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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Chairman of State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends opening ceremony of 9th Moscow Conference on International Security-2021 (MCIS-2021)

State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing is discussing the topic: Asia-Pacific Region in the Context of Global Politics in the second session of the 9th Moscow Conference on International Security-2021 (MCIS-2021) in Moscow on 23 June 2021.

THE opening ceremony of the 9th Moscow Conference on International Security-2021 (MCIS-2021) took place at Radisson Hotel in Moscow of the Russian Federation yesterday morning of local standard time, attended by Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

Also present at the ceremony were Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation Army General Sergey Kuzhugetovich Shoigu, military and civilian leaders, heads of 67 countries, defence ministers, deputy defence ministers, officials and guests.

The Senior General together with those attendees to the conference viewed military weapons displayed by Rosoboronexport Company and other companies.

Before the conference, a video clip on a speech delivered by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin at the 9th Moscow Conference on International Security-2021 (MCIS-2021) was presented. Next, the Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation made an opening speech.

Deputy Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation Colonel General Alexander V. Fomin led the discussions with the participation of Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia Army General Valery Gerasimov, Colonel-General Wei Fenghe from the People's Republic of China, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of Qatar Dr Khalid Bin Mohammad Al-Attiyah, Minister of Defence of Belarus Viktor Khrenin, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross Peter Maurer and former President of Afghanistan Khamid Karzai discussing in the respective sectors while those who could not attend the meeting took part in the discussions online.

In the second session of the conference, the Senior General discussed the topic with the title of the Asia-Pacific Region in the Context of Global Politics.

Next, Deputy Minister of Defence of Maldives Mr Hassan Zameel, Minister of National Defence of Vietnam Senior Lieutenant General Phan Van Giang, Bangladeshi Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Sheikh Aasina and Minister of Defence of Brunei Darussalam Mr Halbi Yussof participated in the discussions under respective topics.

The discussions of the Senior General and the press statement of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation will be mentioned separately. —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.

COVID-19: start ourselves to take preventive measures

ALL people are urged to abide by the following ways of prevention against COVID-19 without fail in line with the motto: "COVID-19: start ourselves to take preventive measures" not to violently infect COVID-19 as next wave and not to be infected of variant COVID-19 virus.

(1) Systematically wear masks whenever go outside and also wear face shields whenever associate with many people.
(2) Take adequate distance from each other as much as they can.
(3) Avoid the crowds.
(4) Take 20 seconds in systematically washing hands many times.
(5) Avoid the visits to the closed chambers, air-conditioned rooms and the lesser ventilated rooms as much as possible.
(6) Those who need to go outside houses should avoid acts close to and eat meals together with older persons above 60 years and those with diabetes, hypertension, and heart diseases.
(7) Fully cooperate in quarantine processes.
(8) Don't buy something from the vendors who do not wear masks.
(9) Exchange information to each other.
(10) Cooperate in vaccination of COVID-19 pandemic. Continuously follow the preventive measures although they have received the vaccinations.
(11) Strictly follow the work guidelines for preventing the COVID-19 pandemic issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports.
(12) If somebody suffers from symptoms of higher body temperature, coughing, suffocation, tiredness and sudden loss of smell and flavour, they need to immediately contact nearby health units to receive medical treatment.

Health Knowledge Awareness Promoting Department
Ministry of Health and Sports

680 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 23 June, total figure rises to 149,927

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **149,927 after 680 new cases** were reported on 23 June 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, **134,093** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll stands at **3,269** after two died. —MNA

They need to carry out politics in unison without diverse concepts

THE Tatmadaw did not commit the coup d'état but manages the State responsibilities to guarantee democracy. There are more than 90 parties in the country based on politics, regions and ethnic nationals. They need to carry out politics in unison without diverse concepts.

(Excerpt from the speech to the State Administration Council meeting made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 25 May 2021)

Chairman of State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief ...

NEWS ON PAGE-1

State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing is viewing the weapons displayed by the Rosoboronexport Company yesterday.

State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing welcomed by Russian Minister of Defence, meeting held

STATE Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, currently in the Russian Federation to attend the 9th Moscow Conference on International Security-2021 (MCIS-2021) was welcomed by Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation Army General Sergey Kuzhugetovich Shoigu with the Guard of Honour on 22 June evening.

The Senior General and the Russian Minister of Defence took the salute of the Guard of Honour and inspected it. Then, they introduced their entourage to each other.

Present at the ceremony together with the Senior General were Council Member Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun, Council Joint-Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Moe Aung, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and Myanmar Military Attaché (Army, Navy and Air) to the Russian Federation Commodore Kyaw Soe Moe. The Russian Minister of Defence was accompanied by senior officers from the Russian Armed Forces.

At the parlour of the Russian Ministry of Defence, the Senior General and the Russian Minister of Defence exchanged views on further cementing existing friendly relations between the two armed forces of both countries, promotion of cooperation in military technologies, preparations of the Myanmar Tatmadaw to take part in the games and training measures held in the Russian Federation to enhance defence capabilities and further participation, political changes in Myanmar, and further cooperation in various sectors between the two governments and two armed forces.

After the meeting, the Senior General and the Russian Defence Minister exchanged emblems and commemorative gifts. — MNA

Discussions of State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing under the title of The Asia-Pacific Region in the Context of Global Politics at the 9th Moscow Conference on International Security

THE Senior General said that he would like to extend greetings to all attendees to the 9th Moscow Conference on International Security.

He said he would discuss the topic of the Asia-Pacific Region in the Context of Global Politics at the conference.

The Asia-Pacific Region is of great importance in the world according to the geopolitical conditions. Such a region occupies the one-third of the world economic market and it is a focal point of the main maritime routes. More than 100,000 vessels pass the Indian Ocean per year and over 70,000 vessels the Malacca Strait yearly, flowing commodities worth US$1 trillion per year. As such, it can be seen that the region is playing a key role in the transport and communications sector. About 80 per cent of the world's oil production is being transported via the Indian Ocean while 40 per cent of the world trade passes the Malacca Strait.

Hence, the Asia-Pacific Region is much crucial in geopolitics and geo-economics, and it becomes the World's Economic Centre of Gravity recognized as a strategic area in the New World Political Order.

Although the Asia-Pacific Region is a focal point for global development and opportunities, it much affects regional politics and security due to strategic competitiveness.

The security measures which are strategically changing in the Asia-Pacific Region are much related to the political situations of regional countries.

Every country faces impacts of COVID-19 on the economy and human health, cyber arena and danger on the improvement of modern technology. Regional groupings and the rising of competitiveness among these

groups become both conventional and non-conventional security threats, and these measures are challenges for the development of the Asia-Pacific Region.

Effort for economic integration in strategic competitiveness among the world powerful countries is a point to shape the good future of the Asia-Pacific Region. Enhancement of economic cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region can mitigate the diversity among the countries while revitalizing the globalization process as well as contributing much to the UN Sustainable Development Goal.

At present, countries across the world including ASEAN are encountering economic crises. As peoples from their respective countries are facing difficulties of basic needs, now is time to prioritize providing necessary assistance to attend to their basic needs.

It is necessary to prioritize more cultivation and production of primary staple foods such as rice and wheat for the people in the agriculture sector with the aim of ensuring food sufficiency of the people. Moreover, efforts should be made for extending the cultivation of other crops for humans on one hand. As such, relevant organizations and authorities need to manage to raise public awareness of the efficient use of water sources. Extreme consumption of freshwater causes terrible worries for the future world. Likewise, it should reduce the unlimited extraction of underground natural resources. It is necessary to use renewable energy such as hydropower, windmill electricity and solar power.

It is seen that regional grouping, military expansion, the strategic and economic competitiveness of powerful countries in addition to the competitive implementation of national interests and competitive armament would be fueling the conflicts in the Asia-Pacific Region.

Every independent country has sovereignty regardless of the small and the large as well as the powerful and the weaker. They all have an equal term of rights. All the countries throughout the world need to safeguard their sovereignty, and they all have the rights to safeguard it. But, it is necessary to avoid the acts of staging the threats with strength and encroaching on the sovereignty of other countries with the wrong concept over the rights. The countries need to frankly cooperate with other countries and regions.

> The ASEAN region is located in the area linking the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean and as a centre of the Indo-Pacific Region. Regional countries need to focus on peace, stability, security and prosperity. Moreover, those countries need to realize mutual respect over the sovereignty, mutual understanding and non-interference in the internal affairs of any country.

China is implementing the Belt and Road Initiative with the enhancement of cooperation with countries from the Asia-Pacific Region.

The ASEAN region is located in the area linking the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean and as a centre of the Indo-Pacific Region. Regional countries need to focus on peace, stability, security and prosperity. Moreover, those countries need to realize mutual respect over the sovereignty, mutual understanding and non-interference in the internal affairs of any country.

In striving for ensuring the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific Region, equality and equal development, it is necessary to avoid the situations which may cause conflicts or confrontation and firmly enhance non-military cooperation including the issues on improvement for the process of trust-building, the prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19 pandemic.

Some countries holding one-sided policies are applying various ways and means for dominating over the different political systems and attitudes. The attempts are seen to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign countries showing reasons for democracy and human rights. The international community needs to cooperate with one another for ensuring the peace, stability and sustainable development of the world based on justice, equal valuation and fairly international laws.

Currently, Myanmar is striving for restoring political peace and stability. The current government is focusing on the reappearance of honesty over democracy.

Being a member of the ASEAN, the Senior General said that Myanmar is fully participating in the peace and stability of the region and development tasks in line with the attitude of the ASEAN. —MNA

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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.

Anti-Terrorism Central Committee discusses counter-terrorism measures

THE Anti-Terrorism Central Committee organized a 1/2021 meeting yesterday.

During the meeting, Chairman of committee Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Soe Htut, member of State Administration Council discussed the aims of meetings, counter-terrorism measures under the law, plans implemented in line with the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the stipulation of procedures to combat terrorisms occurring in the country and plans to boost up the international cooperation works.

The meeting also focused on the plans to take actions against the terrorist groups and their partners who committed the arson attack, bombing, murder cases and threats to innocent people under the law and public awareness programmes for the public not to believe the fake news spreading on Facebook and internet websites.

Then, Committee Secretary Lt-Gen Than Hlaing, Deputy Minister for Home Affairs and Police Chief clarified the occurrence of riots and violence starting in February, intense arson attack, robbery, bombing and murder cases, other cases of terrorists to threaten the public by destroying the ward/village and township administrative procedures in order to cooperate with them and actions taken against the suspects.

Then, the committee members discussed the precautionary measures against terrorism including measures to ensure the safety of the public.

The meeting also discussed the legal actions to take against the terrorist groups CRPH, NUG, PDF and their partners for communicating with international terrorists and ARSA to grab the State power by force and objectives of SAC in detail. – MNA

Myanmar delegations arriving in Russia visit significant places in Moscow, hold meetings with officials

The Permanent Secretary-cum-Director-General and delegation of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture are discussing the propagation of Buddhism with the Moscow Sangharaja of the Mahayana Buddhist Monastery.

THE Myanmar delegations which accompany the Chairman of State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services on his trip to the Russian Federation yesterday visited significant places in Moscow, religious buildings, electric and energy museum and MGIMO University and held a meeting with officials on cooperation measures.

The delegation led by Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman Mayor Dr Maung Maung Naing visited the Moscow Electric and Energy Museum and held a meeting with the Moscow Mayor to exchange views on urban development tasks.

The delegation led by Deputy Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Than Aung Kyaw held separate meetings with the Chairman of Russia-Myanmar Friendship Association and the external relations committee of the branch office of the Saint Petersburg Mayor and discussed cooperation measures.

The delegation led by the Ministry of Health and Sports met with the Moscow Mayor and focused on public health care services and cooperation in medical education.

Moreover, the group of outstanding award-winning officers visited Patriotic Park in Moscow and the main church of the Russian Armed Forces, the delegation of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture the Mahayana Buddhist Monastery of the Moscow Sangharaja and the delegation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the MGIMO University. —MNA

Ex-Magway region chief minister, Hluttaw speaker, ex-regional ministers, Yangon region social affairs minister charged under anti-corruption law

FORMER Magway Region chief minister Dr Aung Moe Nyo, Former Magway Region Hluttaw speaker U Tar, former minister for Natural Resources, Environment, Electricity and Energy U Myint Zaw, former social affairs minister Dr Khin Maung Aye, former minister for construction and transport U Tin Nwe Oo and former Yangon Region social affairs minister U Naing Ngan Lin, have been charged under Section 55 of Anti-Corruption Law.

The former ministers were found corrupt when the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) investigated the allegations of corruption in their activities during their tenures as ministers.

According to the findings of the ACC, former Magway Region chief minister Dr Aung Moe Nyo received 50 million kyats to let a company open a gas station on a one-acre land that was not allowed for other land use applications due to falling in the residential zone since 2016.

Although the company did not charge for the design of the Magway Region Hluttaw Building, former Magway Region Hluttaw speaker U Tar, during his tenure, gave the company 2 per cent of the value of the Hluttaw (main building) project, more than K84 million in the design fee, which was not included in the contract, to make a statue of the general in the shape of attending the Hluttaw, causing the state to lose more than K84 million.

According to the regional government's Notification No. (36/2018) dated 31 October 2018, a rent of K300,000 was collected for one acre of land from the official oil mining licence holder. The former Magway Region chief minister and former minister for Natural Resources, Environment, Electricity and Energy U Myint Zaw failed to collect a total of K310.2 million for a total of 569 acres of land lease in Minhla, Thayet, Saw and Pauk townships, which caused the loss of the State budget in 2018, 2019 and 2020. Former minister U Myint Zaw, in November 2019, received K2.5 million from the chairman and secretary of the Magway Region Petroleum Entrepreneurs' Association to facilitate long-term business ventures.

Former ministers Dr Aung Moe Nyo, Dr Khin Maung Aye and U Tin Nwe Oo chose the different companies for the construction of the restaurants, dormitories and kitchen of the Education Degree College (Magway) and the construction of the main building of the Government Technical High School (Pakokku) in the 2020-2021FY without complying with the tender rules and regulations of the state, causing the state K13.29 million and K9.524 million more.

Former minister for Magway Region Construction and Transport U Tin Nwe Oo received the bribery of K6 million from a company that inspects the quality of the Magway Region Hluttaw main building in August 2020.

The former Magway Region chief minister and the Magway Regional Hluttaw speaker let the Hluttaw representatives carry out the regional development work that was supposed to be done by the government organizations, without submitting to the Union Government and without complying with the financial procedures of the Regional Development Fund issued by Notification No. 58/2019 in the 2019-2020FY. Due to this, the State lost K2,497 million.

Similarly, former Yangon Region social affairs minister U Naing Ngan Lin was found to be corrupt by receiving cash and expensive appliances from numerous businesses and companies during his tenure as the minister. – MNA

Lashio Myoma market closed for two weeks to control COVID-19

BECAUSE of the increasing number of COVID-19 infection cases in Lashio township day by day, Lashio Myoma Municipal Market of the Lashio Municipal Department has closed for two weeks, with effect from 23 June.

As 15 vendors at the Lashio market were found to have been infected with COVID-19 on 22 June, the market was closed for two weeks starting from 23 June until 7 July to control the spreading of COVID-19, said U Kyaw Zin, the executive officer of the municipal department.

Besides, the Lashio town night bazaar and Kharyo market have also suspended their operation.

As 15 vendors at the Lashio market were found to have been infected with COVID-19 on 22 June, the market was closed for two weeks starting from 23 June until 7 July to control the spreading of COVID-19.

During the closure of the market, the vendors are urged to stay at home and if there are some strange things with their health, they are requested to inform the ward administrators or health department as quickly as possible.

On 22 June, a man, who was home quarantines at ward 9 in Lashio town was found to be positive with COVID-19. Then, he committed suicide. The COVID-19 operation team buried the corpse in line with the guidance of COVID-19 protection.

Those who had close contact with the COVID-19 positive person are put in home quarantine and it can take three days to get the result, said an official from the health department.

Lashio has found 168 COVID-19 confirmed patients as of 23 June, according to the Township Level Committee of COVID-19 Prevention, Control and Treatment. — Han Htay (Lashio)/GNLM

MCC ready to provide COVID treatment for 250 patients

MYANMAR Convention Centre (MCC) has the facilities made ready to provide treatment for 250 COVID-19 patients on Mindhamma Road in Mayangon Township, according to the Ministry of Health and Sports.

In order to provide the cure for COVID-19 patients, MCC has already prepared the beds and supplies for the patients. The necessary medical team will also be assigned by the joint medical coordinating team of COVID-19 Prevention, Control and Treatment, according to the Ministry of Health and Sports.

Further, the authorities have supplied necessary things after monitoring the COVID-19 vaccination of the educational staff at MCC.

At present, two hospitals are also carrying out preparation measures to hospitalize the COVID-19 positive patients. These two hospitals are the People's Hospital in Hlinethaya township and the People's hospital in Shwepyitha township. Hlinethaya township hospital will be able to accommodate 100 patients and has made ready the essential things such as oxygen for 50 patients while Shwelinpan civil hospital will be able to accommodate 50 patients.

The authorities are also having the medical examinations conducted on all the visitors who will come from the stay home townships to the Yangon region to make sure whether they have COVID-19 or not.

Currently, the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19 has increased in Lashio.

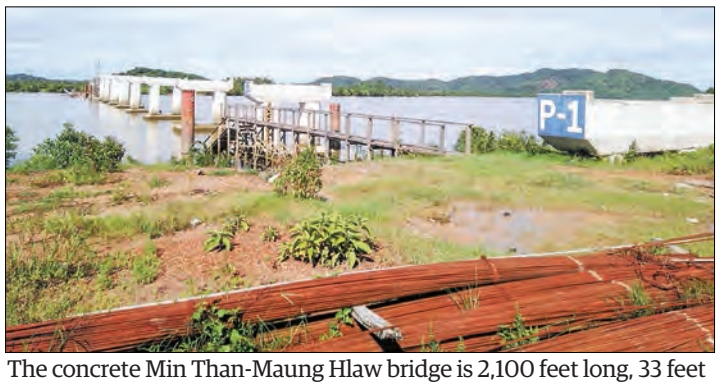
With the essential further control of spreading of COVID-19, the instructions, orders and notifications of the union level organizations and the relevant ministries released on 31 May 2021 was extended to 30 June 2021.

So far, Myanmar has reported a total of 148,617 cases, with 3,265 deaths and 133,753 recoveries as of 22 June 2021. — Aye Maung/GNLM

Min Than-Maung Hlaw bridge completes 27%

MIN Than-Maung Hlaw bridge crossing Taninthayi River is constructed with spending of K13,910 million. So far, the construction of the bridge has completed 27 per cent, according to the Bridge Department of the Ministry of Construction.

Taninthayi bridge is constructed with the crossing of Taninthayi River flowing through Myeik and Kyunsu townships in the Taninthayi Region. The Taninthayi bridge (Min Than-Maung Hlaw bridge project) is expected to cost K13,910 million (over K13 billion).



The concrete Min Than-Maung Hlaw bridge is 2,100 feet long, 33 feet wide and is of 26 feet of water clearance height.

"So far, the construction of the project is completed 27 per cent. The construction project started on 1 December 2018. The whole project construction period will be dependent upon the allocation of the budget," said an official from the bridge department.

The concrete Min Than-Maung Hlaw bridge is 2,100 feet long, 33 feet wide and is of 26 feet of water clearance height. The bridge is being constructed by Rural Road Development Department Fund and Region Rural Development Department. — ACM/GNLM

MAI to launch YGN-KL relief flight in July

Regarding the COVID-19 examination, MAI passengers can take the COVID-19 test at N Health Laboratory near Sule pagoda road starting from 10 February.

MYANMAR Airways International (MAI) is planning to launch Yangon-Kuala Lumpur relief flights next July, according to MAI.

MAI has also extended its suspended flight schedules to Singapore and Kolkata (formerly Calcutta) till 30 June. They will launch only relief flights to Kuala Lumpur, Seoul and Bangkok, according to the announcement of its airline.

Besides, the relief flight will also be launched the Yangon-Bangkok schedules every Saturday starting from next July.

With the extension of the restriction of the travelling period in Myanmar to prevent the spreading of COVID-19, MAI will operate its flight schedules only till 30 June 2021 according to the latest announcements from the Department of Civil Aviation in Myanmar.

The passengers, who have purchased flight tickets for extended suspension periods, will be allowed to freely transfer the scheduled flight depending on the availability of seats. If not, the passengers need to inform the airline of a new rebooking date and or refund not later than 31 August 2021.

Besides, the non-refundable tickets will be exchanged with a travel voucher. Its travel voucher will be available by 30 September 2021. The travel voucher is not allowed to be transferred to others.

Yangon International Airport (YIA) has extended the suspension of all incoming international flights till 30 June 2021, to control the spreading of coronavirus, announced the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

However, for those who will come to Myanmar by relief flight over an emergency government duty or an emergency, foreigners including diplomats and the officers and staff from UN agencies need to contact Myanmar embassies in foreign countries or consulates in Myanmar to lift the visa restrictions.

Regarding the COVID-19 examination, MAI passengers can take the COVID-19 test at N Health Laboratory near Sule pagoda road starting from 10 February. — Aye Maung/GNLM

Myanmar exports about 20,000 bags of rice to China via Bhamo-Lwejel route

MYANMAR daily ships about 20,000 bags of rice to China through the Bhamo-Lwejel route, said U Min Thein, vice-chair of Muse Rice Wholesale Centre.

Man Wein, a major border crossing between Myanmar and China for rice exports, came to an abrupt halt from 30 March, following the COVID-19 detection in the border.

As a result of this, the export channel was shifted to the Bhamo-Lwejel route, he continued.

"The rice is delivered from Mandalay to Bhamo, Kachin State by ship and sent to Lwejel, which is 59 miles away from Bhamo by truck. Lwejel border is next to China," U Min Thein said.

Previously, it took about a month to China via the Mandalay-Muse route due to traffic congestion. This new trade channel cut both the shipping time as well as the cost, he added.

Man Wein border post has remained close even after two and half months.

At present, Myanmar has been conducting border trade with China through Muse, Lwejel, Chinshwehaw, Kampaiti and Kengtung border posts. Muse border performed the best among them, according to the statistics released by the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce. – NN/GNLM

At present, Myanmar has been conducting border trade with China through Muse, Lweje, Chinshwehaw, Kampaiti and Kengtung border posts. Muse border performed the best among them, according to the statistics released by the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce.

Japan ranks second-largest foreign investor in Myanmar

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

Last month, the UK-listed enterprise brought in large investments of $2.5 million and became the top source of FDI in Myanmar in the past eight months, DICA's statistics indicated.

Japan stood as the second-largest investors this FY with an estimated capital of $518.76 million from three projects, followed by Singapore investing $428.336 million in Myanmar.

Japan focuses more on responsible businesses. Therefore, it thoughtfully considers and learns before they make investments, DICA stated.

Additionally, Thilawa Special Economic Zone is a symbol of development in Japan's investments in Myanmar. Besides, Japan is a development partner of Myanmar.

Japan has been providing comprehensive support in developing the infrastructure including railway, road, and research in Myanmar through the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Since 2016-2017FY, the FDI of over $449.367 million has flowed into the Special Economic Zones (SEZs) from 15 Japanese businesses, under the Special Economic Zone Law.

Japan's investment in Myanmar stood at $768.456 million in the last FY2019-2020, $42.77 million in the 2018-2019FY, $134.5 million in the 2018 mini-budget period (April-September), $384 million in the 2017-2018FY, $60 million in the 2016-2017FY and $219.79 million in the2015-2016FY, respectively, the DICA's data showed. – KK/GNLM

Manageable-scale elephant foot yam growers earn extra income

Myanmar elephant foot yams are primarily purchased by China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea.

THE locals from Kyeikdon town, Kayin State are growing the elephant foot yam in the backyard of their house on a manageable scale.

The yams are cultivated two or three feet apart and they are growing well without using fertilizer. The cultivated yams could be harvested in the next three years. Each yam plant could produce about one or five visses while some yams can yield about six visses. Last year, the price of fresh yams reached the maximum of K 1,500 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kg).

Myanmar elephant foot yams are primarily purchased by China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. — Kyeikdon IPRD/GNLM

Thailand remains Myanmar's top trading partner among regional countries in H1

NEIGHBOURING Thailand is Myanmar's major trading partner, which accounts for US$2.45 billion in the first half (October-March) of the current financial year 2020-2021, the statistics issued by the Central Statistical Organization under the Ministry of Planning and Finance indicated.

The ministry reported that exports surpassed imports in trade with Thailand, with exports reaching over $1.55 billion and imports valued at over $901 million.

Thailand has been Myanmar's largest trade partner among the regional countries, followed by Singapore and Malaysia.

Thailand accounted for 18.48 per cent of total trade in 2016-2017 FY with an estimated trade value of US$4.6 billion, 19.17 pc in 2017-2018FY with a trade value of $5.57 billion, 40.38 pc in 2018-2019FY with $5.46 billion and over 40 pc in 2019-2020 FY with $5.117 billion respectively.

Exports of natural gas from the Taninthayi Region contributed to the enormous increase in border trade with Thailand in the previous years. Last year, corn exports to Thailand also rose significantly as well, the Ministry of Commerce stated.

Myanmar primarily exports natural gas, fishery products, coal, tin concentrate (SN 71.58 per cent), coconut (fresh and dry), beans, corns, bamboo shoots, sesame seeds, garment, footwear, plywood and veneer, broken rice and other commodities to Thailand. It imports capital goods such as machinery, raw industrial goods such as cement and fertilizers, and consumer goods such as cosmetics, edible vegetable oil and food products from the neighbouring country.

Myanmar is carrying out border trade with the neighbouring country Thailand through Tachilek, Myawady, Myeik, Mawtaung, Hteekhee, Kawthoung and Meisei border areas respectively. Among them, Myawady performed the largest trade in border trade with Thailand, followed by Hteekhee.

Nevertheless, the trading activity via border is sluggish for now amid the coronavirus resurgences. Consequently, the trade via land border sharply fell in the current FY (2020-2021) as against last year.

Apart from its main trade partner China, Myanmar's external trade was mostly carried out with the regional trade partners. – KK/GNLM

March towards the goal along single way in workplaces

EVERY workplace is formed with experienced workers and newcomers. In that society, experienced workers are responsible for lending a helping hand to newcomers on the way to the target.

While applying experiences in the workplaces, the elder workers should give on-job training to new ones as part of sharing their precious experiences. Depending on the unity of both kinds of workers, the workplaces would have improved.

In fact, the experienced workers should not look down on the newcomers with thoughts that they themselves have adequate knowledge about the workplaces; they must take a leading role in the workplaces because newcomers do not have any experience, and newcomers need to pay respects to them and obey their words of advice.

> That is why two kinds of workers should march towards the goal without disunity and disputes by forging the brotherly spirit with the aim of achieving success by relying on each other in all issues. Everybody knows "unity is strength".

On the other hand, new employees cannot accept the leadership of the old ones because those from both sides are service personnel. They have an equal term of rights because no one need is to pay respect. If they serve duty in relevant workplaces, they will have work experiences to some extent one day.

In fact, those from both sides embrace the wrong thoughts and concepts for workplaces. Everybody should pay respects to each other in all areas. It is a public ethic. The experienced workers should operate the workplaces applying their skills. Meanwhile, newcomers need to observe the ways of operating the workplaces from the experienced ones.

Actually, the experienced workers were also newcomers in the past. They gradually accumulated work experiences by trying to overcome the challenges in workplaces. They exchanged their precious time with invaluable experiences.

The experienced workers need to use the critical things and skills in manufacturing applying the powerful physical strength of the newcomers. If those from both sides have to operate all the duty and functions of the workplaces in harmony, both of whom will have easy access to the goal.

That is why two kinds of workers should march towards the goal without disunity and disputes by forging the brotherly spirit with the aim of achieving success by relying on each other in all issues. Everybody knows "unity is strength".

Renew and ramp up action to address noncommunicable diseases

By Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia

Amid the COVID-19 response, opportunities to prevent, detect, control and treat NCDs must be fully harnessed

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) kill 41 million people globally every year, more than a third of them prematurely. The four major NCDs – cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes – account for over 80% of all premature NCD deaths, of which 85% occur in low- and middle-income countries, including in the WHO South-East Asia Region. Key NCD risk factors such as tobacco use, physical inactivity, harmful use of alcohol and unhealthy diets also contribute to and exacerbate mental health disorders, such as depression and anxiety. Amid the ongoing COVID-19 response, the time is ripe for all countries in the Region to accelerate action to prevent, detect and control NCDs, and bring treatment to everyone who needs it.

People living with NCDs are at higher risk of severe COVID-19-related illness and death. They are among several groups who have been particularly affected by the pandemic, which has been marked by the interaction of SARS-CoV2 infection with a broad range of NCDs, which are themselves mediated by social and economic disadvantage. Amid ongoing waves of infection, WHO will continue to support countries in the Region to aggressively respond, while also enhancing health equity and maintaining essential health services, including for NCDs. High-impact innovations such as telemedicine, extended prescriptions, and door-step delivery of medicines must continue to be leveraged, and all at-risk groups actively encouraged to get vaccinated, in line with national deployment and vaccination plans.

Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh

The Region's progress against NCDs must not be halted, much less reversed. Since 2014, the Region has intensified action to prevent and control NCDs as a Flagship Priority. All countries continue to implement national multisectoral NCD action plans. Even amid the COVID-19 response, they remain committed to achieving the global 2025 and 2030 NCD targets. Most countries have developed national mental health policies, which must continue to be strengthened in the months and years to come. For the Region to protect and defend its many gains, and to catalyse more, several priorities require targeted attention.

First, taking full advantage of new initiatives. For example, in April, WHO launched its Global Diabetes Compact, which aims to ensure all people can access quality diabetes diagnostic tools, medicines and other medical products, without financial hardship. The Region has in recent years made significant progress on increasing access to quality-assured insulin, however, barriers persist, especially for the most vulnerable. In the coming months, the Compact is set to drive innovations in technology and pricing, which all countries in the Region must harness and apply to maximum effect.

Second, implementing "best buy" interventions that we know work. Evidence shows that by increasing taxation of unhealthy products, policymakers can drive down consumption, enhance overall health, and reduce individual and public health costs. In the process, they will increase fiscal revenue, which if allocated towards health, will help achieve a health and economic recovery from COVID-19 that is more equitable, resilient and sustainable. Restrictions on the marketing of unhealthy products are likewise essential, however must cover surrogate advertising, which aims to cultivate brand loyalty among the young.

Third, strengthening action to address NCDs within health systems, especially on the front-lines. The Region's 2016 Colombo Declaration emphasizes the need for all people to have access to quality, integrated NCD services at the primary level, including healthy lifestyle counselling, targeted screening for early diagnosis, and quality medicines and medical devices for effective NCD management. All countries in the Region have made tremendous progress in each of these areas and more, which WHO's new Operational Framework for Primary Health Care can help accelerate throughout the COVID-19 response, recovery and beyond.

The people-centred policy is the need of the hour. By intensifying community outreach and engagement, policymakers can ensure people from all walks of life understand the signs and symptoms of NCDs, and how to get tested and treated. Crucially, they can also increase health and NCD literacy more generally, inspiring people to take preventive action, such as regular and adequate physical activity, healthy eating and abstinence from tobacco and other unhealthy products.

Achieving whole-of-government, whole-of-society buy-in is essential. Policymakers should intensify engagement with key actors across sectors, and also seek out the insights and perspectives of people living with NCDs, who can best identify existing gaps. WHO is committed to amplifying the voice of affected populations, and ensuring they are invited to partner on and continue to co-create, people-centred policy solutions.

Renewed and ramped up action against NCDs cannot wait. Amid the COVID-19 response, WHO will continue to provide all countries in the Region critical support in all areas of health, including NCDs, a pressing threat to health, well-being and sustainable development. Together, we must reduce NCD risks and ensure all people have access to quality care and treatment that is equitable, comprehensive and affordable. Every opportunity must be grasped, and every innovation harnessed. No one can be left behind.

Passage of the World-Famous Panama Pass

By U Than Zaw (Ex-RO, Mercantile Marine)

The Panama Pass is very skillfully constructed by American engineers to obtain a short-cut passageway from Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean or from the west coast of the U.S.A to the east coast of the U.S.A by passing conveniently from Panama-pass; otherwise, all ocean liner vessels have to go via very lengthy voyage around the cape of Chile, of South America. Because, American Continent extends too long from the extreme north towards the extreme south containing countries of the North, South of Central America voyaging in a lengthy way is a sheer waste of time and very costly and; uneconomical for the mercantile world.

Panama is in the area of the mountainous and hilly region in central America. So, do you know how could the ocean liner vessels mountaineering Panama-pass? American engineers in those days are so praised worthy. They sorted out ways of passage over or climbing mountain by ships conveniently as such; all ships are anchored around Balboa port under waiting list; first of all, there are stages of the extra-large seawater tank which rooms for all types or tonnages of mercantile marine vessels.

At first, they top up the 1st tank with sea-water, preference ship has taken place; so, it was raised to a certain height of the mountain.

At the 2nd stage, that raised ship is towed by the vehicles from both sides of the 2ne tank. Then the tank is topped up with seawater and the ship is towed to the 3rd and the last tank and finally becomes the same level with the level of Panama lake and then the ship itself sails to the other bank of the lake where Cristobal Port is situated. Then only the ship climbs down stage by stage systematically to the east coast U.S.A or western east of the Atlantic Ocean in Mexico Gulf.

In that same way, our ship MV Ocean Prosper, owned by Ocean Shipping Co Ltd, Hong Kong, was chartered by Mitsui O.S.K Lines Ltd, Yokohama, Japan, passed Panama passage and did loading unloading along the east coast of U.S.A right up to Brazilian ports, Argentina ports and our ship sailed towards east crossing Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, African coast, Cape Town etc, passing south of Sea of Bengal, then called in Singapore port for refuelling and proceeded sail towards east passing Taiwan Strait, arrived again at Yokohama port Japan. We made around the world voyages travelling towards the east. It lasts for four and half months for one round global voyage.

Ships pass through the Gatun locks of the Panama Canal. **PHOTO: AFP**

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Wednesday 23 June, 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is strong over the Andaman Sea and Southeast Bay and moderate elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 24 June, 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay Regions, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Magway Region and Eastern Shan State, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing Region and Northern Shan, Chin, Kayah States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavy falls in Upper Sagaing, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Rakhine, Kayin, Mon States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon –Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (30-35) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (7-9) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon –Taninthayi Coasts and about (5-7) feet off and along Rakhine Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of rain in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 June, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 June, 2021: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 June, 2021: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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World powers in new push for Libya peace

WORLD powers gathered Wednesday in Berlin to seek lasting peace in Libya by ensuring the conflict-wracked North African country stays firmly on the path towards general elections on December 24.

Representatives of Libya's interim government will join US Secretary of State Antony Blinken as well as the foreign ministers of France, Turkey and Egypt at the UN-sponsored talks.

Russia's Sergei Lavrov will be absent, but deputy foreign minister Sergey Vershinin will attend in his place.

The efforts to end a decade-long spiral of violence in Libya are the second round held in Berlin, after the first attended by the presidents of Turkey, Russia and France in January 2020, before the pandemic.

Ahead of the talks, host German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas reminded participants of pledges made in 2020 for an end to international meddling and for foreign militants or troops to withdraw. "For the further stabilisation of the country, it is crucial that elections take place as planned and that foreign fighters and mercenaries really do leave Libya," Maas said ahead of the gathering. "It is our aim to support the Libyan transitional government so that it can take the fate of the country into its own hands."

The United Nations has estimated that 20,000 foreign fighters and mercenaries are still on Libya's territory. And that presence is seen as a threat to the UN-backed transition leading to the elections.— AFP ■

A first round of talks attended by the presidents of Turkey, Russia and France was held in January 2020, before the pandemic. **PHOTO : POOL/AFP/FILE**

NEWS IN BRIEF

World Bank lowers Malaysia's growth projection to 4.5 pct

THE World Bank on Wednesday revised down Malaysia's growth projection this year to 4.5 per cent from 6 per cent earlier, as the ongoing pandemic and movement restrictions will affect Malaysia's economy in the near term.

The World Bank said in its latest report that the revision reflects the slower pathway towards suppression of the pandemic and the slower-than-expected vaccine rollout.

"The trajectory and pace of growth will depend on the duration and severity of movement restrictions, the containment of the pandemic, and the pace of the vaccine rollout," it said.

The movement restrictions coupled with increased precautionary behaviour and subdued wage growth are expected to affect household spending activity, but with recovering global demand, export growth is likely to gain momentum, it said.

Given the acceleration of advanced nations' vaccination programmes and the reopening of their economies, global demand is expected to continue to recover in the near term, it added.

"The growth rate for Malaysia's exports of goods and services is projected to rebound to 13.1 per cent in 2021 (2020: -8.9 per cent) as global demand picks up," it said. — AFP

Argentina strikes deal with creditor countries to avoid July default

ARGENTINA said Tuesday it had reached an agreement with the Paris Club of creditor countries to avoid defaulting on a loan repayment in July, unlocking temporary relief of some $2 billion.

"We have reached an understanding with the Paris Club" to avoid defaulting on July 31, when a grace period was to expire for the repayment of a final tranche of debt of about $2.4 billion, Economy Minister Martin Guzman told reporters.

Instead of $2.4 billion, Argentina will repay $430 million in the short term, followed by the rest later.

The $2.4 billion was the last repayment on debt renegotiated with the Paris Club in 2014.

Paying the amount, said Guzman, "would have been a blow to international reserves, (and) would have generated more exchange rate instability and more macroeconomic instability."

A default, on the other hand, would have similarly been a hard blow to the economy.—AFP

Five years on, Brexit bedevils pandemic-hit UK

FIVE years on from Britain's shock decision to quit the European Union, the wounds opened by Brexit have yet to heal, and analysts say its far-reaching changes are only just beginning.

The coronavirus pandemic has masked the economic dislocation caused by the referendum verdict, which backed severing five decades of integration with the European mainland.

British trade with the EU collapsed at the start of the year, when Brexit's full effects came into force, but against a backdrop of much deeper damage wrought by Covid-19. And the benefits promised by Prime Minister Boris Johnson for a newly invigorated "Global Britain" remain a work in progress, while the country's very cohesion is at risk from an emboldened nationalist movement in pro-EU Scotland.

Johnson was upbeat on the effects of Brexit in comments marking the anniversary of the 23 June 2016 referendum.

"Now as we recover from this pandemic, we will seize the true potential of our regained sovereignty to unite and level up our whole United Kingdom," the prime minister said.

"With control over our regulations and subsidies, and with freeports driving new investment, we will spur innovation, jobs and renewal across every part of our country," he added.

"This Government got Brexit done and we've already reclaimed our money, laws, borders and waters."

'Slow puncture'

Johnson also hailed trade deals negotiated with the EU and 68 other countries as well as the start of negotiations to join the $9 trillion Pacific trade area. — AFP ■

The Brexit decision has emboldened the nationalist movement in pro-EU Scotland. **PHOTO: AFP**

Turkmenistan capital tops Hong Kong as world's costliest: survey

TURKMENISTAN'S capital Ashgabat has overtaken Hong Kong as the world's most expensive city for foreign workers, a survey showed on Tuesday.

Beirut jumped to third place in the 2021 Mercer survey from 45th a year earlier owing to a "severe and extensive economic depression" resulting from multiple crises, including the country's financial trouble, Covid-19 and a deadly blast in the Lebanese port.

Ashgabat rose from second in the previous survey to the first spot due to "high local inflation", Mercer France global mobility practice leader Jean-Philippe Sarra told AFP.

Turkmenistan is almost wholly dependent on natural gas exports and has struggled to recover from the global energy price slump in 2014 that battered the local manat currency and plunged many citizens into poverty.—AFP ■

Sydney residents banned from leaving city as coronavirus cluster grows

SYDNEYSIDERS were largely banned from leaving the city Wednesday as Australian authorities rushed to stop a growing outbreak of the highly contagious Delta Covid-19 variant from spreading to other regions.

More than 30 people have been diagnosed with Covid-19 since the cluster emerged in the city's Bondi Beach area last week, the latest in a string of flare-ups that highlight Australia's difficulty in extinguishing outbreaks.

New South Wales state Premier Gladys Berejiklian announced new restrictions that will apply for the next week, including the immediate ban on non-essential travel out of Sydney and limits on social gatherings.

A "very huge proportion" of Sydney's five million residents are subject to the travel ban, which applies to seven local government areas where Covid-19 cases have been detected, she said.

Authorities stopped short of ordering the closure of restaurants and bars, but singing and dancing are out, while major events can still go ahead with stadium capacity limited to 50 per cent.

Authorities stopped short of ordering the closure of restaurants and bars, but singing and dancing are out, while major events can still go ahead with stadium capacity limited to 50 per cent. **PHOTO: AFP**

Officials pleaded with Sydney residents to follow the new rules.

"I know from my experience ... there is a degree of tiredness and a degree of apathy about the response to the virus," said NSW Health Minister Brad Hazzard.

"But in a sense, this is a new and more dangerous version of the virus and that apathy has to be swept away." — AFP ■

UK borrowing sinks in May on easing lockdown: data

A restaurant in London. **PHOTO: AFP**

UK government borrowing sank in May as the easing Covid lockdown boosted the economy and tax revenues, but remains elevated on costly pandemic support, official data showed Tuesday.

Public sector net borrowing, the state's preferred measure of the deficit, slid to £24.3 billion ($33.7 billion, 28.3 billion euros) last month, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said in a statement.

However, that was still the second highest May level since records began after £43.8 billion in May 2020 at the height of the pandemic.

The ONS also revised down borrowing for the financial year to the end of March to £299.2 billion -- but this remained the highest level since World War II.

The public purse has been plagued by emergency Covid measures, in particular a furlough scheme which has paid the bulk of private sector wages for millions of workers across the UK during the crisis.

However, the economy is regaining its footing thanks to a phased reopening.—AFP

Paris fashion houses make tentative return to the catwalk

FRANCE'S fashion houses are tip-toeing back on to the catwalk this week after more than a year of crisis that has upended the industry and left many wondering if the traditional calendar will ever return.

With pandemic restrictions easing, many in the Paris fashion world hope men's fashion week, starting Tuesday, marks the start of a return to normalcy.

Still, only six of 72 brands that make up the official Paris fashion calendar will present live shows this week, though they include two big names in the form of Dior and Hermes.

It follows a similarly tentative return in Milan, where only three of 47 -- Dolce and Gabbana, Etro, and Armani -- offered live events for this week's Spring/Summer 2022 show. New York won't be back in physical form until September, while the newly gender-neutral London Fashion Week has also remained fully digital up to now.

In Paris, many big names are staying within the confines of computer screens, including Louis Vuitton, Dries Van Noten, Loewe and Tom Browne.

In Milan, Armani was one of only three of 47 brands to offer live events for this week's Spring/Summer 2022 show. **PHOTO: MIGUEL MEDINA/ AFP**

Pascal Morand, president of France's Federation of Haute Couture and Fashion, told AFP there was "a very strong appetite to return to the physical."—AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Emirates to fly from India again after ban over virus

AVIATION giant Emirates said Sunday it will resume flights from India from next week, after Dubai lifted a ban imposed when coronavirus cases spiked.

The United Arab Emirates, which includes Dubai, suspended all flights from India -- including for transit passengers -- in April in an effort to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus.

"We will resume carrying passengers from South Africa, Nigeria and India... from June 23," Emirates said in a statement.

Dubai said on Saturday that only passengers from India "with a valid residence visa and who have received two doses of a UAE-approved vaccine" would be allowed to travel to the emirate. They would also need a negative PCR test taken within 48 hours of departure, a rapid test four hours before departure, and another PCR test on arrival with "institutional quarantine" required until the results are received.—AFP

Chaotic situation reported at Bogota's vaccination sites

IN Bogota, Colombia, vaccinations have continued to take place throughout the severe inclement weather. However, vaccine seekers are calling on authorities to do more to safeguard them while they queue up for vaccinations given the terrible weather, but also to do more to organize vaccinations more clearly to avoid hundreds of people wasting their time queuing up only to be turned back. "They've turned back a lot of people because they arrive too late, so it's better to come early", says Octavio Osorio, who came for a vaccine.

"I'm someone who gets very sick a lot and I don't think it's good for people to play with other people's health. I have a chronic bone sickness and it's raining and yet I'm still here early in the day, and still they tell me that I have to schedule an appointment for my second shot? That's outrageous", said Floralba Arevalo, who also queued.—AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bitcoin drops under $30,000 for first time in five months

Bitcoin fell underneath $30,000 (€25,204) on Tuesday for the first time in five months, hit by concerns over China's ongoing crackdown on the world's most popular cryptocurrency.

At about 1230 GMT, bitcoin sank as low as $29,334 (€24,645), a level last seen in January, with analysts citing Chinese efforts to curb trading and mining operations.

The unit later stood at $29,590 (€24,860), down 9.25 per cent in value.

"Concerns mount over China's ongoing clampdown and fears that widespread acceptance of bitcoin and other digital currencies will be delayed because of concerns about their environmental impact," said analyst Fawad Razaqzada at trading site ThinkMarkets.

Bitcoin also faces a green backlash because mining often uses electricity produced from fossil fuels, he noted. —AFP ■

Argentina progressively resumes beef exports

ARGENTINA'S government on Tuesday announced the progressive resumption of beef exports suspended a month ago in a bid to moderate skyrocketing prices at home. Exports were authorized up to a maximum of 50 per cent of 2020's average monthly volumes, government ministers told reporters in Buenos Aires. The country is the world's fourth-largest beef exporter as well as one of its biggest consumers per capita, and revenues from the sector are vital to the country's economy.

It exported some 819,000 tonnes of beef and cow leather worth $3.37 billion in 2020 -- a 16.5-per cent drop from 2019 -- primarily to China, Germany and Israel, according to the INDEC statistics institute. "The 50 per cent quota will remain in place until August 31 and depending on the results, we will consider how to adapt it," said Minister of Productive Development Matias Kulfas.—APF ■

Philippines crushes sports cars in Duterte graft warning

Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte watched bulldozers flatten dozens of sports cars and other luxury vehicles Tuesday as part of a drive to fight corruption at the country's customs bureau. **PHOTO: AFP**

PHILIPPINE President Rodrigo Duterte watched bulldozers flatten dozens of sports cars and other luxury vehicles Tuesday as part of a drive to fight corruption at the country's customs bureau.

A Jaguar, a Lexus, a Corvette Stingray, and dozens of top-end German sedans and Japanese SUVs were crushed at a customs yard in the capital Manila. The vehicles were seized after they were smuggled in, authorities said.

A total of 30 vehicles worth a combined 61.6 million pesos ($1.2 million) were scrapped in Manila and two other cities on Duterte's orders

The president has made fighting corruption and illegal drugs the cornerstones of his six-year term.

"Reduce them to scrap metal," Duterte said in a speech to customs employees after the event.

Normally, seized smuggled vehicles are impounded and then auctioned with the government taking the proceeds.

"I will pay for them, no problem," Duterte said.

The Bureau of Customs collects duties on imports and is one of the state's key revenue-generating agencies. It consistently tops independent surveys as one of the country's most corrupt government agencies.

Customs commissioner Isidro Lapena said in a speech at the ceremony that he has reassigned 691 of his some 7,000 employees since he took office in August last year.

Two other employees were dismissed and 16 others have been suspended over alleged illegal activity, he added.—AFP ■

Japan to work with U.S., others to improve process for AI patents

JAPAN will cooperate with the United States, most European nations, China and South Korea to improve application and examination procedures for patents related to artificial intelligence and new technologies, sources close to the matter said Tuesday.

The move, which involves patent offices of the five parties, aims to encourage inventors to protect their intellectual property rights in a field where demand is growing.

According to the Japan Patent Office, applications filed in the five economies accounted for around 85 per cent of the roughly 3.22 million patent applications filed worldwide in 2019.

Japan's aging population will require more investment in technology such as artificial intelligence and robots to make up for a decline in the labor force for economic growth. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Commissioners of the five agencies, who have been meeting since 2007, will set out a schedule at their next meeting to be held online Wednesday to create a collaborative system for examining AI-related patents.

As requirements for the same patent application vary, making each area's standards easier to compare is expected to simplify the process for applicants.

Wednesday's meeting will also affirm each agency's commitment to promoting online procedures, which have become increasingly needed amid the coronavirus pandemic.

The patent offices will also report on their measures to achieve sustainable development goals set by the United Nations, and convey their dedication to solving social issues through technological innovations spurred by intellectual property.— Kyodo ■

EU launches antitrust probe against Google over online ads

THE EU launched a wide-ranging antitrust probe against Google on Tuesday over concerns that it is forcing out rivals in the lucrative online advertising market.

The investigation will "assess whether Google has violated EU competition rules by favouring its own online display advertising technology services", a statement said.

The probe narrows in on an important slice of Google's business model where over 80 per cent of the giant's revenue last year came from advertising, or $147 billion (€124bn).

"We are concerned that Google has made it harder for rival online advertising services to compete" in display ad technology, said EU competition chief Margrethe Vestager.

At issue is Google's largely unnoticed, but highly dominant technologies that serve as an intermediary or broker between advertisers and publishers online.

The business was also at the heart of a recent case in France – brought by News Corp, French daily Le Figaro and Belgium's Groupe Rossel – that saw Google fined €220 million ($267 million). As in France, the EU will try to determine whether Google gave preferential treatment to its own ad inventory technologies AdX and Doubleclick, but will also look at other aspects of its business.

Crucially, the probe will also look into Google's announced plans to prohibit the placement of third party "cookies" on its Chrome browser, a move that has angered some publishers and advertisers. — AFP ■

This file photo shows a girl surfing for bargains on a website in Singapore. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Fukui nuclear unit becomes Japan's 1st to operate beyond 40-yr limit

AN aging nuclear reactor in central Japan's Fukui Prefecture was restarted Wednesday, becoming the country's first nuclear unit to operate beyond the government-mandated 40-year service period introduced under new rules set after the 2011 Fukushima disaster.

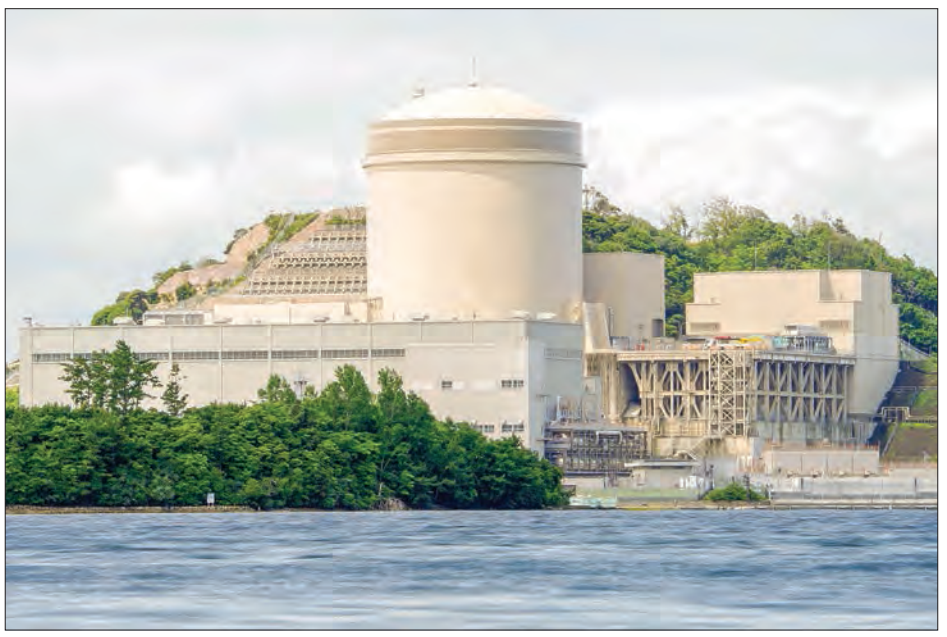
Kansai Electric Power Co. said it began operating the No. 3 unit at the Mihama plant for the first time in about 10 years, after completing final inspections. The reactor had stopped operations after the crisis at the Fukushima Daiichi plant triggered by a massive earthquake and tsunami.

However, the Mihama No. 3 unit, which began commercial operation in 1976, is expected to be halted in about four months before the Oct. 25 deadline for the implementation of counterterrorism measures which Kansai Electric is unlikely to meet, according to the company.

The Nuclear Regulation Authority granted approval in 2016 for the reactor to operate beyond the 40-year limit for an additional period of up to 20 years, after screening the company's safety measures for the unit.

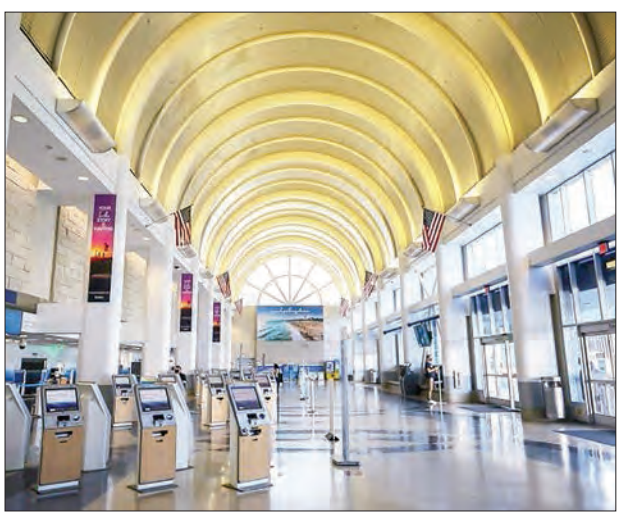
In February, Mihama Mayor Hideki Toshima also gave his consent for the resumption, followed by approval from Fukui. Gov. Tatsuji Sugimoto on April 28, despite increasing worries about aging nuclear reactors among local residents.

On Monday, a group of nine people in Fukui as well as neighbouring Kyoto and Shiga prefectures filed a lawsuit with the Osaka District Court, seeking suspension of the Mihama No. 3 reactor. — Kyodo ■



The No. 3 unit of Kansai Electric Power Co.'s Mihama plant in Fukui Prefecture is pictured on June 23, 2021. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Lifting off? Sudden travel surge tests US airlines



Just a few months ago, US airports were largely empty amid anemic consumer demand. **PHOTO: AFP /FILE**

US airlines are scrambling to ramp back up to meet soaring travel demand that has transformed America's airports from cavernous to crowded almost overnight.

The surge in pent-up demand is exposing immediate staffing shortfalls in the aviation workforce, as well as medium-term labour challenges following an exodus of experienced workers during the downturn.

The issues came to a head over the weekend when American Airlines canceled 400 flights and said it would cut one percent of its flights in July to better manage an "incredibly quick ramp-up of customer demand." While American was more aggressive than rivals in adding capacity, all major carriers face challenges in the sudden rush, analysts said. "They've had so many planes just waiting in hangars or runways that weren't being used... there's a lot of maintenance," said Ian Gendler, executive director of research at Value Line. "It's not an overnight thing."

The surge in bookings and the economic recovery are "fantastic things for the airlines, but they have to execute," Gendler said.

Training needed

Activity at US airports bottomed out in April 2020, when there were several days with fewer than 100,000 passengers nationwide, US data show. Volumes recovered somewhat from that nadir over the next months, but airports remained strikingly low-trafficked until vaccinations became widespread.—AFP ■

Invitation For Open tender No.(3/2021)

1. Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Department of Mines invites to submit the tender quotation sale open tender of (5008.574) Metric Tons, (21) Lots of Cathode Copper by United States Dollar as follow,

a)	Cathode Copper (108.574) MT	(1) Lot,	Yangon, Eden Warehouse
b)	Cathode Copper (100) MT	(5) Lots,	Yangon, Eden Warehouse
c)	Cathode Copper (200) MT	(5) Lots,	Yangon, Eden Warehouse
d)	Cathode Copper (200) MT	(7) Lots,	Monywa, Mine Site
e)	Cathode Copper (500) MT	(2) Lots,	Monywa, Mine Site
f)	Cathode Copper (1000) MT	(1) Lot,	Monywa, Mine Site

2. Base price of Cathode Copper (Eden Warehouse, Yangon) shall be based on the London Metal Exchange Copper price on the date of tender opening. The highest proposal amount shall be winning tender.

3. Base price of Monywa, Mine Site Cathode Copper shall be based on the London Metal Exchange Copper price on the date of tender opening. The highest proposal amount (Premium amount added to the LME price and deduction of transportation and handling expenses) shall be winning tender.

4. Tender Closing Date and Time is 21.7.2021 (14:00)PM and Opening Tender is (15:00) PM.

5. Tender documents are available from the Mineral Development Division, Department of Mines, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Office Building No.(19), Nay Pyi Taw and details can be asked to (+95) 067 3409378 and 067 3409372 within the Office hours.

Tender Committee

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V BLPL BLESSING VOY.NO. (2109E/W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BLPL BLESSING VOY.NO. (2109E/W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-6-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S BLPL SHIPPING LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V MAERSK NARVIK VOY.NO. (123S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MAERSK NARVIK VOY.NO. (123S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-6-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V NICON FUTURE

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NICON FUTURE** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-6-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **IBTT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301191/2301178**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES (S'PORE) PTE LTD

Welcome to border town of Mong Yu in Shan State (East)

By Ko Ko Naing (IPRD)
Translated by EPPA

SURROUNDED by Shan mountain ranges and old fortifications, Mong Yu, a border town in Tachilek district, eastern Shan State, is located on the bank of Namlwe creek. The town is naturally beautiful with ancient historical pagodas, monasteries, and Shan traditional festivals all year round. Mong Yu border town is a favourite for waterfall lovers and those who want to visit the other side of the friendship bridge between two nations.

The history of Mong Yu town started during the Buddha time when the town was covered by forests. It is believed that the town was preordained by the Buddha while He took a rest at the place of Hokhone monastery.

Mong Yu is located at 100 ° 32'E and 100° 33'E. It is located between 21° 29'N and 21° 30'N and covers an area of 1,120.938 square miles. It is 46 miles wide from east to west and 19 miles wide from south to north. With numerous mountains and hills, the town has a few flat plains and is neighbour to Laos in the east, Kengtung in the west, Mongyawng and Tachilek townships in the south and China in the north.

There are two creeks, Namlwe creek which flows

from north to south and Namphun creek which flows from west to east. Due to the temperate climate, the vegetation such as locally called Mitekaw, Sakawar, Seik Nangyi, Ohn Tone, chestnut, Thit Te, Thit Ae and pine trees are naturally grown, and Cassia siamea plant which is used as a firewood.

Although the 18-mile road Mongyawng- Mong Yu road was on earthern road that took the travellers an overnight to get to the town in the rainy season, the public construction company has expanded and upgraded the road to an asphalt road with a concrete bridge.

Village farmers in the town mainly grew the paddy in the past and they have grown maize, various peas, sesame, peanut, sugarcane, rubber, tea, coffee, coconut, banana and other vegetables and fruits now. Although they did breeding of cow, buffalo, pig, duck and fish manageably, not commercially, to use the cows and buffalo in farming, they now raise them for donation only.

Most of the villagers in Mong Yu town are Bamar, Shan, Lwai and Akha ethnic nationalities, with a few Mon, Chin and Rakhine people. The population has increased to an average of 34,461. The Shan people in Mong Yu live are ethnic people who make a living by honestly selling farm and farm groceries at home.

As Mong Yu is the closest city to the neighbouring country of the People's Republic of China, it has the best border trade, and the village has been developed with its main engagement in trade and agriculture.

■■■

Thet Htar Thuzar in good shape to enter Tokyo Olympic

ACCORDING to figures released by the World Badminton Federation on 15 June, Myanmar badminton star player Thet Htar Thuzar is ranked 29th in the women's individual category to advance to the Tokyo Olympics.

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) will approve the qualifiers for the Olympics and will allow 38 athletes to compete in the individual event and thus Thet Htar is in good condition to enter the Olympics.

According to the rules of the tournament, 34 players will be selected according to the rankings. Of the remaining four, one will be a host from Japan and three from the Asian Olympic Council.

Once the BWF has selected the four athletes, they will be sent to the relevant Olympic Committees for approval of the Tokyo Olympics.

According to the BWF, those with a rating of 1 to 16 must have a maximum of two candidates per country. Starting from 17th place, only one player per country will be allowed to compete, and thus some players outside of 34th place can expect it, BWF officials said.

The BWF had previously set a time limit for the Olympics from April 2019 to May 2020, but the Olympics were postponed due to the pandemic situation.

Myanmar Badminton star Thet Htar Thuzar. **PHOTO: BADMINTON WORLD FEDERATION**

The BWF has extended the qualifiers period from 4 January to 13 June this year, but most competitions have been cancelled due to the epidemic.

Therefore, the BWF will determine the qualifying criteria for the Olympics based on the results of the competitions from April 2019 to March 2020. The results are calculated from some of the competitions held this year.

If Thet Htar Thuzar qualifies for the upcoming Tokyo Olympics, it would be the very first Myanmar badminton player to enter the Olympic tourney. — GNLM

England's Sterling undaunted by heavyweight clash in last 16 of Euro 2020

RAHEEM Sterling said England were braced for a heavyweight last-16 clash at Euro 2020 after topping Group D with a 1-0 win against the Czech Republic on Tuesday. The victory at Wembley means England are likely to face either world champions France, holders Portugal or Germany in the knockout phase. England were heavily criticized for their toothless performance in the 0-0 draw against Scotland but found more of an attacking edge in their final group game.

Raheem Sterling said England were braced for a heavyweight last-16 clash at Euro 2020 after topping Group D with a 1-0 win against the Czech Republic on Tuesday. **PHOTO: AFP**

"I think there are positives from the game," Sterling, who also scored England's only other goal of the group phase in the 1-0 opening win against Croatia, told ITV. "We kept the ball better today. It gave us more attacking options. We got in the gaps really well, played some good football and got the goal we needed."

Sterling praised Jack Grealish and man-of-the-match Bukayo Saka, who were brought in to freshen up the attack. "It is brilliant to have these players around you who can create goals," he said. "Different players are needed for different games and those two that came in were massive and did what they needed to do. "If you don't concede goals you win football matches. You just need to score at the other end. People were disappointed in the Scotland game a few days ago but we didn't concede. — AFP ■

Claesson hits last-gasp winner for Sweden against Poland

VIKTOR Claesson scored an injury-time winner as Sweden beat Poland 3-2 in Saint Petersburg on Wednesday to clinch top spot in Group E and knock their opponents out of Euro 2020. Emil Forsberg struck twice, the first coming after just 81 seconds, but Robert Lewandowski's double gave Poland hope of qualifying before Claesson's late goal sent Sweden through as group winners. Sweden will likely play Ukraine in the last 16 after pipping Spain to first place, with Slovakia exiting alongside Poland following a crushing 5-0 defeat in Seville. Janne Andersson's side, safe in the knowledge they were assured of a place in the next round before kick-off, made a dream start as Forsberg scored for the second game in a row, netting the second-fastest goal in European Championship history. The RB Leipzig attacker collected a loose ball just outside the Poland area after Kamil Glik flattened Alexander Isak, riding a challenge from Kamil Jozwiak before firing into the far corner. — AFP ■

Spain put five past Slovakia to book Croatia showdown

SPAIN finally have lift-off at Euro 2020 after a 5-0 hammering of Slovakia on Wednesday sent them through as runners-up in Group E, with Croatia their opponents in the last 16 on Monday.

Luis Enrique described his team as a bottle of cava about to be popped and they certainly exploded in Seville, where a scoring frenzy felt cathartic and could yet prove transformative for their chances in the knock-out stages.

Spain were even about to progress as group winners until Viktor Claesson scored in the 94th minute against Poland to secure top spot for Sweden. Slovakia finish third and are out.

After two tension-filled draws against Sweden and Poland, Spain were left scrambling to qualify, with Luis Enrique admitting he would have taken any position in the group as long as it meant going through.

But Spain ran riot at La Cartuja, their early anxiety heightened by Alvaro Morata's missed penalty and then quickly eased by two dreadful mistakes by Slovakia's goalkeeper Martin Dubravka.

The first was an own goal that will surely go down as one of the strangest moments of the tournament before another Dubravka error allowed Aymeric Laporte to head in. — AFP ■

Spain's players react after their team's fifth goal during the UEFA EURO 2020 Group E football match between Slovakia and Spain at La Cartuja Stadium in Seville on 23 June 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**