYANMAR-THAI border trade reached $1.9 bln in FY2020-21

BILATERAL border trade between Myanmar and Thailand reached over US$1.9 billion as of 2 April in the current budget year 2020-21, which started in October, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The country’s export to Thailand totalled $1.3 billion while its import shared $589 million during the period. Compared to the same period in the last FY, the financial year’s figures declined by $370.

Myanmar mainly conducts border trade with neighbouring Thailand through seven border checkpoints — Tachileik, Myawady, Kayahkaw, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Maese.

During the over six-month period, the Myawady land border topped with $729 million of bilateral trade. Myanmar primarily exports natural gas, fishery products, coal, tin concentrate, coconut (fresh and dry), beans, corns, bamboo shoots, sesame seeds, garment, footwear, plywood and veneer, broken rice and other commodities to Thailand. It imports capital goods such as machinery, raw industrial goods such as cement and fertilizers, and consumer goods such as cosmetics, edible vegetable oil and food products from the neighbouring country.

The bilateral trade between Myanmar and Thailand stood at $1.9 billion in FY2020-21 (as of April), $5.1 billion in FY2019-2020, $5.5 billion in FY2018-2019, $2.9 billion in the mini-budget year of 2018 or transitional period from April to September this year, $5 billion in FY2017-2018, $4.3 billion in the 2016-2017FY, $4.8 billion in the 2015-2016FY, $5.7 billion in the 2014-2015FY, $5.6 billion in the 2013-2014FY, $4.7 billion in the 2012-2013FY, and $4.5 billion in the 2011-2012FY, according to the Myanmar Ministry of Commerce. — Zaw/GNLM

Pigeon pea price remains on the rise

ACCORDING to the Win Win depot from Mandalay, the pigeon pea (red gram) price continues rising in early April. It fetched up to K90,000 per three-basket bag on 10 April.

The traders set the selling price at K90,000 per bag. The majority of them accept only immediate cash payment.

The pigeon pea market is expected to remain bullish even after the Thingyan holidays (13-14 April), a trader from the Mandalay market shared his opinion.

The pigeon pea price was on the rise in March-end 2021 amid the low yield and the dollar gain.

According to the domestic market, the pigeon peas market saw a slight upward trend in price along with the appreciation of the US dollar against Kyat.

The price showed a remarkable increase of K16,000-18,000 as against January’s rate.

As there is no demand by India, the traders are keeping them for now, said U Myo Swe from Mandalay wholesale market.

Myanmar’s pigeon peas are primarily shipped to India and exported to Singapore, the US, Canada, Pakistan, the UK, and Malaysia.

But, the export volume to other countries rather than to India is minimal.

More than 249,245 tonnes of various pulses and beans were exported to foreign markets between 1 October and 4 December of the current financial year 2020-2021, with an estimated value of US$217 million.

Of them, the pigeon pea export accounted for 83,758 tonnes, generating an income of $57.94 million, the Commerce Ministry’s data indicated.

Myanmar’s agriculture sector is the backbone of the country’s economy, and it contributes to over 30 per cent of Gross Domestic Products.

The country primarily cultivates paddy, corn, cotton, sugarcane, various pulses and beans.

Its second-largest production is the pulses and beans, counting for 33 per cent of agro products and covering 20 per cent of growing acres.

Among them, black gram, pigeon pea and green grams constitute 72 per cent of bean acreage.

Other beans, including peanut, chickpea, soy pea, black-eyed beans, butter bean and rice bean, are also grown in the country.

The domestic bean market is positively related to supply and demand law, said Secretary U Min Ko Oo of Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association.

Since 2017, India has been setting import quota on beans, including black grams and pigeon peas.

Therefore, the growers face difficulties to export their beans to the Indian market.

India’s restriction of the importation of pulses in August 2017 severely affected growers in Myanmar.

The price of pulses also drastically plummeted.

In the 2017-2018 FY, over a million tons of black grams, pigeon peas, and green grams were shipped to foreign countries.

Nevertheless, the earnings were registered at just $713 million owing to the price drop.

Myanmar shipped over 1.6 million tonnes of different varieties of pulses, especially black grams, with an estimated worth of US$1 billion, to other counties in the FY2018-2019.

During last FY2019-2020 ended 30 September, the country delivered 1.6 million tonnes with an estimated value of $1.195 billion. — MM/GNLM
Visitors crowd in Ngwehsaung beach in water festival holiday

“The Ngwehsaung beach closed in the COVID-19 period, is being flocked with the visitors in the Thingyan water festival holiday. Ngwehsaung Beach is a popular resort and one of the top tourist attractions in Myanmar to relax by soaking in the sea because of the finer sand and clearer. It is about a six-hour drive from the commercial capital. The visitor can also reach Bird Island, lovers Island, Snake Island, and three pagodas through Ngwehsaung beach. Road links between Yangon-Pathein and Pathein-Ngwehsaung have upgraded, and delivery of freshwater has also developed. We can take relaxation at the beach by enjoying the fresh air and tasting hygienic foods,” said a visitor.

The coast guard and Discipline committee is carrying out the rules and regulation process thoroughly along the beach to ensure visitors’ safety. Most of the people visit the Ngwehsaung beach to have rest and recreation during the water festival. The Ngwehsaung beach hosted about 832 local visitors and 79 foreigners from 24 March 2021to 12 April 2021, according to the official statistics of the Directorate of Hotels and Tourism Department. — (Ngwehsaung IPR/D/GNLM)

Agro exports soar to $2.95 bln in current FY

The agricultural exports have topped US$2.95 billion as of 2 April 2021 in the current financial year since 1 October 2020. According to the Ministry of Commerce, the figures reflect a significant rise of $809.8 million this FY, according to the trade figures released by the Ministry of Commerce.

The agro exports were registered $2.14 billion in the corresponding period of the 2019-2020 FY.

The agricultural exports unexpectedly surge regardless of the coronavirus’s impact on foreign demand for other export groups and political changes.

At present, some ocean liners suspended cargo transport from Myanmar in recent days. The cargo transport will double or triple if we conduct the trade with small ships. It could harm the export sector somehow, according to Myanmar Mercantile Marine Development Association.

However, Myanmar’s border trade with China is steadily conducted. Around 1,000 trucks are daily seen flowing in and out of the Muse, a central cross-border post between Myanmar and China, the traders said.

Myanmar is daily shipping rice, broken rice, green grams, peanuts, various pulses and beans, onion, chilli, fishery products, consumer goods, watermelon and muskmelon to China with over 700 trucks. Meanwhile, building materials, electric appliances, medical devices, consumer goods, and fertilizer are imported daily with 200 trucks.

In the exports sector, the agriculture industry performed the best, accounting for over 22 per cent of overall exports.

India-Myanmar border trade up by $78.8 mln amid strict border control

THE value of border trade between India and Myanmar jumped to US$155 million between 1 October and 2 April period of the current financial year 2020-2021 amidst the closure of border posts by India. The figures reflected an increase of 78.8 million as against a year ago period.

India tightened border control in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. The traders suffered the negative impact of the outbreak. The cross-border trade between Myanmar and India has become sluggish. The reopening of the crossings has been put off for now.

Myanmar conducts border trade with neighbouring India through Tamu, Reed, and Htunlang border posts.

Between 1 October and 2 April in the current budget year, trade values were registered at over $31.15 million via Tamu border and $124 million via Reed. There was no trade recorded at the Htunlang post.

Myanmar exports mung beans, pigeon peas, green grams, areca nuts, ginger, saffron, turmeric, bay leaves, fishery products, fruits, and vegetables to India. At the same time, it imports pharmaceuticals, oil cakes, electronic appliances, motorbikes, steel and other construction machines and building materials from the neighbouring country. — KK/GNLM
Jordan royal feud stirs unease in Saudi Arabia

SAUDI Arabia fervently denies involvement in Jordan’s royal feud, but the arrest of an advisor to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has strained unease in Riyadh, which sources say is pushing for his release.

Bassem Awadallah, seen as an influential figure familiar with the inner workings of the Saudi leadership, was ensnared in a rift within Jordan’s royal family that played out in full public glare.

Riyadh officially threw its support behind Jordan’s King Abdullah II, who has sought to draw a line under the damaging row with his half-brother Prince Hamzah as state television showed them together on Sunday for the first time since the crisis erupted.

Saudi officials dismiss speculation it was behind the split, insisting that such royal infighting could have dangerous ripple effects for other monarchies in the tinderbox region.

The speculation arose as Jordan suggested a “foreign” hand was behind the crisis, with observers immediately pointing the finger of suspicion at Riyadh.

The crisis followed media reports that warning Saudi-Israel ties could cost Jordan - home to a large Palestinian population – its custodianship of Jerusalem’s holy sites including Al-Aqsa mosque, a key source of legitimacy for Amman’s ruling Hashemite dynasty.

But a source close to the leadership of Saudi Arabia, no stranger to royal ructions, told AFP that Riyadh has “zero interest in destabilising Jordan”, a longstanding regional ally.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan led a delegation to Amman last week to express what he called solidarity with Abdullah. The trip came, the source said, as Saudi rulers felt “the (Jordanian) king was being fed rumours by other parties that they needed to refuse in person and not over the phone”. —AFP

Ramadan breeds dread in crisis-hit Iraq

Iraqis are bemoaning the rising cost of living ahead of the fasting month of Ramadan during which families gather together for iftar meals after sunset.

However, the dinar and rising unemployment have more than doubled the price of a kilo of tomatoes to $45 rent for their modest home.

Iraq is facing a growing problem of unemployment and rising prices, with the economic situation worsening as the pandemic continues to spread.

The crisis followed media reports that warning Saudi-Israel ties could cost Jordan - home to a large Palestinian population – its custodianship of Jerusalem’s holy sites including Al-Aqsa mosque, a key source of legitimacy for Amman’s ruling Hashemite dynasty.

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Minneapolis under curfew after officer shoots Black motorist dead

FRESH protests broke out Tuesday night in Minneapolis despite a curfew implement- ed after a police officer fatally shot a young Black man when she appeared to confuse her handgun with her taser, fuel- ling tensions in a US city already on edge because of the George Floyd murder trial.

Shortly before 9:00 pm local time (0200GMT Tuesday), nearly two hours after the curfew went into effect, dozens of protesters continued to wave signs and chant slogans in front of the police station in Brooklyn Centre, where Sunday’s killing occurred.

Demonstrators taunted police through newly-erected fence wiring around the station, and carried signs saying “Jail all racist killer cops,” “Am I next?” and “No justice, no peace.”

Police fired tear gas at the protesters several times and ordered them to disperse.

This was the second con- secutively night of protests af- ter 20-year-old Daunte Wright was shot dead by police while driving with his girlfriend.

In police body camera video released earlier Mon- day in Brooklyn Centre, an officer shouts “Taser! Taser! Taser!” but then instead fires a gun at the victim.

“The officer drew their handgun instead of their taser,” said Brooklyn Centre police chief Tim Gannon.

Gannon said it was his belief that the officer, now on leave pending an investi- gation, “had the intention to deploy their taser but instead shot Mr Wright with a single bullet.” —AFP

Mexican villagers take anti-narco fight into own hands

MEXICAN children toting repli- ca rifles march alongside armed members of a self-defence force who say they have been left to defend their village against drug traffickers all by themselves.

The inhabitants of Ayahual- tempo in violence-plagued Guer- rero state accuse the authorities of abandoning them to their fate despite past killings and kidnap- pings. They blame a local gang called Los Ardillos which they say is seeking to muscle into their village of bean and maize (corn) farmers located in a major opium producing region.

At least nine locals have been murdered since 2019, but the res- idents complain that their pleas to the authorities have fallen on deaf ears.

“It’s been 15 months since the government came here and promised to support us. So far we haven’t seen any help,” said self-defence leader Bernardino Sanchez. Chayo joined the com- munity police force at the age of 15. —AFP

People gather holding signs before curfew to protest the death of Daunte Wright, who was fatally shot by a police officer in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota. PHOTO: AFP
Centralized venues confirmed for upcoming Asian Qualifiers

Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has previously approved the centralized venues for the Asian Qualifiers for the AFC Asian Cup China 2023 matches and FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, scheduled to take place from 31 May to 15 June 2021 according to the statement with the AFC.

China will host the Group A qualifiers, which comprises Syria, the Philippines, Maldives and Guam. Next, Kuwait will take the host position for Group B, which comprises Australia, Jordan, Nepal, and Chinese Taipei. Meanwhile, Bahrain will make the host for Group C, including Asian powerhouse Iran, Iraq, Hong Kong and Cambodia. In contrast, Saudi Arabia will host Group D matches, including Uzbekistan, Singapore, Yemen and Palestine.

Likewise, Qatar, the host country for FIFA World Cup 2022, will welcome Group E opponents Oman, Afghanistan, India and Bangladesh. Japan will stand as a host for Group F, which features Myanmar, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Mongolia.

The United Arab Emirates will be a host for Group G, with ASEAN powerhouse Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. At the same time, South Korea will welcome Group H’s matches, which comprises Turkmenistan, Lebanon, North Korea, and Sri Lanka.

—GNLM

Olympic torchbearers run laps in empty Osaka park due to COVID spike

TORCHBEARERS for this summer’s Tokyo Olympics on Tuesday ran laps in an empty park in Osaka after the flame relay in the western Japan prefecture was rerouted from public roads due to a sharp rebound in coronavirus infections.

A day before the 100-day milestone to the opening of the Olympics, Osaka, a metropolitan that recently has been hit by record numbers of daily COVID-19 infections, became the first prefecture in Japan to give up on holding the relay in its planned format.

Runners carried the flame for about 200 meters in the Expo ’70 Commemorative Park in Suita, which was closed to the public, instead of on public roads where large crowds could have gathered.

Each was allowed to invite up to four people to watch, including family.

More than 100 torchbearers are scheduled to run over two days at the park in Osaka, the 10th prefecture that the flame has visited since the start of the relay on March 25, while public support for the Olympics remains low in Japan.

With the event being streamed online, many torchbearers waved and posed for cameras during their run in the park, which was created on the site of the 1970 Japan World Exposition and known for the iconic Tower of the Sun artwork by the late Taro Okamoto. — Kyodo News

More Ibrahimovic controversy after lockdown restaurant ‘meeting’

ZLATAN Ibrahimovic was again in the headlines for non-football reasons on Monday after he was reportedly pictured in a Milan restaurant while the city was in a coronavirus lockdown.

Italian news website Fanpage published photos it says were taken at lunchtime on Sunday of the AC Milan forward with friends, all without masks and surrounded by wine glasses, in the restaurant which should have been closed to on-site diners.

Sunday was the last day of lockdown in the Lombardy region where Milan is located and several other regions with improving contagion statistics.

Lombardy will be reclassified from a “red zone” area to an “orange” area, where people face fewer travel curbs, shops can reopen, although a ban on dining in bars and restaurants remains.

A source from Ibrahimovic’s entourage claimed to AFP that the Sweden attacker was there for a “work meeting”, while the restaurant’s owner Tano Simonato told Fanpage that the group, which he says also included former Milan player Ignazio Abate, had not eaten in the restaurant.

“She didn’t eat, as friends we had a glass of wine,” Fanpage quoted Simonato as saying.

The photos caused controversy also because in the autumn Ibrahimovic, who contracted Covid-19 in September, promoted social distancing and mask wearing for the Lombardy regional government. —AFP