Hotel operation gets green light for tourism in Magway Region

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has given the hotels, motels and guest houses in Magway Region permission to welcome back customers starting from May, 2021.

A total of 50 hotels and motels have been closed since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared last year and 20 of them were reopened in accordance with the COVID-19 rules and regulations set by the Ministry of Health and Sports since April and now all of 50 are reopened.

The hotels and tourism sector in the region is reportedly relying on the domestic travellers and resumption of the business will yield income and eventually profit, an official of the ministry said.

The hotels, motels and guest houses are fully booked during the university graduation period and the “Shwesettaw pagoda Buddha Puja Ya festival” which lasts about five months. The hotels and tourism sector in Magway Region generates money from the domestic and international tourists who come to the pagoda Buddha Puja Ya festivals.

The tourist sites including Myathalun pagoda, Gan-gaw Tahtaung pagoda and Kwechaung fortress in Magway Township, Malun emerald alms-bowl pagoda and Minhla fortress in Minhla Township, Sekkeinte pagoda, Nagapwet mountain, Swesettaw pagoda, Swesettaw Wildlife Sanctuary and the elephant camp in Minbu Township, Yokesone monastery and ancient pagodas in Sagu, and Sandagui Natha Kyunangtawya pagoda and Lekaing Yokesone monastery in Pwintbyu township are famous tourist sites in Magway Region.

It is reported that plans are underway to develop new tourist destinations for the changing tourism industry in the post-COV-19 era so as to attract home-grown and international tourists in addition to preservation of ancient cultural heritages and conservation of natural beauties.—Kay Tar/GNLM
1. Political affairs
   (a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined
       and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.
   (b) To emphasize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in
       line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
   (c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among
       countries through an independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy.

2. Economic affairs
   (a) To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern
       techniques and strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the
       economy.
   (b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment
       in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
   (c) To promote and support local businesses to create employment opportu-
       nities and increase domestic production.

3. Social affairs
   (a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriot-
       ism.
   (b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National peoples
       and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national charac-
       teristics.
   (c) To enhance the health, fitness and education quality of the entire nation.

Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted and its mandated tasks, including the scrutiny of voter lists, shall be implemented in accordance with the law.
2. Effective measures will be taken with added momentum to prevent and manage the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Actions will be taken to ensure the speedy recovery of businesses from the impact of COVID-19.
4. Emphasis will be placed on achieving enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.
5. Upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution, and further work will be undertaken to hand over State duties to the winning party in accordance with democratic standards.

Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
Statement on Ceasefire and Perpetual Peace

FROM PAGE-1
3. The Tatmadaw will further cease all military operations from 1 to 30 June 2021 across the nation except the period when security and administrative measures of the government in addition to State defence and administrative measures are attacked and encroached on, to hold more talks with ethnic armed organizations until the perpetual peace is successfully restored, to smoothly accomplish the peace process and to enable students to conveniently learn education as of 1 June when the basic education schools under the Department of Basic Education will be opened for 2021-2022 academic year.
4. During the period when the Tatmadaw further ceases military operations, concerted efforts should be made for restoring the perpetual peace through negoti-
       ations.

Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

Effective period for temporary measures to prevent importation of COVID-19 to Myanmar through air travel extended till 30 June 2021

The effective period for the Temporary Measures to Prevent Importation of COVID-19 to Myanmar through Air Travel issued on 29 March 2020 by the Ministry of Health and Sports was extended up to 31 May 2021, 23:59 hours of Myanmar Standard Time, in line with the approval of the Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19. As the infection of this disease remains increasing in most of the countries, and the current effective period will be further extended with the approval of the Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19, until 30 June 2021, 23:59 hours of Myanmar Standard Time to prevent infection of COVID-19 to Myanmar through passengers of international airlines. —Ministry of Transport and Communications

Tatmadaw medical team performs RDT on returnees in Mawlamyine

DUE to difficulties in conducting necessary COVID-19 medical check-ups, Mon and Kayin states residents repatriated from abroad were in quarantine at the hostel of Mawlamyine University in Mawlamyine. Military doctors, nurses and medics from the local military hospital in South-East Command in collaboration with members of the township administration body and CSOs performed Rapid Diagnostic Test (RDT) on 90 returnees at the quarantine centre yesterday. The Tatmadaw hospital has conducted the COVID-19 medical check-ups to a total of 7,175 foreign returnees from 19 February to date.—MNA

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Need to implement the SME and cooperative sectors

It needs to implement the SME and cooperative sectors for doing the primary businesses of the State. Regions and states need to encourage SME and manufacturing. The cooperative system must directly sell products to benefit the manufacturers.

(Excerpt from the speech to the Management Committee meeting made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 11 May 2021)

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Announcement of Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19

4th Waning of Kason 1383 ME
29 May 2021

IT is announced that the statements to the public, orders, notifications and directives (excluding eased restrictions) of the Union-level organizations and Union ministries effective until 31 May 2021 for prevention, control and treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) will be extended to 30 June 2021 as it is required to continue the containment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Yangon-Toungoo railway upgrade project, railway stations, dry dock inspected

UNION Minister for Transport and Communications Admiral Tin Aung San made an inspection tour to the Yangon-Toungoo railway upgrade project phase-1 of the Yangon-Mandalay railway upgrade project, railway stations and the dry port on 29 May.

During the inspection tour of the upgrade work on Bago-Nyaunglebin railway section, the General Manager (Civil) from Myanmar Railways explained the work progress and remaining work to be done, and the companies implementing the upgrade work of the railway section presented the difficulties encountered in implementation, and the Union Minister attended to the needs.

After inspecting the construction works of Pyuntaza railway station and the laying of rail tracks by RBE from Pyuntaza station to DaikU station, the Union Minister met with the passengers waiting for the train at DaikU station and asked them whether the train service was convenient.

At the Bago Station, the Union Minister instructed officials to make arrangements for convenience of train passengers to travel, to keep trains clean, tidy and safe as well as to check and repair the staff housings and to oversee the construction of the station to ensure its long-term viability.

The Union Minister and party also inspected the laying of rail tracks from Bago Station to Ywathagyi station (33.25 miles long section) and the welding work at Htongyi Station.

He also inspected Dry Port in Ywathagyi and related works.—MNA

Daily newspapers available online

MoEE Union Minister inspects Yeywa hydropower plant, Shwesaryan and Aungpinle main power stations

UNION Minister for Electricity and Energy U Aung Than Oo inspected Yeywa hydropower plant and 230 KV Shwesaryan and Aungpinle main power stations in Patheingyi Township yesterday.

At Yeywa power plant, Managing Director U Than Naing Oo of Electric Power Generation Enterprise and head of the power plant presented the water storage processes of the dam. Then, the Union Minister gave necessary instructions and inspected feeding of electricity to national grid from the power control room by operating turbines, water storage process of dam, power intake structure and spillway.

The Union Minister and party also went to 230 KV Shwesaryan and 230 KV Aungpinle main power stations where the heads of the stations clarified the work plans.

The Union Minister stressed the need to inform the public about the duration of power cutoff in advance when the repair works and maintenance are conducted and he inspected the power control unit and power transmission system in the switchyard.—MNA

MoSWRR provides cash assistance to charity organizations, persons with disabilities, senior citizens in Mandalay Region

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement provided cash assistance to charity organizations, persons with disabilities and senior citizens over the age of 85 in Mandalay Region on 29 May.

The ceremony was attended by Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Thet Thet Khine, the Mandalay Region Administration Council Chairman and council members, Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Aung Tun Khaing, Colonel Thurein Tun from Central Command, department officials, representatives from the charity/voluntary organizations, senior citizens and the persons with disabilities.

At the ceremony, the Union Minister and officials handed over K1,650.324 million for 33,366 senior citizens, 10,826 persons with disabilities and the charity organizations to the Chairman and the officials of the Mandalay Region Administration Council.

Afterwards, the Union Minister and party also met with staff of the Department of the Social Welfare, Department of Disaster Management and Department of Rehabilitation at the Children's School for the Deaf in Thamnasiri Township, Mandalay, and visited the school.

The Union Minister and party also viewed round the Mandalay Youth Training School, Rehabilitation Centre for Drug Addicts (Mandalay) and the Patheingyi Youth Training School and inspected the students’ living conditions and vocational course training conducted at the schools.—MNA

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45 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 30 May, total figure rises to 143,571

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 143,571 after 45 new cases were reported on 30 May 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, 132,318 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish “Letter to the Editor” that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.
Prices of traditional clay pots stable in Ngapthayauk

The demand for traditional clay pots are moderate and the price is mostly stable in Ngapthayauk, NyaungU District, U Nay Lin, a clay pot maker said. The prices of clay pots range between K2,000-K7,000 depending on design, size and quality.

Taunggon Village in Ngapthayauk has been relying on earthen pot making businesses for generations. The villagers execute that business on a commercial scale and send the pots to other regions and states.

The villagers prepare the clay pots ready for its toddy sap collecting season. The traders from the nearest villages come to such village to buy those clay pots to collect the toddy sap before the season starts. The Taunggon village yearly produces more than 250,000 clay pots for collecting toddy saps. The clay pots for drinking water are demanded the whole year. Other pots for flower vase (Buddhist offering) and earthen pots for cooking, earthen toys and money saving pots are also sold. The clay pots from Ngapthayauk is famous for its quality, U Nay Lin explained.

Most of the potters in the village are women. The clay pot brokers from Pakokku, Nyaung-U, Taungtha, Myaungyan and NyaungU townships come to the village to buy the pots. — KPD/GNLM

Myanmar imports over $390.76 mln worth machinery, spare parts in five months

The import value of Myanmar’s machinery and spare are estimated at over US$390.76 million in the first five-month (Oct-Feb) of the current financial year 2020-2021, the Ministry of Commerce’s data indicated.

Starting from 1 January 2021, imports of commercial vehicles on a company licence are not allowed. Importers are required to operate a car showroom in line with the prescribed rules and regulations. However, the new policy can pose difficulties for traders conducting business on a manageable scale,” said importers.

At present, the market for those vehicles which have been registered and the second-hand cars are leading to a downward trend during the hard financial times.

Importing the vehicles will cost a lot owing to the dollar gains in the past three months, double the prices of such cars are leading to a downward trend during the hard financial times.

Heavy machinery such as excavators, bulldozers, wheel loaders, vibratory rollers, clam loaders, motor graders, road roller compactors, bridge cranes, gantry cranes, tower cranes, piling machines, crawler drills/ cranes, mobile cranes, rough-terrain cranes, forklifts, boom lifts and asphalt finishers that cannot be driven on public roads are allowed to be brought into the country as long as they are 15 years old or less. — KH/GNLM

Singapore moves down a rank, becomes second largest foreign investor in Myanmar

FOLLOWING Japan moving up a rank with the largest investment, Singapore became the second-largest source of foreign direct investments into Myanmar in the past seven months (Oct-Apr) of the current financial year 2020-2021, according to data released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

Japan is the top investor in Myanmar in the past seven months, bringing in estimated capital of $518.76 million with three projects. Meanwhile, the 13 Singapore-listed enterprises brought in US$388.237 million into Myanmar. Singapore companies mainly put investments into urban development, real estate, power and manufacturing sectors. China stood as the third largest investors this FY with an estimated capital of $166.75 million in Myanmar, the DICA’s statistics indicated.

Those enterprises listed from Thailand, India, Japan, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, UK, Viet Nam, Marshall Island, South Africa, Samoa, China, Hong Kong (SAR) and China (Taipei) also made investments this year.

Of 42 foreign enterprises permitted and endorsed by MIC and the respective investment committees between 1 October 2020 and 30 April 2021 of the current FY, 21 enterprises pumped FDI into the manufacturing sector. The electricity sector received seven projects and the livestock and fisheries sector attracted five projects. Other service sectors drew five projects while the agriculture sector pulled two projects and the tourism sector, one.

Of those foreign enterprises, Singapore emerged as the second largest foreign investor in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone, after top investor Japan. — KK/GNLM

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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 in Myeik, Palaw, Thayetchaung and Yebyu townships of Taninthayi Region.

2. According to the inspection, the previous election commission released 541,431 eligible voters in these four townships of Taninthay Region. The list of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population in November 2020 showed 376,050 eligible voters who had turned 18. The voter lists mentioned that there were 82,183 citizens, associate citizens, naturalized citizens, and non-identity voters, 4,263 persons repeated on the voter lists more than three times and 56,590 persons repeated on the voter lists two times.

3. Findings in respective townships were as follows:

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>Different</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Myeik</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>226,798</td>
<td>143,563</td>
<td>38,519</td>
<td>38,519</td>
<td>1,548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Palaw</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>114,023</td>
<td>76,772</td>
<td>16,982</td>
<td>16,982</td>
<td>1,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Thayetchaung</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>106,436</td>
<td>78,727</td>
<td>11,683</td>
<td>11,683</td>
<td>664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Yebyu</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>114,174</td>
<td>76,986</td>
<td>15,109</td>
<td>15,109</td>
<td>726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>540</td>
<td>561,431</td>
<td>376,050</td>
<td>82,183</td>
<td>6,263</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in each township

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr</th>
<th>Township</th>
<th>Total polling station</th>
<th>List from immigration department</th>
<th>Those involved on voting list without citizenship scrutiny cards</th>
<th>Those involved on voter list more than three times holding one CSC</th>
<th>Those involved on voter list more than two times holding one CSC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>376,050</td>
<td>82,183</td>
<td>6,263</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. The Union Election Commission has inspected the withdrawal/receipt/use/remaining of ballot papers used for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Myeik, Palaw, Thayetchaung and Yebyu townships of Taninthay Region together with the respective township election sub-commissions, heads of police force, immigration and population and administrators in accordance with Section 53 of the relevant Hluttaw Election Law.

5. According to the inspection, a total of 540 polling stations in these four townships took out 611,931 ballots and used 370,749 ballots. It left 235,318 ballots instead of 241,182 persons repeated on the voter lists more than three times and 56,590 persons repeated on the voter lists two times. They conducted measures that violate the law when they started collecting advance ballot.

6. According to the inspections on voter lists of these four townships of Taninthay Region, the numbers of eligible voters are 185,381 more than the eligible voter lists according to the lists of citizens, associate citizens and naturalized citizens who had turned 18 in November 2020 of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population and Section 6(a) of the Hluttaw Election Law. There were 82,183 non-identity voters. Moreover, Section 15(c) of the Hluttaw Election Law in Chapter VI “Preparation of Voting Roll” stated “Whoever has the rights to vote in any constituency shall not be included in the voting roll of any constituency other than that of the constituency concerned at the same time.” But, there were 4,263 persons repeated on the voter lists more than three times and 56,590 persons repeated on the voter lists two times in these four townships of Taninthay Region.

7. There are 82,183 non-identity voters. Moreover, Section 15(c) of the Hluttaw Election Law in Chapter VI “Preparation of Voting Roll” stated “Whoever has the rights to vote in any constituency shall not be included in the voting roll of any constituency other than that of the constituency concerned at the same time.” But, there were 4,263 persons repeated on the voter lists more than three times and 56,590 persons repeated on the voter lists two times in these four townships of Taninthay Region.

8. A total of 53 of 207 voters did not have any ID at No (79) polling station of Yebyu village in Meike village-tract of Thayetchaung Township, and 90 of 233 voters without CSC at No (106) polling station in Pedet village-tract, and eight of 951 voters without ID and date of birth at No (52) polling station of Ponsinphya village of Ponsinphya village-tract, in addition to 244 without CSC, 10 with no date of birth, 11 without father’s names and 10 without mother’s names were allowed to cast votes.

9. The used ballot receipts of No (10) polling station of Kazi TadaU village-tract of Thayetchaung Township went missing and so the exact numbers of advance ballots and remaining ballots were not known.

10. Findings in these four townships of Taninthay Region were as follows;

   a. There were 372,972 voters and they used 370,749 ballots out of all withdrawals, which was 2,223 less than the numbers of voters.

   b. It found 6,677 missing ballots in withdrawals and used ballots.

   c. It found 813 extra ballots at some polling stations.

   d. On voter lists Form (1), they did not fill CSC number, date of birth, parents’ name but they were allowed the voters to cast vote.

   e. The signatures of ward/village-tract sub-commission chairman and secretary were not found on every page of Forms (1) according to the respective Hluttaw Election Rules 15(a).

   f. Names of the voters, voter list number, polling station number, ward/village-tract names and voters’ signs were not filled in ballot receipts used in some polling stations in casting votes.

   g. Some of the ward/village-tract election sub-commissions failed to return the ballot receipts and extra ballots in accordance with the law and so the ballots were found missing.

   h. The non-identity voters were on the voter lists and the voters cast votes just with the certificates without any citizenship scrutiny cards.

   i. They conducted measures that violate the law when they started collecting advance ballot.

   j. They released the COVID-19 related instructions, which were not conformity with the law, to collect voter lists and advance votes when the election drew near.

II. It found voting frauds in Myeik, Palaw, Thayetchaung and Yebyu townships of Taninthay Region. The excess/shortage ballots were found in the inspection. They failed to follow the stipulations of the Hluttaw Election Law and Rules.

Announcement of Union Election Commission

30 May 2021

Union Election Commission
100,000 fingerlings released into Shwetachaung Canal in Madaya Township

THE Department of Fisheries under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation released golden sturgeon fingerlings into Shwetachaung Canal in Madaya Township of PyinOoLwin District in Mandalay Region yesterday.

Deputy Head of Mandalay Region Fisheries Department U Khin Maung Thein, Madaya Township Administration Body, Chairman U Aung Thura Thein and officials released 100,000 fingerlings into the canal.

The township Fisheries Department arranges setting of fingerlings on free at the natural water such as rivers, creeks and dams for sufficiency of fish resources in the areas.—Soe Kyaw Thu Htwe (Madaya)/GNLM

Woman arrested for spreading fake news

THE unscrupulous persons threaten and commit social punishment against the non-CDM health staff, education employees, banking staff and other departmental employees in order to deteriorate the administrative machinery and community peace.

Ma Phway Thu Aung, owner of Pan Ei Phyu facebook account from Kalwin Ywama of Kalwin village-tract in Myeik supposed to spread fake news, wrote articles in support of unlawful associations CRPH and NUG, made social punishment on non-CDM government employees and committed incitements to cause the public and government employees panic on the social networks. Therefore, she was arrested at her house on 29 May and charged under Penal Code section 505-a at Myeik Myoma police station. —MNA

Terrorists destroy two bridges in Kayah State

THE terrorists destroyed two bridges in Prusho Township of Kayah State yesterday. According to the investigation, about 70 terrorists demolished two bridges on Loikaw-Dimawhsa-Bawlakhe road in Prusho Township.

They dug about 225 square feet of ground on each side of the 30 feet long bridge near Kadalar village and also dug 15 feet in width and 20 feet in depth of ground on each side of another 30 feet long bridge. But the latter did not collapse but the vehicles cannot pass the bridge due to the holes in the ground.

The officials conducted repair works for the bridges and the security forces investigated to arrest the insurgents.—MNA

Public information

Yangon Region Administration Council is working with relevant departments to help the businesses in the region. People are informed to contact the following phone numbers to get assistance for their small and medium-scaled businesses and investments which are facing some delays and working to do new businesses.

Phone numbers: 01 830 1975, 01 830 2175

Yangon Region Administration Council
**THE RULE OF LAW**

U Khin Maung, a retired diplomat

**THE TOPIC OF MY ARTICLE IS THE RULE OF LAW.**

As the topic of my article is about the supremacy of law, where there is no rule of law, there is “anarchy”. Anarchy is also mentioned in other words, where there is no rule of law, but anarchy, lawlessness, disorder and chaos will be there, or lawlessness and anarchy shall be there. In simple and understandable way, where there is no rule of law, there is no government services to the people. If there were no rules, there would be jungle law. There would be lawlessness, and might rule shall prevail in any conflict, dispute or quarrel.

**People matter most.**

1. In a country, to be exact, in any democratic country, people matter most.

2. In a government, especially a democratic government, people matter most. Why? “Democracy” is a word, in short is a system in which all people of a country can vote in order to elect representatives to govern “their country”. And such a country, we can also call it a parliamentary democracy.

3. The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary explains “democracy” as “the right and equal treatment of everyone and in an organization etc., and their right to take part in making decisions”. As an example, the Pocket Oxford Dictionary explains that the people can take part in the fight for justice and democracy.

4. In our university, our lecturers explained “democracy” as “demos” – the people, “cracy” – the rule. “For democracy was the rule of the people and I am sure our lecturers’ explanation of “democracy” is true in all times. As such, men are ruled by the rule of law and not by other men. In another explanation, where there is no rule of law, there is no law and order, disorder or lawlessness shall prevail. Human beings are social animals. Human beings contact, connect and co-operate with each other as of necessity.

4. Where there is no rule of law, there will be no order, no proper contract, no connect and no contract, but agreement or dis-agreement. And then, when there is no rule of law, there will be no order, or orderlessness or proper contract, connection, and contact. Might is right, just as the opposite of law and order will prevail. “In tackling this question, I think, we will, and we should first define some phrases which are directly or indirectly connected with the Internet. These phrases and their definitions are to mention only a few, and they are as follows:

(a) “To live and learn.” Learning is a never-ending process. Knowledge is power.

(b) “Unity is strength; solidarity is power.” This is the heart of the Union.

(c) “One union, built with teeth, sword, never forget our un-ion days”.

5. In tackling this question, I think, we should first define some-words, which are directly or indirectly connected with this article. These extracts and their definitions are as follows:

1. “We should value freedom, friendship, fairness and full-flight in our lives, through contact.”

2. In this day and age, learning Internet is a must.

3. “Age is no barrier to learning.”

4. “Heart is the greatest gain.” Contentment is the greatest wealth. Frivolishness is the greatest relative. Purity of mind is the greatest joy.”

5. “It is a threat to life itself.”

REFERENCE:

1. (The) Global New Light of Myanmar

2. (The) Pocket Oxford Dictionary

3. Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary

4. Notes from my constant learning

**Doctors urge global action against climate-related health risks**

Hundreds of health workers marched to the World Health Organization on Saturday demanding that authorities in all countries recognize and act to counter the health risks of climate change.

A ROUND two hundred people wearing white medical coats and facemasks marched or were pushed in wheelchairs, (doctors) two kilometers (1.2 miles) through Geneva’s international BGB headquarters. Some carried giant banners urging action, including one urging to “save our summer, save our world.”

One of the WHO buildings, representing the Doctors for Extinction Rebellion (Doctors4XR) climate activist network handed over a petition to WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

Signed by more than 1,100 health professionals from around the world, the text slammed the “inertia, inaction and the abyssal distance between speeches and action”.

It demanded that health authorities in every country who are currently taking part virtually in the main annual meeting of WHO members state, “publicly commit that climate change is getting people killed, rich and dead, and act to save our lives.”

Fear after declaration after declaration, multilateral institution — including WHO — have warned up climate change and the loss of biodiversity endanger human health worldwide,” the petition said.

Health workers worldwide are already “facing every day with the consequences of environmental degradation on our patients and communities,” they said.

“The list of ailments they suffer from is growing longer every day.”

“We are seeing more and more respiratory and cardiovascular diseases due to polluted air, loss of working days and deaths due to heat waves, over- and undernutrition due to lack of quality food, and diarrhoea and intestinal diseases due to polluted drinking water.”

“Now vaccine for climate change!”

To make the point, the petition came in an envelope decorated with a drawing of a healthy human at 27 degrees Celsius (80.6 Fahrenheit), then “sick” at 35 degrees were added, and “metast” danger and at 37 degrees, were labelled by the words: “Sane with the planet.”

Despite accumulating evidence, repeated warnings... despite more frequent and more serious natural disasters, including the COVID-19 pandemic,” the petition said, “the concrete actions implemented by the health of people and planet, the need for agriculture, water, and food have not increased.”

“Thanks to scientists in our university days, our lecturers explained “democracy” as “fair and equal agreement. And then, when there is no rule of law, there will be no order, or orderlessness or proper contract, connection, and contact. Might is right, just as the opposite of law and order will prevail. “In tackling this question, I think, we will, and we should first define some phrases which are directly or indirectly connected with the Internet. These phrases and their definitions are to mention only a few, and they are as follows:

(a) “To live and learn.” Learning is a never-ending process. Knowledge is power.

(b) “Unity is strength; solidarity is power.” This is the heart of the Union.

(c) “One union, built with teeth, sword, never forget our un-ion days”. In this day and age, learning Internet is a must.

3.

The petition slammed the “inertia, inaction and the abyssal distance between speeches and action.”

**Doctors urge global action against climate-linked health risks**

**Pharmaceuticals are essential for global people in their daily life.**

As everybody faces deterioration of body structures every second, pharmaceuticals become a reliable tool to fight against their diseases. In fact, it is necessary to take initiatives to conduct the tests of new pharmaceuticals with reagents while emphasizing research, and technical development, which plays a vital role in upgrading pharmacists’ policy today. World’s today is encountering new and new diseases year after year. So, the global people need to strive to innovate and produce new drugs to eliminate the new diseases. Hence, the government needs to encourage the scientists in respective arenas in order to perform the research tests for the production of pharmaceuticals.

In this regard, those scientists need no physical and mental disturbances over their work processes. They must be allowed to fly their wings in various scientific fields. As a result, their talents will have the chance to shape their thoughts and realize their dreams, and to come out with new forms of pharmaceuticals to be used in cutting the diseases of patients.

Thanks to scientists in respective arenas, the global people could overcome the challenges of diseases with extreme happiness. In fact, the global people are benefited with such happiness following the patients who have been cured with the use of modern pharmaceuticals. Smiles of those patients who have successfully been treated with modern medications are a reassurance for scientists to carry on their work processes.

On the other hand, those scientists who performed innovation to produce new medical drugs are beneficen- t to the people. Effective outcomes in research works and higher standards of joint pharmaceuti- calists can change the lifespan of people. But, manufacturers need to notice that unacceptable chemicals should not remain in medicines in producing the stocks for local sufficiency. Indeed, western-style pharmaceuticals, as well as traditional medicines, have been benefiting the people for years. These drugs help the patients recover from their diseases. That is why relevant governments need to encourage experts and scientists to produce better pharmaceuticals so as to fight against various diseases, including pandemics, day after day.

**Take initiative for production of pharmaceuticals with modern technologies**

**That is why relevant govern-**
Canada extends shelf life of AstraZeneca jab by 1 month

CANADIAN health authorities announced Saturday they were pushing back the expiration date on nearly 50,000 doses of AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccine by one month.

Health Canada said in a statement its approval to extend the shelf life of two lots of vaccine from May 31 to July 1 was supported by “scientific evidence.”

“This change will ensure that provinces and territories are able to use up their existing inventory and provide Canadians access to much needed doses of the vaccine,” the agency said.

A spokesperson for Health Canada said that as of May 22, there were about 49,000 doses of AstraZeneca in the country with an expiration date of May 31.

Canadian health authorities had previously approved a six-month shelf life for AstraZeneca’s Covid-19 vaccine.

People receive their Covid-19 shot during a “Doses After Dark” overnight vaccination clinic in Mississauga, Ontario on May 15, 2021. PHOTO: AFP

Hong Kong developers offer apartment to woo vaccine takers

MAJOR real estate developers in Hong Kong are holding a lottery with a HK$10.8 million ($1.4 million) apartment as a prize for getting vaccinated against the coronavirus, in a bid to encourage more people to get jabs, according to local media. PHOTO: SCREENGRAB FROM GOOGLE MAPS/KYODO

September 1. The Hong Kong government has secured 15 million doses, sufficient to provide two shots to every resident of the city of 7.5 million. About 4 million doses have already arrived in the former British colony.

Since the territory’s inoculation drive began three months ago, about 1.3 million people have received at least one shot of COVID-19 vaccine. There is speculation that some unused vaccine, set to expire in August, could be wasted.

Some observers say the reluctance among Hong Kong people is partly attributable to concerns about possible side effects and a decline in infections in the city, as well as distrust of the government that has sought to stifle democratic voices. — Kyodo News

Lebanon vaccinates over 10,000 people in day-long drive

LEBANON vaccinated more than 10,000 people on Saturday as part of a day-long vaccine “marathon” organised by the health ministry to ramp up inoculation rates in the crisis-hit country.

The ministry said that by the early evening, 10,452 people over the age of 30 received jabs of the AstraZeneca vaccine at different facilities across the country. They were allowed to enter vaccination centres on a walk-in basis from early Saturday morning in what health authorities have dubbed a vaccine “marathon.”

The country of more than 5 million has administered at least one vaccine dose to over 700,000 people. Firas Abiad, the head of Lebanon’s main hospital for coronavirus patients, called the day a “big success.”

He said 170,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine were expected to arrive in the country on Sunday. — AFP

Neighbourhood in south China under lockdown after fresh virus outbreak

A neighbourhood in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou has been locked down as officials rush to quell an uptick in cases in the area.

The industrial hub north of Hong Kong home to nearly 15 million people has reported 20 new cases of the coronavirus in the past week.

A notice by the Guangzhou municipal health bureau issued Saturday identified five streets in Liwan district in the city centre as “high-risk areas” and ordered residents to stay indoors until door-to-door testing is completed. Markets, schools and entertainment venues in the area were shut. The city government has rushed to conduct mass testing and about 700,000 people had been tested by Wednesday.

China has largely controlled the spread of the virus and has tightened quarantine rules after a surge in cases in neighbouring countries. — AFP

‘Beautiful gift’: How Croatia is luring digital nomads

MELISSA Paul described it as a “beautiful gift” when she became Croatia’s first official digital nomad earlier this year, benefiting from a visa scheme that the country hopes will help promote its pandemic-hit travel industry.

“Croatia is gorgeous, it’s beautiful living here, affordable compared to other places, has a great climate, good internet access,” says the American marketing consultant, who lives among cobblestone streets in Labin, a hilltop town overlooking the Adriatic.

Paul got her visa in January, joining a global army of workers plying their trades in foreign countries since the pandemic ushered in an era of working from home for millions.

Croatia offers the special visas to digital workers from outside the European Union, allowing them to stay for up to a year and exempting them from income tax.

Applicants need to prove they work remotely, have accommodation and health insurance and earn at least 2,200 euros ($2,700) a month.

Paul is one of about 100 people to have applied since the scheme started in January, more than half of them Americans and British. The government has so far approved 33 visas and ministers hope the idea will take off once virus-related travel restrictions are lifted.

Tourism makes up around one-fifth of the economy in the EU nation of 4.2 million people, but the number of visitors plummeted from 21 million in 2019 to seven million last year.

Income more than halved to 4.8 billion euros in 2020 compared with the previous year.

— AFP

Tourism makes up around one-fifth of Croatia’s economy. PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB FROM GOOGLE MAPS/KYODO

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB
EU moves against TikTok over child-targeted ads

The EU on Friday said TikTok must address concerns of aggressive advertising methods targeting children in a case launched by consumer authorities in several member states. PHOTO: AFP

The European Commission said the popular video-sharing app had one month to respond, saying “hidden marketing, aggressive advertising techniques targeted at children, and certain contractual terms in TikTok’s policies” were of “specific concern.”

TikTok has faced many such cases globally, and the EU claim comes a month after Britain accused the video-sharing app of illegally collecting personal data from millions of children in Europe.

The case by the EU executive came after a signal in February by the European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) about TikTok’s alleged breaches of EU consumer rights. Taking up a case launched by Ireland and Sweden, the BEUC said TikTok had failed “to protect children and teenagers from hidden advertising and potentially harmful content on its platform.”

It pointed to the use of online influencers to promote brands, but with the commercial intent hidden from young users.

The BEUC also said that a virtual gift system operating on TikTok represented a danger to children. — AFP

Univ. of Tokyo among top 10 for natural science research

THE University of Tokyo ranked eighth for high-quality natural science research in 2020, returning to the top 10 after falling to 11th the year before, according to a survey by research publisher Springer Nature Group.

In the list of 500 global institutions topped by the Chinese Academy of Sciences, five other Japanese universities and a scientific research institute ranked among the top 100.

Although researchers have had to deal with laboratory closures and disruptions to experiments amid the coronavirus pandemic, a surge of articles related to COVID-19 contributed to an overall increase in research output in 2020, said the German-British academic publishing group.

Kyoto University and Osaka University ranked 37th and 65th, respectively, in the latest survey based on institutions’ contributions to research articles published in 82 natural science journals that are chosen by an independent group of researchers.

Among other high-ranking Asian institutions were the University of Science and Technology of China in 11th place and the National University of Singapore in 29th.

In the ranking of institutions that achieved significant increases in research output in the 2019-2020 period, dubbed “rising stars,” Japan’s Riken state-sponsored research institute secured seventh place, while Nagoya University was 10th. — Kyodo News

Retro milk float brings Londoners zero-plastic groceries

ELLA Shone’s small electric truck used to deliver milk but now she drives it around London, selling groceries and household goods that are free of plastic packaging.

The 32-year-old bought her “top-up truck” last year after the first coronavirus lockdown got her thinking about innovative ways to reduce waste.

She has found plenty of demand for her service, with customers scooping up dry groceries such as lentils or filling bottles from large dispensers of vinegar or washing detergents.

On a rainy day in May, the 32-year-old plied a route to eight stops in the up-and-coming district of Hackney in northeast London.

“It’s very straightforward: it’s a bit like a go-cart ride,” she said of driving the truck, which has a top speed of 30 miles (48 kilometres) per hour.

But she admitted the steering can get “a bit bumpy.”

At one stop, three customers bought dried mango, pasta, raisins and shampoo. The mobile shop was created to bring “packaging-free” shopping to people’s doors, tapping into a growing demand for deliveries during the stay-at-home restrictions.

“I felt that there was a need to make it easier, to make it more accessible, more visible,” she said.

Nevertheless, she wasn’t immediately sure her idea was viable.

“When I started this, I thought I’d gone a bit mad on furlough leave”, she admitted.

During lockdown, Shone was on government-subsidised leave from her job in sales at a company producing sustainable condiments. — AFP

Kazakhstan sees rare antelope rebound after mass die-off

THE population of the critically endangered Saiga antelope in Kazakhstan has more than doubled since 2015. Kazakhstan’s ecology ministry said in a statement the boom was “an indicator of the effectiveness of measures bound after a massive die-off of the animals into the wild.

“this demographic curve allows for optimism and raises scenarios that the great lberian feline away from the critical risk of disappearance,” the statement said. — AFP

The EU on Friday said TikTok must address concerns of aggressive advertising methods targeting children in a case launched by consumer authorities in several member states. PHOTO: AFP

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Finland opens drive-in voting for a Covid-safe election

Finland’s municipal vote was due to take place in April but was postponed due to the pandemic. PHOTO: ANTI AIMO-KOIVISTO LEHTIKUVA/AFP

CARS are queued up on an old airport runway on the outskirts of the Finnish capital Helsinki – not for coronavirus tests but for drivers to cast their vote. Outdoor polling stations have sprung up across the Nordic country as authorities try to make voting as socially distanced as possible ahead of the country’s local elections on June 13.

“Signing in and filling out the ballot paper went brilliantly,” retiree Joukko Salminen tells AFP from inside his white car: “And corona safe too!”

Finland’s municipal vote was due to take place in April but was postponed due to the pandemic, after which officials began looking for ways to cast ballots outside during a two-week advance voting period, while protecting the legally protected privacy of voters.

“We’ve built screens that stop people being able to see the voting happening,” polling station manager Vesa Kouvonen-korpi tells AFP.

“Because the car is the polling booth, and by law you’re not allowed to see into the polling booth.”

Waiting cars are directed into one of three voting lanes, and the driver hands a polling clerk their voting ID through the window and is given a ballot paper.

“The clerk turns their back while the driver casts their vote, puts it into an envelope and returns it,” — AFP.

Nearly 300 rescued in Indonesia ferry accident

SEARCH teams are looking for one missing person after rescuing all other passengers from a large ferry that caught fire in Indonesia, an official said Sunday.

The KM Karya Indah was heading to Sanana, a remote port in the northeast of the Indonesian archipelago when it was engulfed in flames.

Shortly after departing, the ferry caught fire, forcing passengers and crew to jump into the sea to save themselves. There were no reported casualties.

“There were 275 people on board, 274 had been evacuated safely,” Muhammad Arifah, the head of the local search and rescue team told Kompas TV Sunday. “One person, a 43-year-old man, is still being searched for.” He added that at least 35 passengers were children.

Dozens of rescuers are still scouring the area for the missing person.

Images shared by the search and rescue agency showed the large ferryboat enveloped in thick, dark smoke while passengers in life jackets were rescued by rafts. More than a dozen crew members have been detained and questioned by the local police to determine the cause of the fire.

Maritime accidents are common in Indonesia due to poor safety standards. But passenger ferries are widely used for transport in the archipelago of some 17,000 islands. — AFP

Coronavirus sweeps through Thailand’s overcrowded prisons

A coronavirus surge sweeping through Thailand’s prisons has thrown the spotlight on the kingdom’s overcrowded penal system, where some inmates have less space to sleep than the inside of a coffin.

More than 22,000 people have tested positive inside jails, where inmates living cheek by jowl have been encouraged to keep wearing their masks even while they sleep.

Authorities have floated plans to give early releases to prisoners with underlying medical conditions and have announced funding for more testing and medical care in recent days.

But those behind bars say they have been kept in the dark about the seriousness of the outbreak.

Health workers vaccinate inmates at Mumbi Remand Prison in Bangkok. More than 22,000 people have tested positive for Covid-19 in overcrowded Thai jails. PHOTO: THAILAND MINISTRY OF JUSTICE/AFP

“Prisoners don’t have the knowledge to protect themselves,” said Somtoy Prueksaskensum, a high-profile activist facing charges under Thailand’s harsh royal defamation law.

Somtoy was bailed last month and told AFP that he had not been tested for Covid-19 once during his 16-week stint in custody.

He was not worried about contracting the disease while in jail because he had no idea of the level of risk.

“But after this I’m so scared (for everyone still inside) … if you are inside the prison you are at risk, it’s unavoidable,” he said.

Thailand’s prison outbreak has skyrocketed from just 10 publicly announced cases a month ago and sparked growing public concern after a handful of prominent activists contracted the illness.

Among them was student leader Panusaya “Rung” Sithijirawattanakul, who helped lead a series of rallies last year demanding political reforms in the kingdom, and who tested positive after she was released on bail. — AFP

Brazilians stage more protests against Bolsonaro

TENS of thousands of people in Brazil staged another day of protest against President Jair Bolsonaro, in particular for his chaotic handling of the pandemic, which has claimed more than 461,000 lives here.

In downtown Rio de Janeiro, some 10,000 people wearing masks marched through the streets, with some chanting “Bolsonaro genocide” or “Get out Bolsovirus.”

Similar rallies were held in other major cities, the latest in a wave of anger against Bolsonaro that began months ago. After the United States, Brazil has the world’s second highest coronavirus death toll.

At the outset of the pandemic, the far right Bolsonaro dismissed Covid-19 as “a little flu” and as the death toll has risen steadily he has gone on to infuriate people in other ways, opposing stay-at-home measures and masks, touting ineffective medications, refusing offers of vaccines, and failing to anticipate oxygen shortages that left patients to suffocate. — AFP

Colombian army tightens grip on Cali after protests leave 13 dead

THE Colombian army on Saturday tightened its control over Cali, the country’s third largest city, after the latest anti-government protests left at least 13 people dead.

The city’s streets were largely deserted after clashes late Friday pitted police against armed civilians. The country is in the second month of protests against the government of President Ivan Duque.

In Cali, a city of 2.2 million, the smoking remains of barricades and rubble heaps testified to the chaotic night. There, as across the country, poverty and the pandemic have sparked widespread anger and resentment.

The month of protests has left at least 59 people dead, officials say, including the 13 who died in Cali. More than 2,300 civilians and uniformed personnel have been injured, according to the Defense Ministry. — AFP
Commercial facilities in Tokyo to reopen amid extended emergency

COMMERICAL facilities in Tokyo, Osaka and other prefectures are stepping up preparations to resume operations on Tuesday, as the government hopes to strike a balance between curbing coronavirus infections and reviving the battered economy after extending the COVID-19 state of emergency to June 20.

Department stores, movie theaters, amusement parks and museums were initially requested to close under the country’s third coronavirus state of emergency but will be permitted to partially reopen, four days after Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga extended it in nine prefectures.

Restrictions such as bans on restaurants serving alcohol as well as a cap on attendance at sports events and concerts will stay in effect beyond Monday, the previous end date of the state of emergency — Kyodo News.

Greece unveils health pass to hasten EU travel revival

GREECE on Friday unveiled its digital health certificate aimed at rebooting the country’s coronavirus-hit tourism sector and part of a wider EU scheme to reopen national borders. The certificate will be open to all EU citizens from July 1, though Greece will try to start the programme sooner than that, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said.

The certificate was unveiled in Athens to mark the 40th anniversary of Greek community. — AFP

ANA offers weddings on plane grounded by prolonged pandemic

MAJOR Japanese airline All Nippon Airways Co. has been offering couples the chance to tie the knot in ceremonies aboard an aircraft it has been forced to ground as the coronavirus pandemic continues to hit international travel.

The service, launched in late May, will be available until June 13 on the B-777 large passenger jet at Tokyo’s Haneda airport.

The company said that seven couples in all will have wedding ceremonies on board and it has finished accepting reservations. — Kyodo News.

TRADEMARK CAUTION

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Daw Yee Mon Aung, (Advocate)
For GENERAL MOTORS LLC
c/o Baker & McKenzie Limited
Level 18, Unit 18-03, Sule Square,
221 Sule Pagoda Road, Kyauktada Township,
Yangon, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
Dated: 31st May 2021

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G-20 eyes broad int’l corporate tax reform agreement in July

THE Group of 20 major economies plan to strike a broad agreement on international tax reform in July, featuring new rules for the imposition of levies on global technology companies to curb tax evasion, G-20 sources said Saturday.

The G-20 is considering allowing countries to impose levies on digital giants with large sales and profit rates of 15 percent and higher even if they do not operate in a country but generate sales and profits there, a practice known as digital taxation, the sources said.

The major economies including the United States, China, Japan and the European Union are also expected to agree on a global minimum corporate tax rate of around 15 percent, they said.

The G-20 talks are part of global tax negotiations involving around 140 countries being led by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development amid criticism that digital giants such as Google LLC and Apple Inc. are not paying their fair share of taxes. With countries having cut corporate taxes to attract multinational companies, an OECD agreement—which negotiating parties are aiming for around October—would mark a historic turning point in international tax reform.

The G-20 plans to agree on key elements of a deal during a finance ministers meeting slated for July in Venice, Italy. With technical details to be worked out, a final agreement can be expected when G-20 leaders meet in Rome in October.

The agreement would make it difficult for businesses to shift profits to low tax jurisdictions and ensure that tech giants pay more taxes in countries in which they make sales.

The deal is also intended to help countries restore their finances, which have deteriorated as a result of massive stimulus measures in response to the coronavirus pandemic.—Kyodo News

APEC’s GDP projected to grow 6.3% in 2021 as vaccines buoy optimism

THE combined gross domestic product of the 21 member economies of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation is expected to grow 6.3 percent this year, turning around from a 1.9 percent decline in 2020 as they gradually reopen from a 1.9 percent decline projected a year ago as member economies, such as the United States, China and Japan, stepped up fiscal stimulus and monetary easing measures.

The report was issued ahead of an APEC trade ministers virtual meeting slated for June 5, where pandemic response through trade is expected to be on top of the agenda.—Kyodo News

Ivory Coast hopes cashew ‘grey gold’ can conquer US market

FROM a “triangular trade” that sees its nuts shelled in Asia before being shipped to the US, top cashew producer Ivory Coast aims to process more of its own crop for sale in the huge American market. Starting from the present yearly average of just 10 percent, processors aim to shell half by 2025, Adama Coulibaly, director of the Cotton-Cashew Council, told AFP. This year alone the country’s capacity should increase by 100,000 tonnes.

But processing more nuts domestically will mean a shift away from traditional export relationships, which currently see most raw nuts sent to Vietnam and India.

Until now, “triangular trade” has left the shelling up to workers there before the nuts were shipped to the United States at “an exorbitant price”, said Loesseni Kone, president of Ivory Cashew, an American firm specialising in cashew certification and trade.

“The American market is worth 40 percent of world capacity, but accounts for just one percent of imports of Ivorian nuts,” added the Maryland-based entrepreneur. Business prospects are promising if the country can get all the steps worked out. “There is no cause for concern about the cashew market in the USA. We love it. Ivorian cashew is the best,” Association of Food Industries (AFP) president Bob Bauer told AFP, promising the group would “help” producers.—AFP

French budget deficit 47bn euros higher in 2021: minister

FRANCE’S budget deficit for 2021 will stand at 220 billion euros, some 47 billion higher than previously estimated, Olivier Dussopt, public accounts minister, told AFP on Saturday.

The increase is “a result of supporting measures that we’re continuing to take to support the recovery” from the devastating effects of Covid-19 shutdowns wreaked on the eurozone’s second-largest economy, he said.

It is not yet clear how the revised numbers will affect the budget deficit when expressed as percentage of GDP, which was previously forecast to hit 9 percent this year, a postwar record. Public debt was previously forecast to reach 118 percent of GDP.

The Covid-19 pandemic is expected to cost the French state nearly half a trillion euros over three years—158 billion euros in 2020, an expected 171 billion euros in 2021 and a forecast 96 billion euros in 2022, Dussopt said in April.

France has borrowed heavily to try to keep the economy afloat through three nationwide lockdowns, including money spent on supporting salaries of people furloughed and aid for companies struggling to stay afloat during the crisis.—AFP
Biden dismisses Texas voting bill as attack on democracy

BRITISH Prime Minister Boris Johnson married his fiancee Carrie Symonds in a “secret ceremony” on Saturday, UK media reports said.

Known for his colourful love life, 56-year-old Johnson wed Symonds, 33, in Catholic Westminster Cathedral in front of close friends and family, the Mail on Sunday and The Sun newspapers reported.

He is the only second British prime minister to marry while in office, and the first in nearly two centuries with Robert Jenkinson the last in 1822.

The nuptials are a surprise development, after reports earlier this week said the couple had sent out “save the date” cards for a wedding on July 30 next year.

However, they have been waiting months to tie the knot after their original plans to marry last year were delayed by the pandemic. The pair got engaged in December, 2019, and have a one-year-old baby son, Wilfred. Around 30 guests attended Saturday’s service — the maximum currently allowed under coronavirus rules — in central London, after being invited at the last minute, according to the Mail on Sunday.

A small number of church officials were involved and Downing Street aides were not informed, sources told the paper. However, The Sun tabloid said the couple had been planning the “cloak and danger operation” for a secret ceremony for up to six months.

The demonstration on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial was seized /Indonesian Maritime Security Agency.

The Iranian tanker MT Horse has left Indonesian waters four months after it was seized /Indonesian Maritime Security Agency.

Among other restrictive provisions the Texas law bans drive-in voting, limits voting by mail, and cuts back on voting hours on election day.

Proponents say the law is designed to make voting more secure but critics say it aims to make it more cumbersome for Blacks, Latinos and other non-whites who tend to vote Democratic.

President Joe Biden says Republican-sponsored state laws restricting voting access are an attack on democracy. PHOTO: AFP

UK’s Boris Johnson weds in ‘secret ceremony’: reports

The captains of both tankers were released from detention and were believed to have left Indonesia with the rest of the crew Friday despite their sentences.

In January, the tankers were spotted off Kalimantan, Indonesia’s section of Borneo island, and were later seized after the crew failed to respond to radio calls.

Indonesia’s Maritime Security Agency or Bakamla claimed the crew were suspected of a string of violations, including failing to display the vessels’ national flags, turning off their identification systems to avoid detection and illegally transferring oil.

— AFP

INDONESIA has released an Iranian tanker and a Panamanian vessel that were both seized at the beginning of the year on suspicion of illegal oil transfers, officials said on Saturday.

Following legal proceedings, the crude oil tankers — Iranian-flagged MT Horse and Panamanian MT Freya — were handed a suspended prison sentence of one year with a two-year probationary period.

The court also ordered the crew to pay a two billion rupiah ($140,000) fine for dumping oil illegally in Indonesian waters.

Both captains were released from detention and were believed to have left Indonesia with the rest of the territory without a permit.

MT Horse’s Iranian captain Mehdi Mognahemjahromi and MT Freya’s Chinese captain Chen Yo Qun were each handed a suspended prison sentence of one year with a two-year probational period.

The court also ordered Chen to pay a two billion rupiah ($140,000) fine for dumping oil illegally in Indonesian waters.

Biden dismisses Texas voting bill as attack on democracy

WEST African leaders will meet in Ghana on Sunday to discuss a response to Mali’s second coup in nine months, with the new president Colonel Assimi Goita attending. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) invited Goita to come to Ghana’s capital Accra for “consultations” ahead of an extraordinary summit on Sunday devoted to Mali, according to a letter from the 15-nation bloc seen by AFP.

He flew to Accra on Saturday, military and airport sources said.

In a statement on Facebook, the office of the Mali president said Goita would “take part alongside his counterparts in the sub-region”.

He had served as vice president since leading a coup last August that ousted the democratically elected president, with the roles of president and prime minister held by civilians after pressure from ECOWAS, which has served as a mediator.

However on Monday, soldiers detained transitional president Bah Ndaw and prime minister Moctar Ouane, releasing them on Thursday while saying that they had resigned.

The twin arrests triggered a diplomatic uproar and marked the second apparent coup within a year in the Sahel country. — AFP

Pro-Palestinian rally in Washington seeks end to US aid to Israel

The Israeli government has decided to stop granting aid to Palestinians, days after the US government signed a deal to resume US aid to Israeli settlements.

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The twin arrests triggered a diplomatic uproar and marked the second apparent coup within a year in the Sahel country. — AFP

Mali’s new president heads to ECOWAS over double coup

MORE than 1,000 rallied Saturday in Washington in support of Palestinians and calling for an end to US aid to Israel.

The demonstration on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial came as a ceasefire that ended 11 days of intense fighting between Israel and the Islamist movement Hamas in the Gaza Strip has so far held.

“We are hoping to send a clear message to the United States government that the days of supporting the Israeli state without repercussions are over,” one of the demonstrators, 39-year-old Washington lawyer Sharif Silmi, said as he stood in the crowd where many protesters held red, white, green and black Palestinian flags.

“We will stand against any politician that continues to fund weapons to Israel. We will oppose them, we will vote against them, we will fund their opponents, until we vote them out of office,” said Silmi.

Lama Alahmad, a resident of neighboring Virginia who is of Palestinian origin, said US public opinion is turning in favor of the Palestinian cause. — AFP

Biden dismisses Texas voting bill as attack on democracy

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Following legal proceedings, the crude oil tankers — Iranian-flagged MT Horse and Panamanian MT Freya — left Indonesia on Friday, the country’s Maritime Security Agency spokesperson told AFP.

The captains of both tankers were found guilty on Tuesday of entering Indonesian waters.

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP

PHOTO: AFP
Tokyo Olympics badminton players to be announced on 15 June

THE Tokyo Olympics, which has been postponed due to the pandemic, will be held from 23 July to 8 August, and officials will announce the badminton players list on 15 June. Myanmar badminton player Thet Htar Thuzar is trying to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics and she is currently in good shape. The Badminton star is currently ranked 29th in the latest Olympic qualifying rankings released on 25 May, and also in a good position to qualify for the Olympics.

According to BWF, Thet Htar Thuzar has competed in 15 events during the Olympic qualifying period with a total of 23,650 points. She has competed in competitions organized by the World Badminton Federation for the past few years and has achieved great success.

The Tokyo Olympics’ Badminton event includes men’s and women’s singles, doubles and mixed events. The COVID-19 pandemic, which struck the world early last year, has postponed all events of the World Badminton Federation, including the Olympics. Previously, the Olympic qualifiers was held from April 2019 to early May 2020, but due to the pandemic, the competition was postponed from 4 March to 11 January 2021.

Therefore, points for admission to the Olympics will be calculated from April 2019 to June 13, 2021. The BWF had planned to hold 10 or more competitions this year, but only a few were held due to the epidemic, and most of the competitions were postponed and cancelled.—Ye Yat Lwin/GNLM

Hong Kong mountaineer on a high after fastest Everest climb by a woman

FORMER Hong Kong schoolteacher Tsang Yin-hung said Sunday she always believed in aiming high after setting a new record for the fastest ascent of Everest by a woman.

Tsang scaled the 8,848.86-metre (29,031 feet) mountain in 25 hours and 50 minutes, a Nepalese government officer who recorded her time told AFP on Thursday. The 44-year-old reached the summit of the world’s highest peak on May 23 and arrived back in Kathmandu on Sunday.

“I am... relaxed and happy because I set this target around four years before,” she told AFP.

“I have always shared with my students and my friends that if you aim high and expect high, you can achieve high.”

Tsang had tried to reach the summit earlier in May, but was stopped by poor weather conditions when she was at 8,755 metres, her guide Pemba Sherpa said.

She had to return to base camp and climb up the mountain again to make her record attempt.

Tsang was born in mainland China and her family moved to Hong Kong when she was 10 years old. As a child, Tsang said they lived with “no resources” and sport — which was free to participate in at her school — became her source of joy.

“When I was young I used to run on the mountains, play basketball and do other sports,” she said.

She started to train as a mountaineer 11 years ago and summited Everest in 2017 — the first woman from Hong Kong to achieve such a feat. —AFP

Kai’s the limit as Chelsea fans revel in Champions League glory

CHELSEA fans piled into the streets surrounding the Stamford Bridge ground of the new kings of European football following their 1-0 defeat of Manchester City to be crowned European champions. London after their team beat Manchester City to be crowned European champions.

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Donaire knocks out Oubaali in the fourth to reclaim WBC title

NONITO Donaire used a powerful left hook and three knockdowns to become the oldest fighter to win a bantamweight title with a fourth round knockout of WBC champion Nordin Oubaali on Saturday night in Los Angeles.

The 38-year-old Donaire reach up and turned back the hands of time at the Dignity Sports Health Park venue as he reclaimed the WBC title that he held in 2011.

The Filipino fighter is also the oldest, at 38 years and 204 days, to win a bantamweight world title, breaking the mark he set in 2018 when he was 35 and captured the WBA belt.

“Father time is on my side,” said Donaire of Bohol, Philippines. “I believe the human body is an incredible machine if we take care of it. Mentally you are only as strong as your mind can be.

“Being at this age is not the question. It is my ability to grow. It is not what age you are, but how strong you are mentally.

“I am back. The whole time I was not fighting I was learning. I am ready for the next one.”

Donaire knocked the French champion down twice in the third round and then finished him off halfway through the fourth round with a stinging upper cut to raise his record to 41-6 with 27 knockouts. — AFP

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR