

NATIONAL

SEZs are important to seek employment opportunities and techniques, and secure economic development of the country similar to that of neighbouring and other countries: Vice-Senior General

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VIII, No. 44, 8th Waning of Kason 1383 ME

www.gnlm.com.mm

Wednesday, 2 June 2021

All the national people need to strive for serving the interests of the State with spirit "We are Myanmar": Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends and speaks on the occasion of the bridge renaming ceremony yesterday.

THANLWIN Bridge (Chaungzon) was renamed in accord with the wish of local people focusing on national unity, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the ceremony to unveil the signboard of the bridge yesterday morning.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said the bridge was built in 2010-2015 in the first democratic government for the development of the township. In the 2014-2015 financial year, K3,700 million was spent on the construction of the approach

roads and land preparation. And K20,000 million was spent on the structure of the bridge in 2015-2016FY and K31,360 million in 2016-2017FY.

The 1,586 metres long bridge linking Mawlamyine and Chaungzon was commissioned into service on 9 May 2017. It was found that the previous government focused on the inauguration of this bridge under the title of Bogyoke Aung San Bridge instead of the original title intending to polish the image of their party. As objections were aloud for changing of bridge title, the nomination of the bridge

was submitted to the Hluttaw to seek approvals which had never happened in Myanmar history. But, the ruling party marched forward the giving of bridge title based on the larger strength of Hluttaw representatives and twist in democracy.

A total of 14 political parties announced statements that the title of the bridge would not contribute to national reconciliation and can harm national unity and requested the ruling party to review the event. Although the previous government entitled the bridge as Bogyoke Aung San Bridge, setting aside the wish

of the local people, today, the bridge was renamed as Thanlwin Bridge (Chaungzon) in line with the wish of the local people.

The State Administration Council, as well as the Tatmadaw, has granted all for building the Union based on democracy and federalism. The Senior General urged all to effectively utilize Thanlwin Bridge (Chaungzon) for the development of all sectors such as economic, social and health affairs. All the national people need to strive for serving the interests of the State with the spirit "We are Myanmar" so as to gain momentum in peace

and stability and development of the region.

Chairman of Mon State Administration Council U Zaw Lin Tun expressed a great thank on behalf of the local ethnic national people to the State Administration Council for renaming the facility as Thanlwin Bridge (Chaungzon).

Then, the Senior General and party strolled along the bridge and instructed officials to maintain the long-term existence of the bridge. The Senior General cordially greeted local ethnic national people who presented traditional dances. —MNA

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

- 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 opportunities and increase domestic production.
- 3. Social affairs**

 - (a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
 - (b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National peoples and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national characteristics.
 - (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.

National Payment System Governing Committee discusses to pratise digital payment system

NATIONAL Payment System Governing Committee held its first coordination meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, Committee Chairman and CBM governor U Than Nyein said that it should implement the visions and missions of the National Payment System Strategy (2020-2025). It also needs to establish a secure national payment system that can effectively contribute to its financial stability and economic growth.

He also discussed matters pertaining to the use of electronic payment system for national payment, duties of government to supervise in implementing a digital payment system to reduce cash usage,



modern payment and electronic payment systems, enactment of the law to protect service providers and customers, and plans to draft a law supervisory framework meeting the international criteria.

Then, Daw Than Than Swe, Deputy-Governor of CBM, pre-

sented CBM-Net System, tax payment on CBM-Net System, other tax payments via Digital payment platform of Mobile Financial Service Providers like Wave Money, OK Dollar, MPT, Ooredoo and MyTel and MMQR system.

The attendees to the meeting also discussed the mobile payment systems of local banks, criteria and procedures for payments, digital payment system, cooperation works between government and private sectors for tax relief, digital sales for retail and wholesale, Cheque Truncation System, safe and secure payments and illegal payment system to be added in the payment system of the country. —MNA

122 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 1 June, total figure rises to 143,751

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 143,751 after 122 new cases were reported on 1 June 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, 132,360 have been discharged from hospitals. —MNA

State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets members of Mon State Administration Council, departmental personnel



CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday morning met Mon State Administration Council members and departmental personnel at the office of Mon State Administration Council in Mawlamyine.

Mon State Administration Council Chairman U Zaw Lin Tun reported on social, economic, health and regional development tasks of the state, vaccination of COVID-19 and general matters and Union Minister for Transport and Communications Admiral Tin Aung San on arrangements to be made for the development of Mawlamyine port and upgrade of Mawlamyine Airport.

In his response, the Senior General stressed the need to rebuild Sittoung Paper Mill to meet the State's paper demand. It is necessary to systematically

grow bamboo, eucalyptus and Manjansia as raw materials for paper production. The Senior General spoke of the need to consider the long-term plan for an upgrade of Mawlamyine Airport. As the development of Mawlamyine Port will help produce the goods made of marine products, short and long term plans should be laid down.

The Senior General expressed his satisfaction with the highest pass rate of the matriculation examination from 1997 to 2020 in Mon State. Mon State makes the best efforts in the education sector. So, it needs to maintain the existing traditions, and efforts must be made for achieving more success to be applied for the interests of the state. All students need to focus on learning, and parents and officials should encourage education for those students. Learning the university education is enlarging the scope of studies on

Hence, local farmers need to use quality paddy strains, sufficient water supply, correct agricultural methods and efficient use of necessary inputs. Quality crops can be exported to earn foreign exchange, so local farmers will have benefits, and it will contribute much to the regional development.

their majoring subjects.

The Senior General pointed out that it is necessary to increase the educated persons in the regions for undertaking the regional development tasks. Without knowledge and skills, it is impossible to produce advanced products and advanced agricultural and livestock products. So, institutes of agriculture and institutes of livestock breeding are opened to teach the students to have knowledge of respective subjects, essen-

tial for the agriculture and livestock farms. The Senior General stressed the need to encourage domestic production of sufficient and quality agricultural and livestock products at home. Production of necessary product items in Mon State as import-substitute goods will much benefit the country.

With regard to land utilization, agricultural tasks are being carried out as main livelihoods. Although paddy cultivation is sure to be rice sufficiency in Mon

State, a per-acre yield of paddy is down. Hence, local farmers need to use quality paddy strains, sufficient water supply, correct agricultural methods and efficient use of necessary inputs. Quality crops can be exported to earn foreign exchange, so local farmers will have benefits, and it will contribute much to the regional development.

Concerning generating electricity, emphasis must be placed on developing hydropower called renewable energy. Implementation of possible hydropower projects in the state will much benefit the state and the country.

The Tatmadaw is striving for strengthening the multiparty democracy route the people aspire. The Senior General recounted he has said that he would like to march towards a pure democracy and honesty democracy at the third-anniversary ceremony of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in 2018. Political dishonest activities should not be done in a democracy. The election plays a key role in democratization. Due to errors on the voter lists, the Tatmadaw is temporarily taking the State duties in line with the constitution. Arrangements are being made to hold the free and fair election. The Tatmadaw decided to build the Union based on democracy and federalism.

In the evening, the Senior General and party inspected the upgrade of Yamanya stadium in Mawlamyine and instructed officials to upgrade the stadium meeting the standards and other matters. —MNA



State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party are inspecting the upgrade of Yamanya stadium in Mawlamyine yesterday.

Disturbance to opening of schools is acts of
destroying the country

THE curricula are being used in line with the 30-year national education promotion long-term plan approved by the previous governments. Disturbance to the opening of schools is the acts of destroying the country, and it is very bad. Effective action must be taken against these destructive acts.

(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)

State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior
General Min Aung Hlaing meets officers, other ranks and families from Mawlamyine Station



State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing is making the speech at the meeting in Mawlamyine Station yesterday.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered a speech in meeting with officers, other ranks and their families from Mawlamyine Station of South-East Command yesterday afternoon.

Speaking about the country’s political situation, the Senior General stressed the need for officers, other ranks and their families to be familiar with it. He said the Tatmadaw is taking State responsibilities temporarily to ensure genuine and disciplined democracy and strong democracy following the circumstances that erupted in the country.

Under the country’s election law, the representatives they have elected are the ones who have to choose State leaders on behalf of the voters. Therefore, they need to be real representatives for the people. The Senior General stressed the need to consider and review that those who won the election through vote-rigging could not be real representatives for the people at all.

Tatmadaw repeatedly talks



The Senior General comforts local patients at the military hospital in Mawlamyine yesterday.

about a solution to the problem of inaccurate voter lists. Those responsible did not seek any answers, and instead, they tried to come to power in a forcible way.

Education staff have the duty to provide basic education for school-age children. Civil servants need to distinguish between their emotions and sense of duty. They should consider it for the sake of the country.

Preparations are being made to replace the civil servants avoiding their duties. When the emergency period of State duties is over, a free and fair election will be held, and power will be transferred.

The Tatmadaw’s main duty is national defence. The Tatmadaw had to continue to control the country as it has played a leading role in national politics

throughout successive eras. Those who have led a soldier life must serve State and military duties as good Tatmadawmen. As military discipline is the backbone of the Tatmadaw, they must be obedient and disciplined. The leadership role is important, and there must be fair governance as well as step-by-step command and control system. Leaders must be able to lead their sub-

ordinates the way to correcting and overcoming difficulties. As they have been taught since their basic training courses to perform their duties in a careful and sensible way, they are urged to correctly apply the skills and knowledge they have been taught. They must be proud of their national defence duties and work hard by looking towards their future and progress, the Senior General said.

The Senior General, wife and party went to the local Tatmadaw hospital in Mawlamyine. The Senior General comforted and presented foods to the officers, other ranks and families and local people receiving treatments. Since health staff were absent from their work at the State people’s hospitals, the Tatmadaw hospitals since February has accepted 4,265 civilian patients. They include 540 pregnant women who delivered their babies naturally, 309 pregnant women who delivered their babies by Caesarian section, 485 patients for major surgeries and 496 patients for normal surgeries. There are still 52 civilians in the hospital. —MNA

SAC Chairman visits Padonmar Soap Factory in Paung

STATE Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by the SAC members, Union Ministers, the Mon State Administration Council Chairman and the Commander of South-East Command, paid a visit to Padonmar Soap Factory (Paung) of the Myanmar Economic Holdings Public Company Limited in Paung Township of Mon State yesterday.

During the visit, MEHC Chairman Lt-Gen Hsan Oo presented manufacturing processes of body soaps and washing soaps, operations of the factory and car assembly processes with SKD and CKD systems at Indagaw Auto Assembling.

Then, the SAC Chairman said it should make concert-

ed efforts to meet domestic soap demands and to ensure import-substitute products. The products must be cheap when compared with the same products. And the quality of products must be higher when compared with the products at the same prices. Therefore, it should manage for the public to use quality products at low prices. He also stressed the need to maintain the quality of soaps produced at the factory and fulfil local needs up to some per cents.

The SAC Chairman and party checked Padonmar soaps and other soaps distributed in the market and provided cash prizes to the factory employees.

The Padonmar soap factory is established to create job opportunities for war veterans and the local populace



SAC Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing is looking into the production process at the Padonmar Soap Factory in Paung yesterday.

and meet local needs at cheap prices in 2002. The PADON- MAR brand soaps produced in various grams and fragrances are being distributed into the market at fair prices. —MNA

SEZs are important to seek employment opportunities and techniques, and secure economic development of the country similar to that of neighbouring and other countries: Vice-Senior General

CHAIRMAN of Myanmar Special Economic Zone Central Committee Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win delivered an address at the meeting 1/2021 of the central committee at the SAC Vice-Chairman's Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

The Vice-Senior General said that the special economic zones are essential to seek employment opportunities and techniques and secure economic development of the country similar to that of neighbouring and other countries. The special economic zone law was enacted in 2014 for the economic development of the State. Special economic zones were implemented in Thilawa, Kyaukpadaung and Dawei. The Central Committee for Myanmar Special Economic Zone must emphasize further development of SEZs to contributing to the economic growth. The central committee, the working committee and the management committee have been reconstituted for the development of the SEZs. As such, efforts must be made for the improvement of the zones in line with the international rules and regulations.

Among the three SEZs, Thilawa SEZ only can be operated



State administration Council Vice-Chairman Vice-Senior General Soe Win is addressing the Myanmar Special Economic Zone Central Committee meeting 1/2021 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

smoothly with the creation of job opportunities in cooperation with Japan. Up to March 2021, a total of 96 factories are being operated in Zone A and 26 in Zone B, totalling 122 invested with more than US\$532 million. As Thilawa SEZ is the image of the country, it is necessary to maintain development momentum. Relevant ministries need to join hands to inflow more investments to the zone.

In line with one of three economic objectives: to develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National People, zones need to give better services in accord with the international work procedures for

practically realizing the SOP of relevant ministries to meet the goal successfully. If so, further foreign investment can be invited to develop the economy. The management committee chairmen and party must strive to achieve a better situation and increase export volume. One-stop service centres in the economic zones need to give effective services.

With regard to Kyaukpadaung SEZ, the framework agreement for the deep seaport project was signed on 18 November 2018, the shareholder agreement in January 2020 and the concession agreement in November 2020. So, the deep seaport project of Kyaukpadaung SEZ will be implemented soon to develop Rakhine State and generate jobs for the local

people. The deep seaport project needs to manage tender for ESIA and PGTS Surveys. Kyaukpadaung SEZ management committee needs to take the example of successful Thilawa SEZ to meet the goal. Kyaukpadaung SEZ deep seaport project will be successfully restored to the Myanmar-China economic corridor project so as to promote bilateral cooperation. Kyaukpadaung SEZ is much related to China's Belt and Road Project as well as the mutual interests of both countries and regional development tasks.

Coordination is underway to upgrade the two-way motor road linking Dawei SEZ to Hteekee and then to Funamrum of Thailand. The Tatmadaw, in its tenure, will strive for securing the

achievement set as the original goal. The Ministry of Construction needs to manage the implementation of the two-way projects under the action plans. Myanmar warmly welcomes the proposals of Japan to implement Dawei SEZ. It is expected Dawei SEZ would win the potentials of victory thanks to tripartite cooperation among Myanmar, Thailand and Japan. Likewise, Thailand and Japan need to gain good results in a short time. Only when SEZs achieve rapid development they can create job opportunities for the local people.

Chairman of Central Working Body Union Minister Dr Pwint San and chairpersons of Thilawa, Kyaukpadaung and Dawei SEZ management committee sought approvals for the orders of Myanmar SEZs. Union ministers and officials reported on matters related to the successful implementation of SEZs.

In conclusion, the Vice-Senior General urged all to review agreements of the SEZs. All need to cooperate in the soonest undertaking of the work process at the remaining two SEZs. As workers should abide by the disciplines and rules of relevant workplaces, relevant ministries must cooperate in conducting necessary training courses for workers.—MNA

Children happily go to schools nationwide



Singaing Township, Mandalay Region.



Yamethin Township, Mandalay Region.



Myothit Township, Tamu District, Sagaing Region.



Minhla Township, Thayet District, Magway Region.



Mongnai Township, Langkho District, Shan State (South).



Kyaikto Township, Mon State.



Kyaikdon Town, Kayin State.



Kengtung Township, Shan State (East).



Kawthoung Township, Taninthayi Region.



Kokang Self-Administered Zone, Laukkai Township, Shan State (North).



Kyaunggon Township, Ayeyawady Region.



Chaungzon Township, Mawlamyine District, Mon State.



Myawady Township, Kayin State.



Pyay Township, Pyay District, Bago Region.



Waingmaw Township, Myitkyina District, Kachin State.



Mongyawng Township, Mongphyat District, Shan State (East).



An Township, Kyaukpyu District, Rakhine State.

Children back to schools for 2021-2022 AC in Nay Pyi Taw

IN Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory, basic education schools temporarily closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic were reopened yesterday morning for the 2021-2022 Academic Year following COVID-19 rules and regulations.

Medical workers and teachers make efforts to ensure students wear masks and face shields, handwash and temperature checks to prevent the

COVID-19 disease infection under the Ministry of Health and Sports guidelines.

No (5) Basic Education High School of Nay Pyi Taw, which is reportedly 90.3%, has adopted double-shift schooling for the current academic year.

“For the current academic year, we operate the school in two shifts, and all major and optional subjects will be taught.

“Our teachers are ready to teach. We are working hard to produce disciplined and well-mannered children throughout the school year,” the headmaster said.

The Government has also provided free textbooks and learning materials, and COVID-19 protective gears such as reusable masks and face shields to the students and the exemption of the enrol-



BEHS-6, Nay Pyi Taw.



BEHS-5, Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: AYE NAW

ment fees.

Officials from the Ministry of Education also arranged the classrooms according to the COVID-19 guidelines and school bus in systematically reopening the schools.

Parents are also happy for schools reopening with the proper COVID-19 preventive measures and the security assistance by

a combination of community-based security groups and the Myanmar Police Force to ensure a peaceful education.

“I am so happy that schools reopen, and I feel safe for children to see that reopening is being systematically implemented in line with the COVID-19 prevention and control system.

“Myanmar Police Force is also providing security around the school,” said a mother of a student from No (6) Basic Education High School, Nay Pyi Taw.

There are a total of 859 schools, including 28 monastic education schools and 74 private schools in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory. — Lu Lin Nge/GNLM

School enrolment still accepted in opening of schools

THE basic education schools were closed in the 2020-2021 academic year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, the government reopens the schools for the 2021-2022 academic year starting 1 June.

“We make preparations under the instructions to reopen the schools. We accepted the enrolment of students between 24 and 31 May. We will continue accepting during school days. The school can accommodate more than 6,000 students. Now, over

2,000 students — 30 per cent — were enrolled. The students will keep their social distancing in the classroom. The teachers, security members and town elders will provide security for the students,” said Daw Win Win Nwe, headmistress of Kamayut TTC.

Then, a student said, “I am so happy when I meet my friends at school as we haven’t met for more than one year. I continued studying my lessons since schools closed.”

Daw San San Maw, the moth-

er of a student from B.E.H.S (2) Latha, also said, “We are expecting the reopening of schools. I don’t let anything affects my daughter’s education. Being a student’s parent, I want my child to become an educated person. Education is the key.”

The monastic schools have also reopened in addition to the basic education schools.

Pyinnya Theikpan Monastic School and Youths Development Parahita Home Sayadaw Maha Sadhamma Jotikadhaja Bhadd-



BEHS-3, Tamway.



BEHS-2, Mingaladon.



Daw Win Win Nwe, Kamayut TTC headmistress.

anta Pannasami mentioned, “The Director of Yangon Region Basic Education Department came here and discussed with us to reopen monastic schools. There are only a few students at every school during the early period of school reopening in the 2020-2021 academic year. We will teach just a few students at our schools.

We also urge the teachers. The government provided teaching aid materials including school textbooks and COVID-19 protective gears.”

The government launched the school enrollment week between 24 and 31 May. A total of 355,771 students enrolled in Yangon Region. — MNA



BEMS-11, Yankin.



Kamayut TTC.



BEHS-2, Latha.

Study education, knowledge, technique and vocation at the young age

EVERYBODY passes life in three parts of age, namely the young age, the second age and the third age in the general view.

All the living beings are responsible across the world for studying the thought for food as well as for having the food for thought. It is because both thought and food are of great importance in respective roles.

Generally, Myanmar senior citizens give words of advice based on their precious experiences accumulated along with

their lives to the youths to learn education and study knowledge, techniques and subjects of vocation at their young age.

It is a true saying. Humans at a young age are sharpened in critical thinking and mighty strength with the endurance of physical and mental tiredness and exhaustion in studies. They are capable to deeply learn education or study knowledge, modern techniques and various items of vocation.

These education, techniques and subjects of vocation will be useful for them in the future. When they are in the second age, they need to apply the education, techniques and knowledge they study to do businesses for earning income in their lives. If so, they can earn income from businesses depending on the accumulation of knowledge and techniques.

Having the degree of success in their lives depends on their efforts at a young age in the capability of studies. At an opportune time, they can apply their experiences in studies to be exchanged with incomes. The deeper they study, the greater experiences they achieve. Hence, they can hold various kinds of tools in hand for shaping their lives as they like.

In fact, the young age is basic for the whole life of humans. If they select the correct ways and options, their ways of life will straighten with lesser hindrances than others. If they choose the wrong ways based on lesser experience and exposure, the ways of their lives will derail from the route to the goal.

Hence, all the youths in their young age need to build their lives by studies to be applied in their lives if necessary as part of paving a good step leading to the second age.

■ ■ ■

If they choose the wrong ways based on lesser experience and exposure, the ways of their lives will derail from the route to the goal.

Living with Research in Changing World

By Dr Than Lwin Tun

RESEARCH is defined as creating new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way to generate new concepts, methodologies, and understandings. This **definition of research** encompasses pure and strategic basic research, applied research and experimental development.

Market and social research provide accurate and timely information on a population's needs, attitudes, and motivations: It plays a vital social role, assisting our government and businesses to develop services, policies, and products that are responsive to an identified need.

It creates knowledge and development designs and builds prototypes to prove their feasibility. Engineering then converts these prototypes into products or services that can be offered to the marketplace or into processes that can be used to produce commercial products and services.

It encourages scientific and inductive thinking, besides promoting the development of logical habits of thinking and organization. The role of research in applied economics in the context of an economy or business is greatly

increasing in modern times.

It begins when we want to know something. It provides us with the information and knowledge needed for problem-solving and making decisions. In this context, the purpose of research is the ways for 'problem-solving'.

An original and systematic investigation is undertaken to increase existing knowledge and understanding of the unknown to establish facts and principles. Some people consider research as a voyage of discovery of new knowledge.

It comprises the creation of ideas and the generation of new knowledge that leads to new and improved insights and the development of new materials, devices, products, and processes. It should have the potential to produce sufficiently relevant results to increase and synthesize existing knowledge or correct and integrate previous knowledge.

Good reflective research produces theories and hypotheses and benefits any intellectual attempt to analyze facts and phenomena.

The word 'research' perhaps originates from the old French word "recherchier" that meant

to 'search again.' It implicitly assumes that the earlier search was not exhaustive and complete, and hence a repeated search is called for.

When do we call a research scientific? Any research endeavour is said to be scientific if it is based on empirical and measurable evidence subject to specific principles of reasoning. It consists of systematic observations, measurement, and experimentation. It relies on the application of scientific methods and the harnessing of curiosity. It provides scientific information and theories for explaining nature. It makes practical applications possible; and ensures adequate analysis of data employing rigorous statistical techniques.

Scientific research has multidimensional functions, characteristics, and objectives.

Keeping these issues in view, we emphasize that research in any field or discipline: Attempts to solve a research problem; Involves gathering new data from primary or first-hand sources or using existing data for a new purpose; based upon observable experiences or empirical evidence; Demands accurate observation and description; Employs carefully designed procedures and rigorous

analysis; attempts to find an objective, unbiased solution to the problem and takes great pains to validate the methods employed; and deliberate and unhurried activity that is directional but often refines the problem or questions as the research progresses.

Characteristics of Research

Keeping this in mind that research in any field of inquiry is undertaken to provide information to support decision-making in its respective area, we summarize some desirable characteristics of research:

- ✓ The research should focus on priority problems.
- ✓ The research should be systematic. It emphasizes that a researcher should employ a structured procedure.
- ✓ The research should be logical. Without manipulating ideas as logically, the scientific researcher cannot make much progress in any investigation.
- ✓ The research should be reductive. It means that one researcher's findings should be made available to other researchers to prevent them from repeating the same research.
- ✓ The research should be replicable.

It asserts that there should be scope to confirm previous research findings in a new environment and different settings with a new group of subjects or at different times.

- ✓ The research should be generative. It is one of the valuable research characteristics because answering one question leads to generating many other new questions.
- ✓ The research should be action-oriented. In other words, it should be aimed at reaching a solution leading to the implementation of its findings.
- ✓ The research should follow an integrated multidisciplinary approach, i.e., research approaches from more than one discipline are needed.
- ✓ The research should be participatory, involving all parties concerned (from policymakers down to community members) at all stages of the study.
- ✓ The research must be relatively simple, timely, and time-bound, employing a comparatively simple design.
- ✓ The research must be as much cost-effective as possible.
- ✓ The research results should

be presented in formats most useful for administrators, decision-makers, business managers, or community members.

Goals of Research

The primary goal or purpose of research in any field of inquiry; is to add to what is known about the phenomenon under investigation by applying scientific methods. Though each research has its own specific goals, yet we may enumerate the following four broad goals of scientific research: Exploration, Description, Causal explanation and Prediction.

Areas of Research

The most important fields of research, among others, are; social, health, population, business, marketing, agricultural, biomedical, clinical, outcomes, internet, archival, empirical, legal, education, engineering and historical researches.

In addition, living with research is one of the essential issues in changing world.

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WHO switches to Greek alphabet for virus variant names

Covid-19 variants are to be known by letters of the Greek alphabet to avoid stigmatising nations where they were first detected, the World Health Organization announced Monday.

THE new system applies to variants of concern -- the most troubling of which four are in circulation -- and the second-level variants of interest being tracked.

"They will not replace existing scientific names, but are aimed to help in public discussion," said Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO's Covid-19 technical lead.

Under the new system, the variants of concern take on the following names: the hitherto so-called British variant B.1.1.7 becomes Alpha; the B.1.351 first discovered in South Africa becomes Beta, while the Brazilian P1 becomes Gamma.

The so-called Indian variant B.1.617 is split into sub-lineages, of which the B.1.617.2 variant of concern becomes Delta.

The B.1.617.1 variant of interest

is called Kappa.

Besides these names, there are two other scientific names in use for each mutation, while different geographic names have been used to describe the same variant.

For example, within Britain, what other countries have been referring to as the British variant is often called the Kent variant - the county in southeast England where it was first discovered.

The lineage names such as B.1.1.7.2 will still continue to be used in scientific circles, for the mutation information that their name conveys.

'Stigmatising and discriminatory'

"While they have their advantages, these scientific names can be difficult to say and recall, and are prone to misreporting," the WHO said in a statement.

"As a result, people often resort to calling variants by the places where they are detected, which is stigmatising and discriminatory.

"To avoid this and to simplify public communications, WHO encourages national authorities, media outlets and others to adopt these new labels."

Earlier this month, US President Joe Biden signed a hate crimes law aimed at protecting Asian Americans who have suffered a surge in attacks during the Covid-19 pandemic.

US anti-extremism groups say the number of attacks and hate crimes against Asian Americans has exploded since the beginning of the crisis.

They lay some of the blame with former president Donald Trump, who repeatedly referred to Covid-19 as the "China virus".



Accredited Social Health Cctivist (ASHA) health workers collect a swab sample from a man to test for the Covid-19 coronavirus, at Bolamaramahalli village on the outskirts of Bangalore on May 31, 2021. PHOTO: AFP

The WHO has been trying to come up with simplified nomenclature for the variants for several months.

The Greek alphabet contains 24 letters but there is no plan yet as to where to go next if they are exhausted.

Epsilon, Zeta, Eta, Theta and Iota have already been ascribed to variants of interest.

SOURCE: AFP

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Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 1 June 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is weak over the Andaman Sea, South Bay, Eastcentral Bay and Northeast Bay of Bengal. Weather is a few cloud elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.
FORECAST VALID UNTIL EVENING OF THE 2 June 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin, Northern Shan and Chin states, fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region and Eastern Shan, Kayah and Mon states, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, and Magway regions, Southern Shan and Rakhine states and isolated in the remaining regions and states. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of thundery activities in the Northern Myanmar areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 June 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 June 2021: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 2 June 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

Corn price remains elevated in late cultivation season



After two months of the cultivation period, the corn can be harvested in three months. The corn is sold for K100 per one in the retail market and K80 per one in the wholesale market.

ACCORDING to the corn growers, local farmers from Kyaukdone village in Minbu (Sagu) township are growing the corn. The cultivation is successful with the price remaining high. The temperature is high, and it seems like it is too late to cultivate the corns. Corn cultivations need good soil moisture. If the corns are grown in summer and winter, they need to be irrigated to have sufficient water. Also, the corn plants need good care to grow well. After two months of the cultivation period, the corn can be harvested in three months. The corn is sold for K100 per one in the retail market and K80 per one in the wholesale market. The systematic cultivation of corn can yield abundantly. There are three types of corns' species in Myanmar. There are around 10,000 plant of corn per acre. Each plant can yield three corns. Now, the local corn growers are happy with earning of good price, it is learnt. — Zeyar Htet (Minbu)/GNLM

Yangon property booms but rental market plunges

AFTER Yangon's housing market crashed due to COVID-19 impacts, it raised its head again this year as Myanmar keeps the pandemic under control. The real estate rental market is, however, falling, the experienced realtors said. "The real estate sales go up a bit at present. Housing price does not appreciate as expected. The property is sold at a low price. The rental market crashes as the businesses still cannot resume for now," said U Maung Maung, a realtor. Despite the COVID-19 containment measures under control, the real estate rental market is dropping. The rent plunges, and house owners let the tenants stay more months. "To remedy the economic fallouts, some generous property owners pay back half of the rent for long-term tenants. That is a kind of mutual trust between owners and tenants, and humanitarian action in difficult times," a realtor said. Although the real estate market in Yangon has recovered, we still cannot set which particular township has good real estate sales. At present, it depends on the demand of the buyers. Some buyers prefer rural sites, and some buy large farmland acres and roadside property. The real estate in Yangon downtown (six townships) slightly drops. "The real estate market is not set like dollar and oil prices. We cannot confirm the market price of the properties in 45 townships of the Yangon Region. The reason why the real estate market booms again is that people like to invest in property rather than banking," said a realtor. The real estate market crashed in 2020, and it recovers this year. Nevertheless, the pricing is not that high amid the economic collapse triggered by the COVID-19. — Pwint Thitsar/GNLM

Stranded trucks in Kyalgaung allowed departing through Man Wein post within three days

THE trucks stuck in Kyalgaung, China, are allowed to depart between 1 and 3 June via Man Wein post, said U Min Thein, vice-chair of Muse Rice Wholesale Centre. "A total of 223 trucks have stranded in Kyalgaung, China since 21 April. The trucks have been loaded for over a month, raising concerns over imports. So, we had to request the authorities to give the green light for the trucks to depart. They arranged for trucks to leave for Hnin Hnin Khine terminal in Muse city in three days (1-3 June)," he elaborated. The trucks are planned to leave on 1, and 3 June between 7 am and 5 pm. The drivers must wear PPE. They must drive nonstop up to Hnin Hnin Khine terminal, traders association notified. Coronavirus cases were detected in Shweli (Ruili) and Kyalgaung precious stone market in late March. It prompted China to restrict border access at the Man Wein checkpoint, a major border crossing between Myanmar and China. At present, the number of positive cases has dropped. Lockdown on the Kyalgaung area has been eased since 4 May. However, it will be monitored for about three months. Consequently, there is no plan to reopen the Man Wein post. "It is still closed. The border closure began on 30 March. Kyalgaung area will be kept under watch for three months even after lifting the lockdown. We still cannot confirm when the crossing will reopen," said U Min Thein. Additionally, Man Wein border post is not available for now, according to the negotiation with Shweli's Foreign Affairs Department. The border post will resume the trade only after drawing up a detailed project report, the Trade Department (Muse 105th mile trade zone) stated. As once China lifts the restriction, the traders will be spontaneously informed. In the meantime, major export items: rice, broken rice, various pulses, fishery products, onion and chilli, are delivered to China through Kyinsankyawt post, a major crossing for Myanmar's fruit exports, said U Min Thein. However, shipping via Kyinsankyawt post caused traffic congestion and delay. During the first wave of the COVID-19, the driver-substitution system was practised in the border area, which helps lessen the impediment to the trade, yet the current restriction exacerbates border trade, the Muse Rice Wholesale Centre stated. — NN/GNLM



The trucks stuck in Kyalgaung, China, are allowed to depart between 1 and 3 June via Man Wein post.

Licenced overseas recruitment agencies allowed to send employees abroad

THE licenced overseas recruitment agencies are allowed to send employees abroad under the Overseas Employment Law (1999), according to the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population. Regarding granting licence to the overseas recruitment agencies, most employees choose to depart mainly to Thailand, Malaysia, Korea, Japan, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Macao and Jordan. So far, Myanmar has sent 1,320,914 employees to foreign countries from 1990 to May 2021. The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population has been increasing business licence deposit fees for the overseas employment agencies from K5 million to K25 million starting from 4 February 2020. It raised deposit fees to reduce the number of overseas employment agencies, make them interested in their businesses, and work effectively. It would also ensure more prominent agencies are more responsible and accountable. According to the Ministry, among the overseas recruitment agencies, there are 295 overseas employment agencies in Myanmar that pay increased deposit fees of K 25 million. Those who wish to apply for the new overseas employment agency license need to come and apply for the permit at the department of labour relations (head office) in Nay Pyi Taw. The application must be signed in person by the managing director of the agency companies. The managing directors need to bring the necessary documents such as company profile, national ID, census and recommendation of the police station and ward. Those, who will apply for agency licences, must show proof of personal assets worth K100 million, an updated bank account with at least K100 million from the last six months and demand letters. — Soe Myint Aung/GNLM

US, EU leaders call for more action at climate summit

TOP US and EU representatives on Monday urged other countries to do more in the global initiative towards a greener planet, stressing the world “cannot afford to wait” at a virtual summit hosted by South Korea.

Climate change is a major threat to global growth, with perils ranging from disease outbreaks and declines in crop yields.

But international negotiations on how to tackle it have long been hampered by disagreements over burden-sharing between rich countries that bear far more historical responsibility for climate change and

the rising giants that are now among the world’s biggest polluters.

Last month, US President Joe Biden announced that the world’s largest economy would cut emissions blamed for climate change by 50 to 52 per cent by 2030 compared with 2005 levels, doubling the country’s previous commitments.

The US’ special climate envoy John Kerry told the P4G climate conference hosted by South Korea: “We are pressing other countries to step up their ambitions as well.”

Moments earlier Vietnam called for developed countries



Talks on how to tackle climate change have long been hampered by disagreement between rich countries and rising giants. An Extinction Rebellion demonstrator protests outside of The Royal Courts of Justice in London in July 2019. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

to take the lead and provide financial assistance to others, but Kerry told Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh: “We all have to do it.”

After the coronavirus pandemic, he added, “everyone wants to get back to normal but unfortunately we can’t be satisfied with that because the fact is normal was already a crisis and existential one.”

His comments came as virtual negotiations resumed ahead of the next UN climate change conference in Glasgow in November, with scientists issuing increasingly dire warnings on the situation — AFP ■

Iceland’s glaciers lose 750 km2 in 20 years

ICELAND’S glaciers have lost around 750 square kilometres (290 square miles), or seven per cent of their surface, since the turn of the millennium due to global warming, a study published on Monday showed.

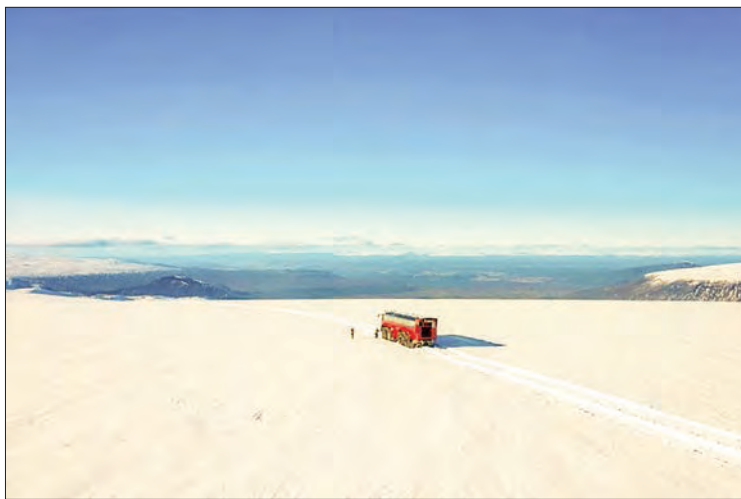
The glaciers, which cover more than 10 per cent of the country’s land mass, shrank in 2019 to 10,400 square kilometres, the study in the Icelandic scientific journal *Jokull* said.

Since 1890, the land covered by glaciers has decreased by almost 2,200 square kilometres, or 18 per cent.

But almost a third of this decline has occurred since 2000, according to the recent calculations by glaciologists, geologists and geophysicists.

Experts have previously warned that Iceland’s glaciers are at risk of disappearing entirely by 2200.

The ice’s retreat over the past two decades is almost equivalent to the total surface area of Hofsjokull, Iceland’s third-biggest ice cap at 810 square kilometres.



Between 2000-2019, the world’s glaciers lost an average of 267 billion tonnes of ice each year. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

“Glacier-area variations in Iceland since around 1890 show a clear response to variations in climate,” the authors of the study wrote.

“They have been rather synchronous over the country, although surges and subglacial volcanic activity influence the position of some glacier margins,” they added. In 2014, glaciologists stripped the Okjokull glacier of its status as a glacier, a first for Iceland, after determining that it

was made up of dead ice and was no longer moving as glaciers do.

Nearly all of the world’s 220,000 glaciers are losing mass at an ever increasing pace, contributing to more than a fifth of global sea level rise this century, according to a study published in *Nature* in April. Analysing images taken by NASA’s Terra satellite, they found that between 2000-2019, the world’s glaciers lost an average of 267 billion tonnes of ice each year. — AFP ■

Common French bird species face ‘unrelenting’ decline

FROM city centres to rural fields, human activity has decimated populations of France’s most common bird species, scientists warned on Monday, citing data collected over 30 years by volunteer ornithologists.

Between 1989 and 2019 over 2,000 French bird lovers participated in monitoring the nation’s 123 most common bird species through the Tracking Common Birds Over Time (STOC) program.

The effort is sponsored by the French National Museum of Natural History, whose president Bruno David called the findings “unrelenting”.

Over a third of common French bird species are in decline, including the European goldfinch, the European turtle dove, the common house martin and 40 others,

the museum reported.

The sharpest drops in populations were on farmlands, where numbers dropped 30 per cent in 30 years, followed by urban areas, which saw declines of about 28 per cent.

Forest birds have fared somewhat better, with their numbers falling by 10 per cent over the last three decades.

‘Massacre’ in the fields

Conservation biologist Benoit Fontaine, a researcher at the National Museum, in a press conference Monday described the loss of birds in agricultural territories as a “massacre”.

In 2018 Fontaine published a study detailing the decline. “Our countryside is in the process of becoming a veritable desert,” he said at the time. — AFP ■



European goldfinches are among 43 common species in decline. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Japan approves chip development project with TSMC

JAPAN has signed off on a US\$338 million semiconductor research project to develop cutting-edge chip technology in the country with the market-leading Chinese Taipei Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC).

Chinese Taipei’s chip-mak-

ing plants are among the largest and most advanced in the world, and the project is intended to boost Japan’s competitiveness in a key sector.

The move comes as industry grapples with a global semiconductor shortage that has hampered the manufacturing

of numerous products, particularly autos. Around 20 Japanese companies will work with TSMC in the project worth 37 billion yen with the government paying just over half of that, an official from Tokyo’s Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry told AFP on Tuesday. — AFP ■

Ardern tours 'devastating' New Zealand floods



New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern inspects the flood damage from an army helicopter. PHOTO: POOL/AFP

NEW ZEALAND Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern toured flood-hit areas of the country's South Island on Tuesday, expressing shock at the destruction left when three months' worth of rain fell in three days.

Swollen rivers swept away bridges and landslides blocked highways in the deluge, which finally began to ease on Tuesday after a 72-hour barrage that Ardern described as a once-in-a-century event.

"It's quite devastating,

there's a lot of work to do -- a big clean-up job lies ahead of us," she told reporters after surveying the damage in a military helicopter.

Entire communities, including 35,000 people in the town of Ashburton, were left isolated by the floodwaters and Ardern said crews were scrambling to restore road and rail links.

"We've got thousands of people who are not connected to their town, they're not connected to their schools or place of work,"

she said.

"So that's a real priority. It's devastating to see what communities will be dealing with for some time to come."

The official MetService forecaster said the highest rainfall was at Mount Somers, which recorded 539 millimetres (21.2 inches) over the three-day period.

While hundreds of people were forced to evacuate, there have been no reports of serious injuries. — AFP ■

UN nuclear watchdog 'concerned' over undeclared Iran sites

THE UN nuclear watchdog Monday voiced concern that Iran had not clarified queries over possible undeclared nuclear activity, adding that its enriched uranium stockpile was 16 times over the limit.

The two reports issued by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Monday are the first substantive reports since Iran suspended some inspections in February.

Last week the IAEA said it had extended a temporary agreement with Iran until June 24 which has allowed many inspections to continue.

The report said IAEA director general Rafael Grossi was "concerned that the technical discussions between the agency and Iran have not yielded the expected results," referring to exchanges on the sites where undeclared nuclear activity may have occurred.

The conclusion comes despite a "proactive and focused effort" launched by the IAEA in April "to break the impasse"

over the sites.

The IAEA says that the results of its inspection work have established "a clear indication that nuclear material and/or equipment contaminated by nuclear material has been present" at three undeclared locations, with most of the activity in question dating back to the early 2000s.

The agency also said Iran has failed to answer questions regarding a fourth site where

natural uranium may have been present between 2002 and 2003 in the form of a metal disc.

Iran and world powers are engaged in talks in Vienna to rescue the 2015 nuclear deal after former US president Donald Trump walked away from it in 2018 and reimposed crippling sanctions on Tehran. Trump's successor Joe Biden has signalled his willingness to revive the plan. — AFP ■



Talks are on in Vienna to revive the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers. PHOTO: AFP

Scores of children abducted from Islamic seminary in Nigeria

GUNMEN kidnapped scores of children from an Islamic seminary in central Nigeria, officials said, the latest mass abduction to hit Africa's most populous nation.

Some 200 children were at the school in Niger state on Sunday during the attack, the local government tweeted, adding "an unconfirmed number" had been taken.

Nigerian President Mu-

hammadu Buhari on Monday ordered the security and intelligence forces "to expedite efforts towards the recovery of the 200 children", his office said.

He described "as unfortunate, the kidnapping of children from schools" and urged all those "involved in the rescue operation to do their utmost in securing their immediate release".

The abduction came a day after 14 students from a universi-

ty in northwestern Nigeria were freed after 40 days in captivity, one of a series of kidnappings to target colleges and schools since December. Niger state police spokesman Wasiu Abiodun said the attackers had arrived on motorbikes and started shooting indiscriminately, killing one resident and injuring another, before kidnapping the children from the Salihu Tanko Islamic school. — AFP ■

Last resort: the seeds kept safe in a South Korean mountain



A researcher checks trial plantations at the wild plant seeds research division of the Baekdudaegan National Arboretum. PHOTO: AFP

HIDDEN in a South Korean mountain tunnel designed to withstand a nuclear blast, the seeds of nearly 5,000 wild plant species are stored for safekeeping against climate change, natural disaster and war.

Plant extinction is progressing at an alarming rate, researchers warn, driven by increasing human population, pollution and deforestation, even before many species are catalogued.

The Baekdudaegan National Arboretum Seed Vault Centre preserves nearly 100,000 seeds from 4,751 different wild plant species to ensure they are not lost to "apocalyptic events", says its head Lee Sang-yong.

It is one of only two such facilities in the world, he told AFP: unlike more commonplace seed banks, where samples are stored and regularly withdrawn for various purposes, deposits in seed vaults are meant to be permanent, with use intended only as a last resort to pre-

vent extinction.

The vault is designated as a security installation by South Korea's National Intelligence Service, surrounded by wire fences and dozens of cameras, with restrictions on filming in place and police patrolling on a regular basis.

Inside, a lift leads about eight floors down to a cavernous concrete tunnel, where two heavy steel doors guard the storage room and its hand-cranked shelving racks, kept at minus 20 degrees Celsius to preserve the seeds and 40 percent humidity to keep them viable.

The vault's samples are largely of flora from the Korean peninsula, but with a capacity of two million seeds, the South makes its space available to other countries, with Kazakhstan and Tajikistan among those to have taken up the offer. Depositors retain ownership of their samples and control over withdrawals. — AFP ■

Philippine noodle giant Monde Nissin opens lower on debut

PHILIPPINE instant noodle giant Monde Nissin opened lower as it debuted on the country's stock market Tuesday after raising more than \$1 billion in a record-breaking initial public offering in the Southeast Asian nation.

The maker of the Philippines' best-selling instant noodle brand Lucky Me! opened down 0.15 percent at 13.48 pesos after being offered at 13.50 pesos in a floatation that raised 48.6 billion pesos.

That gave the company a valuation of 242.6 billion pesos, which would rank it 14th among the 30 companies listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange In-

dex (PSEi), Bloomberg News reported.

The offering was four times oversubscribed, said Lexter Azurin, senior equity analyst at AB Capital Securities in Manila.

"Given the market uncertainty right now, it's actually quite positive that we're seeing demand has been quite brisk," Azurin added.

The PSEi has fallen more than seven percent this year, but rebounded in the past week.

Monde Nissin exports instant noodles, biscuits and crackers to dozens of countries. It also owns the British meat-substitute maker Quorn. The money raised will be used to increase capacity



Monde Nissin exports instant noodles, biscuits and crackers to dozens of countries. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

and pay back loans, it said.

Monde said it has attracted cornerstone investors including

Hong Kong insurer AIA and Singapore sovereign wealth fund GIC. — AFP ■

Toyota, Honda suspend vehicle production in Malaysia due to lockdown

TOYOTA Motor Corp. and Honda Motor Co. have stopped producing vehicles at their plants in Malaysia, officials of the Japanese automakers said Tuesday, after the Southeast Asian country began a two-week total lockdown to stem the spread of the coronavirus.

With the auto industry in the country required to keep the number of workers who

report to work at 10 per cent or less, both companies apparently decided that the reduced workforce would not be enough to keep their factories running.

Virus cases are increasing in Southeast Asia as vaccination against COVID-19 lags. Japanese automakers and automotive parts makers also have plants in other countries in the region, such as Thailand

and Indonesia, where cases are also on the rise.

If infection rates worsen in those countries, the companies could potentially face further production delays.

In Malaysia, Toyota has two plants in Selangor State, while Honda has a motorcycle plant in Penang State and a car factory in Malacca State.

The officials said that even

though new car sales are suspended, after-sales service for car owners will continue.

Toyota produced about 50,000 passenger and commercial vehicles in Malaysia last year. Honda says its motorcycle factory there has the capacity to make 300,000 units annually with its car plant capable of producing 100,000 units. — Kyodo News ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

US subsidiary of meat-packing giant JBS hit by cyberattack

THE American subsidiary of the world's largest meat processing companies said Monday it had been hacked, paralyzing some of its operations and impacting thousands of workers in Australia.

The intrusion was detected Sunday, forcing one of the leading producers of beef and pork in the United States to suspend affected systems, and call in its IT staff and third-party experts to deal with the breach.

"JBS USA determined that it was the target of an organized cybersecurity attack, affecting some of the servers supporting its North American and Australian IT systems," the unit said in a statement. — AFP ■

China-Vietnam freight train speeds up by facilitating customs

THE International Railway Port of Nanning is an important hub of the Belt and Road and the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor. The number of the China-Vietnam freight trains launched from this railway port had a continuous three-year rise.

As trade between China and Vietnam booms, more efficient and convenient cross-border freight routes are expected to be created by companies in both countries.

With ASEAN countries becoming China's largest trading partner in 2020, bilateral trade between China and Vietnam witnessed particularly remarkable growth.

In a year when the coronavirus pandemic caused unprecedented disruptions to global commerce, China's trade with Vietnam rose a staggering 18.8 per cent compared with the previous year, and its imports from the neighbor surging 22.2 per cent, according to data released by the General Administration of Customs. — Xinhua ■

Ex-owners of toxic Italian steelworks sentenced



Fabio and Nicola Riva were convicted of conspiracy to commit environmental disaster and wilful failure to take precautions in the workplace. **PHOTO: ANDREAS SOLARO/ AFP/FILE**

TWO former owners of Europe's largest steelworks, the ex-Ilva plant in Italy, were sentenced to more than two decades in prison Monday for toxic emissions blamed for hundreds of deaths.

Prosecutors have previously attributed at least 400

premature deaths to toxins, including carcinogenic particles, that spewed across the southern city of Taranto after years of the plant's non-compliance with environmental controls.

Brothers Fabio and Nicola Riva were sentenced to 20 and 22

years, respectively, by a Taranto court. The former president of Italy's Puglia region where the plant is located, Nichi Vendola, received a three-and-a-half year sentence. Charges against the Rivas included conspiracy to commit environmental dis-

aster and wilful failure to take precautions in the workplace.

The first-instance ruling is likely to be appealed by the defendants, who are not likely to go to jail until a final guilty verdict is delivered -- something that can take years in Italy. The Riva family admitted to having saved over 1.3 billion euros (\$1.6 billion) between 2009 and 2013 by delaying work to bring the steel plant -- which churned out about a third of the country's total production -- into compliance with safety and environmental norms.

Following the sentencing, a mother of one of the deceased said the ruling was long awaited.

"It is an important day where we finally see someone pay for what they have done, for what has been done to an entire city," the woman, who was unnamed, told the La Repubblica newspaper. — AFP ■

"My son is no longer here,

NEWS
IN BRIEF

Oil, pound rally on recovery optimism, equities mixed ahead of US jobs

OIL prices surged on demand optimism ahead of the latest OPEC meeting on Tuesday, while the pound hit a three-year high against the dollar over Britain's economic rebound but equities struggled with focus on upcoming US jobs data.

Wall Street and London were closed Monday for holidays meaning there were few drivers for buying, with the general theme continuing to be the global economic recovery playing against fears about inflation and a possible taper of central bank monetary policy.

The rollout of vaccines around the world has allowed leaders of key economies including the United States and Europe to wind back the containment measures that sparked a recession last year.

That, combined with mind-boggling government spending splurges and central bank largesse, has been crucial to a rally in global equities from their March 2020 lows to record or multi-year highs. — AFP ■

OPEC and allies set for another crude output increase

THE OPEC group of oil-producing countries and its allies look set to boost production further when they meet Tuesday, as pandemic-hit demand for crude recovers.

The OPEC+ alliance, consisting of 23 countries, implemented sharp output cuts to support prices after the coronavirus pandemic crushed the global economy last year.

But since early May the cartel has started implementing more generous production increases as oil prices have recovered and the health situation improves in developed economies.

Currently the production roadmap for OPEC+ members consists of a series of increases between May and July adding up to some 1.2 million barrels per day (bpd). — AFP ■

Japan Jan-March corporate profits up 26%, 1st increase in 2 yrs



People wearing face masks walk in a street in Tokyo's Ueno area on May 27, 2020. PHOTO: AFP

JAPANESE corporate profits in the January-March period logged their first year-on-year gain in eight quarters, driven by a strong recovery by the manufacturing sector from a coronavi-

rus-induced slump, government data showed Tuesday.

Pretax profits of domestic companies covered in the Finance Ministry's quarterly survey rose 26.0 per cent to 20.07

trillion yen (\$183 billion) from a year earlier, the sharpest growth since a 26.6 per cent increase in the January-March period in 2017, according to the ministry.

The rise was largely due to

an advantageous year-on-year comparison. Pretax profits had dived 28.4 per cent in the first quarter of 2020 as the virus began to spread, hitting social and economic activities.

The manufacturing sector posted a 63.2 per cent expansion in pretax profits, following a 21.9 per cent rise in the previous quarter. The transportation equipment sector including the auto-related industry saw an almost threefold rise on the back of rebounding car exports amid a global economic recovery from the pandemic shock.

Pretax profits of nonmanufacturing firms climbed 10.9 per cent, turning positive after an 11.2 per cent fall in October to December. The service industry saw a 40.6 per cent rise, believed to be boosted by a huge profit earned by investment giant SoftBank Group Corp. — Kyodo News ■

Indian economy contracts by record 7.3% in 2020-21

INDIA'S economy contracted 7.3 per cent in 2020-21, official data showed on Monday, its worst recession since independence as coronavirus lockdowns put millions out of work.

Asia's third-largest economy grew by 1.6 per cent between January and March – the fourth fiscal quarter – after exiting its first “technical recession” since 1947 following two successive quarters of contraction.

About 230 million Indians fell into poverty due to the pandemic last year, according to a study by Bangalore's Azim Premji University, which defined the poor as those living on less than 375 rupees (\$5) a day.

An easing of restrictions towards the end of 2020 helped propel a tentative recovery in activity, but this may prove short-lived following an explosion in COVID-19 cases in April and May.

India's vicious second wave, which has killed 160,000 people in eight weeks, prompted further lockdowns and saw 7.3 million people lose their jobs in April alone, according to the Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy.

That means more pain in a country where 90 per cent of the workforce is in the informal sector with no social safety net, and where millions do not qualify for emergency government rations.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has so far refrained from announcing any fresh major stimulus measures in response.

The government has faced growing criticism – including from Nobel prize-winning economists Esther Duflo and Abhijit Banerjee – for focusing on loans to hard-hit businesses rather than direct cash handouts to vulnerable households. — AFP ■

China factory activity nudges down on slower demand, services strong

FACTORY activity in China nudged down slightly in May on slower demand and higher raw material prices, while the services industry boomed over the Labour Day break, official data showed on Monday.

The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), a key gauge of China's manufacturing activity, was 51.0 – slightly down from 51.1 in April but above the mark separating growth from contraction, said the National Bureau of Statistics.

But there are risks ahead, analysts warned, including shortages of parts – especially semiconductors – and rising

commodity prices. Although factory production has been “rising steadily”, with overall activity exceeding the same periods in the past two years, demand growth has slowed, said NBS senior statistician Zhao Qinghe.

The new export order index fell, he said, “reflecting the decrease in foreign orders”.

Capital Economics said in a recent note that there are “few signs” of easing, with freight rates still going up. Meanwhile, the purchasing prices of major raw materials remains high, said the NBS. On top of that, a fresh wave of COVID-19 in Asian



Factory activity in China nudged down slightly in May on slower demand and higher raw material prices, while the services industry boomed over the Labour Day break, official data showed on Monday. PHOTO: AFP

countries and the resurgence in China's Guangdong province will also “hurt some small exporters

in the region”, said Betty Wang, senior China economist at ANZ Research. — AFP ■

Macron, Merkel want explanations from US, Denmark over spying report

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Monday that they expected the US and Danish governments to present explanations over allegations Washington spied on European allies with Copenhagen's aid.

"This is not acceptable between allies, and even less between allies and European partners," said Macron after a French-German summit meeting held via video conference between Paris and Berlin.

"I am attached to the bond of trust that unites Europeans and Americans," Macron said, adding that "there is no room for suspicion between us."

"That is why what we are

waiting for complete clarity. We requested that our Danish and American partners provide all the information on these revelations and on these past facts. We are awaiting these answers," he said.

Giving her position, Merkel said she "could only agree" with the comments of the French leader.

In an investigative report on Sunday, Danish public broadcaster Danmarks Radio (DR) and other European media outlets said the US National Security Agency (NSA) had eavesdropped on Danish underwater internet cables from 2012 to 2014 to spy on top politicians in Germany, Sweden, Norway and France.

The NSA was able to access



The US spied on Chancellor Angela Merkel and others, using Danish underwater cables. **PHOTO: AFP**

text messages, telephone calls and internet traffic including searches, chats and messaging services -- including those of

Merkel, then-foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and then-opposition leader Peer Steinbrück, DR said. — AFP ■

Trudeau pledges 'concrete action' after mass indigenous student grave found



Members of the Mohawk community of Kahnawake, near Montreal, march through the town on Sunday to commemorate the news that a mass grave of 215 indigenous children were found at the Kamloops Residential School in British Columbia, Canada. **PHOTO: AFP**

PRIME Minister Justin Trudeau on Monday expressed Canada's grief while pledging "concrete

action" in support of indigenous communities after remains of 215 indigenous children were discov-

ered at an old boarding school.

"As a dad, I can't imagine what it would feel like to have

my kids taken away from me," Trudeau told a news conference. "And as prime minister, I am appalled by the shameful policy that stole indigenous children from their communities."

"Think of their communities that never saw them again. Think of their hopes, their dreams, their potential, of all they would have accomplished, all they would have become," he said. "All of that was taken away."

Trudeau, who has made reconciliation with Canada's nearly 1.7 million indigenous people a priority of his government since coming to power in 2015, said he would speak with his ministers to shore up "next and further things we need to do to support (residential school) survivors and the community." — AFP ■

Kyrgyzstan detains ex-PM in gold mine probe

KYRGYZSTAN said Monday it had detained a former prime minister over corruption at the country's largest gold mine, the centre of a legal dispute with Canadian firm Centerra.

The giant Kumtor gold mine is the Central Asian country's largest foreign investment project and accounts for around a tenth of the economy. Kumtor was operated by Centerra Gold but Kyrgyz authorities suddenly seized the mine, prompting the Toronto Stock Exchange-listed company to turn to an interna-



The Kumtor gold mine is the country's largest foreign investment project. **PHOTO: AFP**

tional court. Kyrgyzstan's rubber stamp parliament earlier this month passed a law allowing authorities to temporarily seize the mine and appoint "external management" to remedy address environmental and safety problems. On Monday, the country's security service said it had detained a popular former prime minister, Omurbek Babanov, as part of a probe into corruption "at various stages of the development" of the Kumtor project.

Babanov, 51, served as prime minister in 2011-12. — AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Chad, C. Africa at loggerheads after troops killed at border

CHAD and the Central African Republic (CAR) were at loggerheads on Monday after the Chadian government accused its southern neighbour of killing six of its soldiers at a border post, five of whom were allegedly abducted and then executed, branding it a "war crime" that would "not go unpunished".

Hours after the accusation, the CAR said there had been "exchanges of fire... at the border", with fatalities on both sides.

Expressing regret for the deaths, it put the blame on rebels it said its soldiers had been pursuing and suggested Chad and the CAR -- "two brotherly peoples" -- hold a joint investigation.

The incident has placed the spotlight on the occasionally fraught relations between Chad -- ruled by a junta since its veteran ruler was killed six weeks ago -- and the CAR, an impoverished, unstable country battling powerful armed groups. — AFP ■

Polisario leader to be quizzed by Spanish judge

THE leader of Western Sahara's independence movement, whose presence in Spain has angered the Moroccan government, will appear before a Spanish court Tuesday to answer allegations of torture and genocide.

Brahim Ghali, who heads the Algeria-backed Polisario Front, will testify by video conference from a hospital in Logrono in northern Spain where he has been treated for Covid-19 since mid-April.

The closed-door hearing at Spain's National Court in Madrid is scheduled to get underway at 10:30 am (0830 GMT).

Ghali, who is also the president of the Sahrawi Democratic Arab Republic, a self-declared state since 1976, is the subject of two investigations in Spain. — AFP ■

History and legacy are very important to me: ONE Heavyweight champion Arjan

ACCORDING to ONE Championship source, ONE Championship World Heavyweight Champion Arjan Bhullar expressed he would like to emphasize the importance of the history and legacy of his fights plus experiments.

"It's really amazing being the first MMA World Champion from India. It's a great honour and a great privilege. It's going to be here forever. History and legacy are very important to me.

It comes with great responsibility, too. Now we're going to grow the sport, make sure that it's a bit easier for the next generation of fighters, and they know what's possible.

It means a great deal to me, personally, just to be a World Champion and to represent my people. As I said, it's going to be there forever – being a World Champion, being there first",

Arjan Bhullar said.

Arjan also focused on wrestling tradition compared with his victories.

"I think for other wrestlers who come from the country and the wonderful wrestling tradition that we have, they'll see this is possible. The biggest thing you can do is show that it's a viable option, and it's a great option.

I have had a lot of big wins, but I think every success led to this. Without those other wins, this would not have been possible. So I'm going to say yes, this absolutely is my most significant, most fulfilling, most life-changing win. Not only for me, but also many people around me, my loved ones, and people around the world", the ONE heavyweight champion added. —GNLM



ONE Championship World Heavyweight Champion Arjan Bhullar. **PHOTO: ONE CHAMPIONSHIP**

Hazard says he is not 100% but will be ready for Euros

EDEN Hazard is still having "some thigh problems" after missing much of Real Madrid's season but "will be there when the Euros start", he told a video press conference on Monday.

The midfielder said he was "not yet at 100 per cent" but added that "physically I still have to prepare myself and I obviously hope to be ready for the first game on 12 June".

Belgium, one of the favourites for the title, start Euro 2020 on June 12 against Russia in a group that also includes Denmark and Finland.

Hazard arrived at the national training centre at Tubize on Monday, at the same time as most of his team-mates and, as

captain, was the first to speak at the press conference.

"I missed the last game with Real because of a little discomfort in my thigh. Since then I have been able to rest for a week and mentally I am fine," he said.

"I'm going to be good again when I get my confidence back, and when my thigh and ankle don't hurt," he said. "I've had an unlucky season." "I've always been a player who liked to play one match after another and that hasn't been the case. I still have many good years ahead of me." Injuries have kept him out of recent Belgian squads.

"I missed it," he said. "I am happy when I am on the pitch."

Hazard has struggled to contribute since joining Real for a reported 100 million euros (\$122 million) from Chelsea in 2019.

Since the end of a season in which Real finished second in La Liga and fell against Hazard's former club Chelsea in the Champions League semi-finals, coach Zinedine Zidane has quit.

Hazard said he was "very disappointed that Zidane is leaving." "I spent two great seasons with him. I'm frustrated that I couldn't give him more," he said.

Hazard said he is not going to leaving Real. "I can't see myself anywhere else but Real Madrid," he said. "I have three years left on my contract at Real, we know that the first two years were complicated, but I want to continue to give the best of myself at Madrid." — AFP ■



Eden Hazard is still having "some thigh problems" after missing much of Real Madrid's season but "will be there when the Euros start", he told a video press conference on Monday. **PHOTO: AFP**

Greenwood withdraws from England squad for Euro 2020



Mason Greenwood (L) started Manchester United's Europa League final loss to Villarreal last week. **PHOTO: AFP**

MANCHESTER United forward Mason Greenwood has pulled out of England's Euro 2020 squad due to injury, the club announced on Tuesday.

The 19-year-old was named in Gareth Southgate's provisional 33-man pool, which is due to be

cut to 26 later on Tuesday ahead of the tournament.

Greenwood, who made his international debut last September, will not be selected after United said playing in the competition would not be "beneficial" for an ongoing injury problem.

He scored 12 goals in 52 appearances for United this season, and played 100 minutes of the Europa League final defeat by Villarreal last week. "Manchester United striker Mason Greenwood has withdrawn from the provisional England Euro 2020 squad, in order to recover fully from an underlying injury that also kept him out of the Under-21 European Championship in March," a club statement read. "Mason's club appearances were managed carefully to maintain his availability through the intensive 2020/21 Premier League and Europa League schedules.

"But a further spell of tournament football would not be beneficial and Mason will remain at Manchester United to recuperate and prepare for pre-season training." — AFP ■

Spain's Garcia returns to Barca from Manchester City

MANCHESTER City's Spain centre-back Eric Garcia will join Barcelona on a five-year deal next month, the Catalan club said on Tuesday. Garcia, 20, who has been included in his country's squad for the upcoming Euro 2020, will leave the Premier League champions when his deal ends on July 1.

"The player will sign a contract until the end of the 2025/26 season and his buy out clause is set at 400 million euros (\$489.5 million)," the La Liga side said in a statement. Garcia follows Sergio Aguero after the Argentina forward left City for Barca on Monday. — AFP ■



Manchester City's Spain centre-back Eric Garcia will join Barcelona on a five-year deal next month, the Catalan club said on Tuesday. **PHOTO: AFP**