

NATIONAL

Over 39,000 trees planted in Ngaphe Township

PAGE-3

NATIONAL

Taninthayi Buddha's Footprint pagoda

PAGE-4

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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60,000-acre monsoon paddy more to be planted in Thaphanseik dam-irrigated area this year

A TOTAL of 60,000 acres of monsoon paddy more than last year will be planted this year within the Thaphanseik Dam-irrigated area, according to the Head of the Shwebo District Department of Agriculture, Sagaing Region.

Last year, more than 420,000 acres of monsoon paddy were planned to be planted in the irrigated area of the dam and, this year, it is planned to cultivate more than 480,000 acres of monsoon paddy depending on the remaining water of the dam.

“Last year, the Thaphanseik Dam had a capacity of 390,000 acre-feet and it covered 420,000 acres of monsoon paddy were cultivated in the irrigated area, and this year, since the dam has 850,000 acre-feet,



Last year, more than 420,000 acres of monsoon paddy were planned to be planted in the irrigated area of the dam and, this year, it is planned to cultivate more than 480,000 acres of monsoon paddy depending on the remaining water of the dam.



480,000 acres of paddy were planned to be planted, which is more than 60,000 acres than last year,” said Head of the Shwebo District Department of Agriculture U Tin Maung

Swe. If it rains more this year and the inflow of water into the dam increases, the dam will supply more paddy fields than the planned, he added.

In the Thaphanseik Dam irrigated area, 67,110 acres will be planted in the Kindat canal, 95,000 acres in the Kintat right canal, 202,890 acres in Shwebo canal and 115,000 acres in YeU canal, a total of 480,000 acres will be planted this year. The water supply for planting and ploughing will be distributed starting from 1 July 2021, according to the Sagaing Region Agriculture Department.

The plan to cultivate 480,000 acres of monsoon paddy in the Thaphanseik Dam irrigated area was approved by

the coordination meeting of the district/township agriculture departments on 8 June 2021. —Lu Lay/GNLM

Last year, more than 420,000 acres of monsoon paddy were planned to be planted in the irrigated area of the dam and, this year, it is planned to cultivate more than 480,000 acres of monsoon paddy depending on the remaining water of the dam.

INSIDE TODAY

LOCAL NEWS

Myanmar-Thai border trade nearly hit \$3 bln PAGE-5



LOCAL NEWS

Mon State reports 300 COVID-19 positive cases as of 26 June PAGE-5

LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar ships nearly 1.49 mln tonnes of various pulses as of 18 June PAGE-6



LOCAL BUSINESS

Cargo shipping crisis impedes palm oil import amid COVID-19 pandemic PAGE-6

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

1,312 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 29 June, total figure rises to 155,697

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 155,697 after 1,312 new cases were reported on 29 June 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, 135,992 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 3,320 after 11 died. —MNA

Only when every citizen has the will to build a better country will the country have prosperity

IT is necessary to turn out many educated persons and disseminate the knowledge to each other in the nation to ensure the rule of law. Only when every citizen has the will to build a better country will the country have prosperity. In order to do so, the education sector needs sound foundations.

(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)

Announcement

1. It is found that some foreign correspondents based in Myanmar express the current government of the State Administration Council as military council or military junta or junta in their news stories and exaggerate their news quoting rootless sources and false news related to Myanmar.
2. The State Administration Council just controls various State duties in line with the provisions of the state of emergency under the Constitution (2008) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and it has been clearly announced that the government is not a coup d'état government.
3. The United Nations and global countries have recognized the State Administration Council as the legal government of Myanmar.
4. Especially, some foreign news agencies need to express news in line with news media ethics instead of quoting and exaggerating inaccurate and uncertain news and undermining the country by disseminating false news to global people.
5. The government emphasizes the holding of press conferences and the correct and quick replies to queries so as to ensure the correct and swift flow of information.
6. The announcement was hereby issued that some foreign news agencies were warned not to further apply the usage of military council/military junta/junta for the government in the future and not to quote and exaggerate the false news, and action will be taken against them under the existing laws if they apply wrong usages, quote and exaggerate fake news and disseminate false information.

Ministry of Information

Over 39,000 trees planted in Ngaphe Township



A total of 39,850 saplings including 10,402 plants of Eucalyptus, 2,1479 plants of cutch, 3,635 plants of Sitt, 1,209 plants of bamboo, 100 plants of Martakut, 550 plants of neen, 90 plants of gum-kino, 900 plants of chukrassia, 900 plants of Myanmar raintree, 450 plants of Tectona and 135 plants of Holoptelea were planted on 80 acres of the village land.

OFFICIALS from the Dry Zone Greening Department of Magway Region, carried out plantations in Ngaphe Township, Minbu District this month, said the departmental officials.

A total of 39,850 saplings including 50 acres of watershed plantations, 30 acres of village firewood plantations and special green plantations are being cultivated starting from 11 June.

Special plantation will be continued this rainy season to revitalize the tropics said officials from the Department of Dry Zone Greening.

U Zaw Thin, Head of Dry Zone Greening Department, Ngaphe Township, staff and local people participated in the plantation.

A total of 39,850 saplings including 10,402 plants of Eucalyptus, 2,1479 plants of cutch, 3,635 plants of Sitt, 1,209 plants of bamboo, 100 plants of Martakut, 550 plants of neen, 90 plants of gum-kino, 900 plants of chukrassia, 900 plants of Myanmar raintree, 450 plants of Tectona and 135 plants of Holoptelea were planted on 80 acres of the village land. — Ma Yu (Ngaphe)/ GNLM

CBM sells \$3 mln for third time in June

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold US\$3 million for the third time this month on 25 June.

About US\$3 million were sold at an auction exchange rate of K1,595 per US dollar.

On 7 June, the CBM sold about \$ 3 million for the first time this month at an auction market rate. The bank has already sold a total of US\$12 million within this month.

In May, the CBM reportedly sold \$24 million at an auction rate. The CBM is conducting auctions for foreign exchange to reduce the fluctuation of foreign exchange rates in a short-

term period and fulfil the needs of foreign exchange reserves.

The dollar exchange rate against Myanmar Kyat stood at around K1,330 per dollar at the end-January. Then, the rate jumped to K1,730 per dollar on 12 May.

With the rising US dollar exchange rate, the CBM has been constantly selling the US dollar at an auction exchange rate since 12 May. Consequently, the exchange rate dips to around K1,600 in the local foreign exchange market.

The local foreign exchange market's data in 2021, the highest

and the lowest exchange rate is currently fixed around K1,327-1,345 in January, K1,335-1,465 in February, K1,420-1,550 in March, K1,550-1,610 in April and K1,585-1,730 in May.

In 2020, the exchange rate moved in the range of K1,465-1,493 in January, K1,436-1,465 in February, K1,320-1,445 in March, K1,395-1,440 in April, K1,406-1,426 in May, K1,385-1,412 in June, K1,367-1,410 in July, K1,335-1,390 in August, K1,310-1,355 in September, K1,282-1,315 in October, K1,303-1,330 in November and K1,324-1,403 in December. — GNLM



With the rising US dollar exchange rate, the CBM has been constantly selling the US dollar at an auction exchange rate since 12 May. Consequently, the exchange rate dips to around K1,600 in the local foreign exchange market. PHOTO: YE HTUT TIN (NLM)

Taninthayi Buddha’s Footprint pagoda

TANINTHAYI Township in Myeik District of Taninthayi Region boasts of many ancient pagodas. This week, we would like to highlight the Chay Taw Yar pagoda (Buddha footprint) located on the mountain called Thamantakuta. The mountain is situated between Lal Taung Yar Kyay Village and Tamote Chone Village and the pagoda is constructed on a 2,414 feet high rock called Ga Za Yazar which was in the shape of a laying elephant. The Set Taw Yar is 57 inches in length, 20 inches in width of heel and 29 inches in width of the tips of the foot. The Gaza Yazar rock is 43 feet in length, 21 feet in width and 14ft in height.

The Buddha visited the Thamantakuta hill of Leitaungya after visiting around for alms from the Khayin of Taninthayi. Then, He sat on the Gaza Yazar stone. Meanwhile, Hermit Thihha and Dragon King Mani Akkhita donated alms to the Lord Buddha. The Buddha delivered sermons to the King of Thamantakuta hill and other celestial beings in the forests. Then, He made a footprint of His right foot on Gaza Yazar stone in 111 ME, according to the records.

The wonders of Taninthayi Sett Taw Yar are as follows:

Although it existed on the natural rock about 2,600 years ago, the shape stays the same in its original structure.



There are two ways to the pagoda—concrete road and dirt road. The pilgrims can reach there by car or motorcycle or on foot. The Taninthayi Chay Buddha’s Footprint pagoda festival was held during the Thingyan festival in previous years.



There is water in the footprint in any season.

The rock with the Buddha footprint is not attached to another layer of stone.

The rock is in the shape of laying elephant.

The rock is surrounded by the stone structures of Dragon King and Tortoise King.

There are the footprints of Arhat, Elephant and Horse beside the Buddha footprint.

If someone begins the observance of resolution for religious purpose within the Sett Taw Yar compound, the water leaks more and the symbols of Sa Ma appears on the rock.

The climate suddenly changes when the Special Beings, Dragon, Weik-za and Zaw Gyi visit there to pay homage to the Buddha footprint.

The rays of light and fire

come out.

It is easy to attain tranquility for meditation and there are plenty of stone caves where the hermits take meditation.

The lotus with 24 inches in diameter blooms near the Sett Taw Yar.

There are plenty of rare various aromatic tuber herbs and snow lotus.

The Taninthayi River Brothers and the mountains pay homage for many times.

The mountain is the highest one compared to the others in vicinity areas.

The big snakes, tigers and gorillas can be seen there but they are a no longer danger to the people.

Two cities Kaw Thamvi and Taninthayi emerged on the right and left of the mountain.

The ancient people take the

granite from the mountain and curve them into Buddha images and commemorative wooden post for the establishment of the city.

The people can see the mountain like large fish swimming in the waves of Taninthayi mountains wherever they look.

There are two ways to the pagoda — concrete road and dirt road. The pilgrims can reach there by car or motorcycle or on foot. The Taninthayi Buddha’s Footprint Taung pagoda festival was held during the Thingyan festival in previous years.

Although there was no concrete road, the people paid a visit to the pagoda on foot in groups. The people can enjoy the picturesque cloud sea view in the early morning. There are about 500 pilgrims to the pagoda

daily, according to the Township Sangha Nayaka Chairman Sayadaw Bhaddanta Jotika.

The Township Sangha Nayaka Committee, Chay Taw Yar Taung pagoda board of trustees and the well-wishers jointly construct a two-storey religious hall for the pilgrims to take a rest peacefully, hold Maha Pathana recitation ceremony and donation ceremony by organizing a ceremony to lay the foundation for building the religious hall on 26 February 2021.

Therefore, I would like to urge the pilgrims, people who love travelling and climbers to visit to Taninthayi Buddha footprint pagoda full of mysterious things, picturesque nature and fresh breeze on behalf of Taninthayi residents. — Nanthayi-Htein Win/GNLM

Natmauk residents run small-scale baby chick production

THE people living in Kan Gyi Ward of Natmauk Township in the Magway Region operate manageable scale poultry farming.

“We breed about 100 native chickens at our poultry farm. We put the eggs in the incubators for 21 days. Then, the newly born chicks receive the vaccine as

soon as they are taken out of the machine. They are also placed in a room with the required temperature for 21 days and vaccinated against new castle disease. We get K1,800 per normal chicken and K8,000 per broiler chicken. We feed them broken rice, corn and bran three times a day. We

also use watercress and Brachiaria grass as their feed. The poultry farming industry makes a profit for us,” said a poultry farmer from Kan Gyi Ward.

Most of the customers of chicks are from Natmauk and Pyawbwe townships. —Thin Thin Myat (Natmauk)/GNLM



Most of the customers of chicks are from Natmauk and Pyawbwe townships.

Remove Corruption, Promote Prosperity

Noticeable facts to file complaint to Anti-Corruption Commission

1. Anybody may send information and complaints on matters pertaining to corruption and wealth in bribery to the commission or the commission’s office or the working committee formed under this law or the preliminary scrutiny body and any investigation team or relevant government department or government organization.
2. Filing of the complaints must directly be sent to the commission without the need to sending a copy.
3. The complaint must comprise the complainant’s name, signature, copy of citizenship scrutiny card, full address and telephone number.
4. The complaint must be submitted with important evidence such as witnesses, documents, photos, audio files, and video files.
5. If the complaint is intended to cause grievance or discredit against anyone, action will be taken against the complainant under Section 59 of this law.

Address

Anti-Corruption Commission
Office No 56, Zeyahtani Road, Ottarathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw, post box: 144
Tel: 067-8103347, 067-8103334
Email address: accm@accm.gov.mm
Website address: <http://www.accm.gov.mm>

Imports down by \$3.5 bln as of 18 June, MoC reports

THE value of Myanmar's imports between 1 October and 18 June in the current financial year 2020-2021 stood at US\$10.84 billion, a sharp drop of \$3.5 billion from \$14.36 billion registered in the year-ago period, according to data released by the Ministry of Commerce.

The value of imports in the consumer, capital, intermediate goods, and CMP businesses groups declined in the current FY. The drop in foreign direct investment this year negatively affected the trade.

Over the past eight and a half months of the current FY, capital goods, such as auto parts, vehicles, machines, steel, and aeroplane parts were brought into the country. Their import value was estimated at \$3.77 billion. The figure was over \$1.7 billion lower than those values registered in the same period of the previous FY.

Meanwhile, Myanmar imported consumer products worth \$2.3 billion, including pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and palm oil. The imports of consumer products showed a slight decrease of \$162.7 million compared with the same period in the previous FY.

Intermediate goods make up the second-largest share of Myanmar's imports, with petroleum products and plastic raw materials being the main import items. This year, imports of raw materials plunged to \$3.66 billion from \$4.78 billion registered during the year-ago period.

During the same period, raw materials worth over \$1 billion were also imported for the Cut-Make-Pack (CMP) garment sector, showing a decrease of \$524 million compared with the last budget year.

At present, the CMP garment sector which contributes to 30 per cent of Myanmar's



Meanwhile, Myanmar imported consumer products worth \$2.3 billion, including pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and palm oil. The imports of consumer products showed a slight decrease of \$162.7 million compared with the same period in the previous FY.

export sector is struggling due to the cancellation of the order from the European countries and suspension of trading by western countries amid the COVID-19.

Therefore, import values of raw materials by CMP businesses have been dropping.

The top 10 import countries to Myanmar are China, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Viet Nam, Japan, the Republic of Korea and the US, as per data of the Ministry of Commerce. — KH/GNLM

Myanmar-Thai border trade nearly hit \$3 bln



Myawady Trade Zone in Kayin State, bordering with Thailand. **PHOTO SUPPLIED**

TRADE volume between Myanmar and Thailand in the financial year 2020-21 hit a total of US\$2.95 billion in total, Ministry of Commerce statistics shows.

According to the Ministry, Myanmar's exports to Thailand reached \$2.06 billion while imports hit \$895 million.

Compared to the same period in the last FY, this year FY's figures declined by \$71 million. The bilateral border trade hit \$3.02 billion last year.

The county mainly conducts border trade with Thailand through seven border checkpoints, Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Meisei gates.

From 1 October 2020 to 18 June 2021, the Myawady border gate topped with the most bilateral border trade value of \$1.23 billion.

Myanmar's exports to Thailand were primarily agriculture

and livestock products, and imports from Thailand were mainly non-alcoholic beverages, fabric and yarn, motorcycles and related parts, and construction material.

The bilateral trade between Myanmar and Thailand stood at \$2.95 billion in FY2020-2021 (as of June), \$5.1 billion in FY2019-2020, \$5.5 billion in FY2018-2019, \$2.9 billion in the mini-budget year of 2018 or transitional period from April to September this year, \$5 billion in FY2017-2018, \$4.3 billion in the 2016-2017FY, \$4.8 billion in the 2015-2016FY, \$5.7 billion in the 2014-2015FY, \$5.6 billion in the 2013-2014FY, \$4.7 billion in the 2012-2013FY, and \$4.5 billion in the 2011-2012FY, according to the Myanmar Ministry of Commerce.

Thailand is Myanmar second-largest trade partner and third-largest foreign investor. —ACM/GNLM

Mon State reports 300 COVID-19 positive cases as of 26 June

MON State reported about 300 confirmed cases of COVID-19 as of 26 June, according to the Emergency COVID-19 Assistance Charity Organization.

Four new COVID-19 confirmed cases were found in Paung on 26 June early morning, bringing the total tally to 22 patients. Those all positive patients were infected by local transmission.

Besides, the related authorities from the public Health Department will also set up an isolation ward in Paung township civil hospital. Its ward will be able to accommodate 20 patients. The monastery in Paung township is

intended as quarantine centre.

"On the morning of 26 June, about 47 COVID-19 confirmed patients were found in Mawlamyine Township. Because of the high rate of infection, the number of infected people could actually be much higher if we had more testing conducted," said a health volunteer of a charity organization.

The isolation ward-3 in Mawlamyine general hospital where there are COVID-19 positive patients has nearly 200 patients. The isolation ward-1 in Mawlamyine hospital has exceeded its target number of patients and authorities are now

All private bus lines suspend operation in Namtu township

ALL private bus lines plying Namtu-Lashio-Muse route have stopped temporarily starting from 28 June to control the contagion of COVID-19 virus in Namtu township, Shan state (North).

Regarding the suspension period of all private bus lines operation, the vehicles briefly halted operation to the townships along the way of stay-at-home townships in Shan State (North) including Lashio town beginning from 28 June. The announcement will also

be made if the bus lines are permitted to resume their operations again as usual. If the bus lines are found to be operating during the suspension period without following the COVID-19 rules and regulations, the bus lines and the drivers will be fined under the Natural Disaster Management Law, according to the Namtu Township Administration body.

From 16 June till today, a total of five women were found infected with the COVID-19 virus in Namtu township in two weeks.

In order to prevent the spreading of COVID-19, those coming from distant places should report immediately to authorities. They should stay home as much as possible and refrain from going into crowds, wear the masks systematically and wash their hands.

Myanmar has reported a total of 155,697 cases with 3,320 deaths and 135,992 recoveries as of 30 June 2021. —Lu Maw (IPRD)/GNLM

Myanmar ships nearly 1.49 mln tonnes of various pulses as of 18 June



Merchants evaluate quality of pulses at the Mandalay wholesale market last year. **PHOTO MIN HTET AUNG**

MORE than 1.49 million tonnes of various pulses and beans were exported to foreign markets between 1 October and 18 June of the current financial year 2020-2021, with the estimated value of US\$1.117 billion, the Commerce Ministry's data indicated.

Over the past eight and half months, the country conveyed \$623.8 million worth 787,857 tonnes of pulses and beans to foreign markets through maritime trade, and \$554 million valued 710,673.59 tonnes were sent to the neighbouring countries through the land border.

Myanmar's agriculture sector is the backbone of the country's economy and it contributes to over 30 per cent of

Gross Domestic Products. The country primarily cultivates paddy, corn, cotton, sugarcane, various pulses and beans. Its second-largest production is the pulses and beans, counting for 33 per cent of agro-products and covering 20 per cent of growing acres. Among them, black beans, pigeon peas and green grams constitute 72 per cent of bean acreage. Other beans including peanut, chickpea, soybean, black-eyed beans, butter bean and rice bean are also grown in the country.

India is the main buyer of Myanmar beans, especially black beans, green grams and pigeon peas. Besides India, Myanmar's beans are purchased

by Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, UAE, Malaysia, Indonesia, China (Taipei), Japan, and European countries. But, the volume of demand by those countries is small, according to the domestic beans market.

The bilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Myanmar and India ensured a strong market next five years, along with other relaxations on import quota, Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization under the Ministry of Commerce stated.

Myanmar can export 250,000 tonnes of black gram (urad) and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon peas under the G-to-G (government to government) pact during the

April-March period between the 2021-2022 financial year and the 2025-2026 FY. The bilateral negotiations for the G-to-G pact started in 2016 and the two countries signed an MoU on 18 June 2021.

Additionally, this G-to-G pact will not relate to India's yearly quota on bean import. Therefore, Myanmar exporters can ship them under this quota as well.

In May 2021, India's Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare approved not only black gram but also other pulses being imported from Myanmar that have the bill of lading up to October-end 2021, with relaxations of conditions regarding clearance consignment.

India experienced some damages to their farms due to erratic weather, resulting in a yield drop. The demand in India has risen amid the impacts of the global pandemic and the low supply. Consequently, India's ministry gave green light to the relaxations of conditions for imports of pulses from Myanmar.

The number of bean acreage is expected to increase in the coming season following the relaxations.

Following the policy change of India's pulses import, the prices of black gram and pigeon peas have risen in the domestic market. The grams are in high demand at present, according to the traders from Mandalay

commodity depot.

Strong local demand boosted the price of black gram (urad) to K1,105,000-1,235,000 per tonne on 25 June. Black gram fetched only K880,000 per tonne in April-end. Similarly, the high demand pushed up the price of pigeon peas up to K1,092,500 per tonne on 25 June, Bayintnaung Wholesale Market data showed.

Moreover, the green gram market also raised its head on the back of steady demand by China, India and other ASEAN countries.

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

India set an import quota on beans including black gram and pigeon peas starting from 2017. Myanmar earlier had to export black bean and pigeon peas under the quota system and limit period. The local growers were battered by quota and price manipulation in the previous years.

Myanmar shipped over 1.6 million tonnes of different varieties of pulses, especially mung beans, with an estimated worth of US\$1 billion, to other counties in the FY2018-2019. During the last FY2019-2020 ended September 30, the country delivered 1.6 million tonnes with an estimated value of \$1.195 billion. – KK/GNLM

Cargo shipping crisis impedes palm oil import amid COVID-19 pandemic

THE COVID-19 pandemic triggered a cargo shipping crisis, hindering palm oil import, said U San Lin, chair of Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association.

"The cargo shipping disrupted the palm oil import. The resurgences of COVID-19 infections in India raised concerns and hit the shipping industry hard," said U San Lin.

Additionally, the bank-ing restrictions imposed difficulties to exporters and importers, he continued.

At present, the domestic palm oil price has slightly declined, tracking the import price retreat, said U San Lin, chair of Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers'

Association.

The price of palm oil fell to US\$995 per tonne in the international market. Consequently, it ranges K2,800-2,900 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kg) in the domestic wholesale market.

The oil palm trees produce fruits in abundance this time. The price is likely to be in the bull market up to October if any trade barrier will not occur, U San Lin said.

In early January 2021, production slump in importing countries Malaysia and Indonesia, caused by erratic weather conditions and the COVID-19 impacts, high imports by certain countries under tax reduction, a



The palm oil price stood at \$1,055-1,200 per tonne in the foreign market.

tax hike on exports in producing countries and the short storage of palm oil in those countries con-

tributed to the rise in edible oil price. The palm oil price stood at \$1,055-1,200 per tonne in the

foreign market.

Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association issued a notice in January to import palm oil from foreign countries sustainably for self-sufficiency and distribute edible oil at a fair price to consumers. So it would ensure that there will be no edible oil shortage in regions and states when there is a rise in imported oil price.

The domestic consumption of edible oil is estimated at 1 million tonnes per year. The local cooking oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. About 700,000 tonnes of cooking oil are yearly imported in order to meet the self-sufficiency in the domestic market. – NN/GNLM

Malaysia unveils \$36 bln in aid as lockdown extended indefinitely

MALAYSIAN Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin announced Monday a 150 billion ringgit (\$36.2 billion) aid package to help people tide over the lockdown that has been extended indefinitely as the number of fresh COVID-19 cases shows no signs of abating.

In his televised address, Muhyiddin said the aid package includes 10 billion ringgit for cash handouts to middle-class and low-income households by the end of this year.

He also announced a six-month automatic loan moratorium, regardless of income level, and various funds and tax breaks for small and medium-sized enterprises and the hotel industry, among other measures.

“Even though the fiscal room is very limited, the Na-

tional Alliance government will remain committed in prioritizing the wellbeing of the people,” Muhyiddin said.

The announcements came after the government extended the lockdown, scheduled to end Monday, for an indefinite period.

It has said lockdown rules will only be eased when daily COVID-19 cases fall below a weekly average of 4,000 and hospitals have more space to treat patients.

Over the past week, the country has on average confirmed over 5,000 new coronavirus cases, with double-digit deaths each day. Intensive care unit bed occupancy is almost full and only 6.4 per cent of the population had completed two doses of vaccine as of Sunday.

The latest aid package announced by Muhyiddin is the



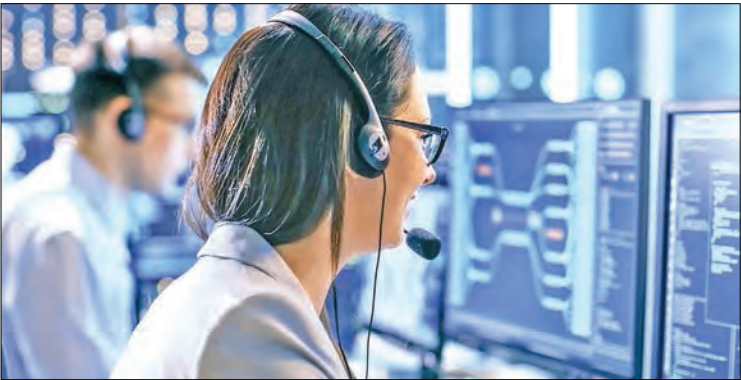
Streets are deserted in Kuala Lumpur on 1 June 2021, as Malaysia entered a nationwide lockdown. PHOTO: KYODO

fourth this year as the country battles with a surge in coronavirus infections that prompted the government to impose a lockdown on 1 June.

Only essential manufacturing and services sectors are allowed to operate, and shopping malls, schools and public parks are closed. Movements are also

restricted, with only two people per household allowed to go out, and journeys between states and districts in the country banned. — Kyodo News ■

Australian doctors call for COVID-19 vaccine advertising campaign



The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) recently said it was critical for the government to give Australians up-to-date information about the COVID-19 vaccine program. PHOTO: XINHUA

AUSTRALIAN doctors have called for an urgent national advertising campaign to address coronavirus vaccine misinformation.

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) recently said it was critical for the government to give Australians up-to-date in-

formation about the COVID-19 vaccine program.

“There are certainly people who are having questions about their second dose, and we’ve got questions from the older cohorts, or refusals, which is a real concern,” Karen Price, the president of the RACGP, told Nine Entertainment newspapers.

“I think that we risk pandemic fatigue, and then negative speculation if we are not addressing these issues.

“If we wait for supply to increase before ramping up a campaign, we are risking more people becoming hesitant in the meantime.”

The urge comes after Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced on Monday night that Australians under the age of 40 can go to their GPs to request AstraZeneca’s COVID-19 vaccine if they wish to.

The AstraZeneca vaccine was only recommended for Australians over 60, after it was linked to a rare blood clotting disorder, but federal, state and territory leaders on Monday agreed to grant indemnity to doctors who administer the vaccine to willing under-60s. A spokesperson for the Department of Health said the campaign was being updated constantly. — Xinhua ■

NEWS
IN BRIEF

Berlin urges UK govt to reduce Euro 2020 crowd sizes

GERMAN Interior Minister Horst Seehofer on Tuesday urged the British government to reduce the number of fans allowed into Wembley stadium for the final Euro 2020 matches, as fears grow over the spread of the Delta variant.

“I think it’s irresponsible for tens of thousands to gather in close proximity” in countries where the “highly contagious” Delta variant is spreading, Seehofer told Germany’s Augsburg Allgemeine newspaper. —AFP ■

Sweden to further ease COVID-19 restrictions

SWEDEN will further relax the restrictions introduced to combat the spread of COVID-19, the government said here on Monday.

“As from Thursday (1 July), life will begin to resemble what it was like before the pandemic,” Minister for Health and Social Affairs Lena Hallengren said at a press conference.

Crowds of up to 50 — 300 if there are dedicated seats — will be allowed to attend indoor sport and culture events. Outdoors, the new ceiling will be 600 (3,000 with dedicated seats). Even more spectators may be allowed should the venue have several sections, each with its own entry point, and where the spectators can keep a transmission-safe distance.

The relaxed rules also allow

for venues to be rented out for private functions with up to 50 participants. Curfews on bars and restaurants will also be lifted, although the number of guests will be restricted to eight per table indoors.

A plan to allow long-distance bus and train companies to operate at full capacity from July 15 was also announced by Hallengren, who is in effect minister in a transitional government following Prime Minister Stefan Lofven’s resignation only hours earlier after losing a no-confidence vote last week.

The announcement was made as the number of COVID-19 patients in intensive care and that of coronavirus-related deaths have decreased consider-

ably lately in the country. However, on 23 June, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) issued a warning that the Delta variant

of COVID-19 first identified in India was spreading at an alarming rate in the European Union and the European Economic Area (EU/EEA). — Xinhua ■



In Uppsala, a city near Stockholm in Sweden, posters on the sides of rubbish bins read: “The danger is not over”. PHOTO: AFP

Viet Nam posts healthy Q2 growth but virus poses

VIET NAM shook off a fresh outbreak of virus infections and containment measures to record strong economic growth in the second quarter, data showed on Tuesday, though there were warnings that the road ahead remained bumpy.

The country has long been among the best performing economies in Asia and was one of the few in the world to expand last year after success in containing the worst of the virus. —AFP ■

Take pride of sacrifice in being restricted as stay-at-home for all

The infection rate of the COVID-19 pandemic in Myanmar is on the rise day by day. The Ministry of Health and Sports issues the press release on the number of positive patients daily. Myanmar's major cities fighting against the disease on the battlefield fall into the list of stay-at-home programmes. So, everybody needs to specially take care of fighting against the disease.

So far, eleven townships have been involved on the list of stay-at-home programme. These are Tonzang, Tiddim, Falam, Thantlang and Haka townships in Chin State, Kalay and Tamu townships in Sagaing Region, Pyu and Letpadan townships in Bago Region, Lashio and Laukkai townships in Shan State.

The act of re-stricting their daily life aims to enable re-maining town-ships to be free from im-pacts of infec-tion. As such, those peo-ple from the stay-at-home programmes should take pride in their sacrifice for all.

Various townships outside the stay-at-home programme should not commit discrimination against those people from the restricted townships in addition to provide necessary assistance for them.

In fact, the people residing in the townships included on the list of the stay-at-home programme are facing difficulties for their basic needs on a daily basis. But they should have to understand restrictions adopted by the authorities as the activities for disinfection of the virus. The act of restricting their daily life aims to enable remaining townships to be free from impacts of infection. As such, those people from the stay-at-home programmes should take pride in their sacrifice for all.

■ ■ ■

At a time when any township has been enlisted at the stay-at-home programme, local people of those townships miss the chance for freedom of their daily lifestyle.

They miss the chance to go elsewhere but reside at their homes only, except for the persons going to workplaces for serving duties. Those people need to individually go out shopping. They are banned for their freedom which they practised during the period before the outbreak of the pandemic. So, they are restricted to allowing two persons in maximum for going to hospitals and clinics. Even vehicles need to take registration to pass one place to another.

Unavoidably, those who returned from foreign countries should tightly be urged to join the quarantine centres not to infect virus from them if they are affected after receiving the laboratory tests for COVID-19 disease.

All the laboratory and medical examinations and restrictions are being implemented for the sake of remaining resident people as part of disinfection activities of the disease.

The people from various townships outside the stay-at-home programme should not commit discrimination against those people from the restricted townships in addition to provide necessary assistance for them.

In fact, the people residing in the townships included on the list of the stay-at-home programme are facing difficulties for their basic needs on a daily basis. But they should have to understand restrictions adopted by the authorities as the activities for disinfection of the virus. The act of restricting their daily life aims to enable remaining townships to be free from impacts of infection. As such, those people from the stay-at-home programmes should take pride in their sacrifice for all.

Delayed doses of AstraZeneca jab boost immunity: study

DELAYED second and third doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine boost immunity against Covid-19, a study by Oxford University, which developed the jab with the British-Swedish firm, said on Monday.

An interval of up to 45 weeks between the first and second dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine led to an enhanced immune response, rather than compromising immunity, the study said.

A "substantial increase" in antibodies

Giving a third dose of the jab more than six months after the second dose also leads to a "substantial increase" in antibodies and induces a "strong boost" to subjects' immune response, said the pre-print study, meaning that it has yet to be peer-reviewed.

"This should come as reassuring news to countries with low supplies of the vaccine, who may be concerned about delays in providing second doses to their



The Astra vaccine uses a design formulated by Vaccitech Plc scientists at the University of Oxford. PHOTO: UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD/AFP

populations," said lead investigator of the Oxford trial Andrew Pollard.

"There is an excellent response to a second dose, even after a 10-month delay from the first."

The researchers said the results for a delayed AstraZeneca third dose were positive, particularly as nations with advanced vaccination programmes consider whether third booster shots will be required to prolong immunity.

"It is not known if booster jabs will be needed due to waning immunity or to augment immunity against variants of concern," said the study's lead senior author, Teresa Lambe.

She explained the research

showed the AstraZeneca jab "is well tolerated and significantly boosts the antibody response."

Lambe added results were encouraging "if we find that a third dose is needed".

A milestone in efforts against the pandemic

The development of the jab, which is being administered in 160 countries, has been hailed as a milestone in efforts against the pandemic because of its relatively low cost and ease of transportation.

However, confidence in the jab, as with the vaccine developed by the US firm Johnson & Johnson, has been hampered by concerns over links to very rare but serious blood clots in a handful of cases.

A number of nations have suspended the use of the vaccine as a result or restricted its use by younger groups who are less at risk from Covid.

The Oxford study indicated

that side effects from the vaccine in general were "well tolerated" with "lower incidents of side effects after second and third doses than after first doses".

A separate Oxford-led study released on Monday found that alternating doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine with that developed by Pfizer/BioNTech also boosted immune response.

It found subjects responded differently depending on the order in which the shots were given, but vaccination schedules involving both the AstraZeneca and Pfizer/BioNTech jabs could potentially be used to give more flexibility in tackling the virus.

Matthew Snape, the chief investigator for the trial, said when the mixed vaccines were given at a four-week interval they induced "an immune response that is above the threshold set by the standard schedule of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine".

SOURCE: AFP

Trauma patients with COVID-19 face greater risk of complications, death: Study

Study shows that COVID virus increased the risk of complications, death among trauma patients with injuries from car crashes, falls or other accidents, or who were victims of violent injuries such as gunshots.

COVID-19-positive patients with traumatic injuries have a six times higher risk of death and complication than patients without COVID, according to researchers at Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. Published in the Journal of Trauma and Acute Surgery titled "The Impact of COVID-19 Infection on Outcomes After Injury in a State Trauma System", the study shows that the virus also increased the risk of complications and death among trauma patients with injuries from car crashes, falls or other accidents, or who were victims of violent injuries such as gunshots and stabbings.

A six times higher risk of death

The findings reveal that patients in trauma centres across the state of Pennsylvania who also tested positive for COVID-19 had a six times higher risk of death than patients with similar injuries

without COVID. COVID-positive patients also demonstrated double the likelihood of complications such as venous thromboembolism, renal failure, need for intubation, and unplanned ICU admission, as well as more than five times the odds of pulmonary complications. These risks were even greater in patients over age 65. "COVID-19 had the largest impact on patients whose injuries were relatively minor, and who we would have otherwise expected to do well," said lead author Elinore Kaufman, MD, MSH, an assistant professor in the Division of Trauma, Surgical Critical Care and Emergency Surgery at Penn Medicine.

With extra care and vigilance

Elinore added, "Our findings underscore how important it is for hospitals to consistently test admitted patients so that providers can be aware of this additional risk and treat patients with extra

care and vigilance." Researchers conducted a retrospective study of 15,550 patients admitted to Pennsylvania trauma centres from March 21, 2020, (when Governor Tom Wolf ordered the closure of non-essential businesses statewide) to 31 July, 2020. Of the 15,550 patients, 8,170 were tested for the virus, and 219 tested positive. During this period, the researchers evaluated length of stay, complications, and overall outcomes for patients who tested positive for COVID, compared to patients who did not have the virus. They found that rates of testing increased over time, from 34 per cent in April 2020 to 56 per cent in July. However, rates of testing varied substantially across centres, with a median of 56.2 per cent and a range of 0 per cent to 96.4 per cent.

Standard protocols to minimize risks

"First, we need to investigate



COVID-19-positive patients with traumatic injuries have a six times higher risk of death and complication than patients without COVID, according to researchers at Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. PHOTO: UNSPLASH/ANI

how to best care for these high-risk patients, and establish standard protocols to minimize risks," said senior author Niels D. Martin, MD, chief of Surgical Critical Care and an associate professor in the divi-

sion of Trauma, Surgical Critical Care and Emergency Surgery.

Niels added, "Second, we need more data on the risks associated with patients who present symptoms of COVID, versus those

who are asymptomatic, so we can administer proven treatments appropriately and increase the likelihood of survival with minimal complications."

SOURCE: Asian News

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Rebuild Better Together

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နေပြည်တော်

Myanmar Daily Weather Report
(Issued at 4:00 pm Tuesday 29 June, 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: Monsoon is weak over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 30th June, 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway Regions, scattered in Upper Sagaing Region and Kayah State, fairly widespread in Bago, Ayeyawady Regions and Chin, Kayah States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with isolated heavyfalls in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin, Rakhine States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Weak to moderate monsoon.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30th June, 2021: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30th June, 2021: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30th June, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

The Global New Light of Myanmar

www.gnlm.com.mm

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NEWS
IN BRIEFJapan expresses
concern over
economic
security amid
US-China rivalry

In a white paper released on Tuesday, the Japanese government said that it should diversify suppliers and cooperate with the United States and other countries to protect supply chains as a way to improve economic security amid increased US-China rivalry. The document, authored by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, also stressed it is "essential" that thorough measures be taken to prevent sensitive technologies from being leaked, reported Kyodo News.

The white paper said countries had been spurred to strengthen economic security after the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the fragility of supply chains, citing the disruption of medical supplies as an example. It further stressed the need to promote research, development and capital investment in technologies of strategic importance with the aim of strengthening domestic production and "securing a competitive edge." — ANI ■

Russian police
search homes
of investigative
journalists

Russian police on Tuesday were searching the apartments of investigative journalists and their relatives as authorities pile more pressure on independent media. Proyeckt (The Project), one of Russia's last remaining independent media outlets specialising in in-depth investigations, said that police were raiding the homes of its chief editor Roman Badanin and journalist Maria Zholobova.

Another journalist, deputy editor Mikhail Rubin, was detained while police were searching his parents' apartment, the media outlet said on social media. The searches came ahead of the planned publication of an investigation into the alleged wealth of Interior Minister Vladimir Kolokoltsev, his son and other relatives, Proyeckt said. — AFP ■

China holds art performance to celebrate
CPC centenary

An art performance was held in Beijing on Monday evening in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

Party and state leaders Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, Li Zhanshu, Wang Yang, Wang Huning, Zhao Leji, Han Zheng and Wang Qishan joined about 20,000 people to watch the performance, titled "The Great Journey," at the National Stadium.

At around 7:57 pm, Xi and other Chinese leaders walked onto the rostrum, waving to the people amid applause and cheers. With fireworks rocketing into the sky, displaying the

number 100 over the stadium, the performance unveiled its curtain. The epic show, divided into four parts, depicted how the Chinese people, under the leadership of the CPC, have carried out revolution, construction and reform over the past 100 years.

It extolled the fact that under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core since the 18th CPC National Congress, socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era, and China is embarking on a new journey of fully building a modern socialist country. — Xinhua ■



An art performance titled "The Great Journey" is held in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC) at the National Stadium in Beijing, capital of China, on the evening of 28 June 2021. PHOTO: XINHUA/HUANG JINGWEN

Lapid arrives in UAE on first official visit
by an Israeli minister: AFP

Israel's top diplomat Yair Lapid arrived in the United Arab Emirates on Tuesday on the first ever official visit by an Israeli minister, after the two nations normalised ties in September.

Lapid landed at Abu Dhabi airport shortly after tweeting a picture of himself in a plane, with the caption: "Taking off for a historic visit to the UAE."

Israeli ministers have previously visited the United Arab Emirates, but newly appointed Lapid is the most senior Israeli to make the trip, and the first to travel on an official mission.

The head of mission at the Jewish state's embassy to the



Yair Lapid is on the first ever official visit by an Israeli minister to the United Arab Emirates. PHOTO: POOL/AFP/FILE

UAE tweeted "30 years as a diplomat, but to see the blue and

waiting for the minister of foreign affairs to land -- is exciting!"

Since their US-brokered normalisation agreement was announced in August last year, Israel and the UAE have signed a raft of deals ranging from tourism to aviation and financial services.

During his visit, Lapid will inaugurate the Israeli embassy in Abu Dhabi as well as a consulate in Dubai. "The Israeli delegation will land late morning at Abu Dhabi, and will be received by the minister of economic affairs at the foreign ministry," Israel's foreign ministry said in a statement. — AFP ■

India's holy Ganges river gives up its coronavirus dead



Families in India's north and east gave up the bodies of their loved ones to the Ganges river, or buried them in shallow graves on its banks, unable to afford the cost of funeral pyres during the height of the coronavirus outbreak. PHOTO: AFP

PARTLY hidden between long reeds of grass, bodies shrouded in saffron cloth float silently down the holy Ganges river, a reminder of how India's ferocious coronavirus wave overwhelmed hospitals and crematoriums.

Families in India's north and east gave up the bodies of their loved ones to the river or buried them in shallow graves on its banks, unable to afford the cost of funeral pyres at the height of the outbreak in April and May.

But the start of seasonal monsoon flooding has caused strong currents to surge through the 2,500-kilometre (1,550-mile) long waterway,

dislodging some of the bodies buried on its banks.

Officials in Allahabad -- one of Hinduism's holiest cities, where millions visit to perform funeral rites -- say almost 150 bodies that floated up in the past three weeks have been cremated.

Funeral pyres line river-side embankments beside piles of wood waiting for new bodies to be retrieved.

When AFP visited the surrounding areas, there were dozens of partially submerged corpses in the river.

Officials estimate that up to 600 bodies were buried along the Ganges in the city during the virus surge. — AFP ■

Samsung lagging on renewables pledge: Greenpeace

SMARTPHONE and chip giant Samsung Electronics' fulfilment of a headline-grabbing pledge to switch to renewable energy in the US, China and Europe accounts for less than 20 per cent of its global electricity use, environmentalists Greenpeace said Tuesday.

The firm needs to broaden and deepen its commitment if it is going to have a genuine impact in the fight against climate change, the campaign group said in a report, urging it to take similar steps in more countries within "aggressive timeframes".

The company is the flagship subsidiary of the Samsung

group, by far the biggest of the family-controlled conglomerates that dominate business in South Korea, the world's 12th-largest economy.

In 2018, Samsung Electronics promised to source all of its energy use in the US, China and Europe from renewables within two years, a target it said in March it had met.

But renewables only accounted for 17.6 per cent of the firm's global energy mix in 2020, Greenpeace said, highlighting that its two key production hubs -- South Korea and Vietnam -- were not included in the original commitment.



Samsung Electronics is among South Korea's biggest consumers of electricity despite its pledge to switch to renewable energy, which presents a challenge for President Moon Jae-in's goal of the country becoming carbon-neutral by 2050. PHOTO: AFP

The two countries account for around 80 percent of Samsung

Electronics' worldwide electricity consumption and in both of

them it "depended heavily on fossil fuels", Greenpeace said in its report, which was based on disclosures and statistics from Samsung itself.

In the South, Samsung has its own solar panels and geothermal power facilities, but they generated only "a tiny fraction" of its gigantic 17 TWh electricity usage there last year -- more than 70 per cent of the firm's global consumption. Samsung Electronics is among the South's biggest consumers of electricity and the situation presents a challenge for President Moon Jae-in's goal of the country becoming carbon neutral by 2050. — AFP ■

Wind and the sun power Greek islands' green energy switch



Tilos has no shortage of sun and wind to draw upon. PHOTO: AFP

IN the tranquil Greek island of Tilos, a wind turbine hums over a silvery sea while scorching sun rays hit a hill lined with solar panels.

The small island of around 800 inhabitants is the first island in the Mediterranean to generate almost all of its electricity from

renewable sources under a pioneering project launched in 2018.

Just 65 square kilometres (25 square miles) in size, Tilos last week was one of three islands awarded EU prizes for clean energy transition, alongside Denmark's Aero and Spain's El Hierro, part of the Canaries group.

Connected by submarine electricity cable to Kos, a larger neighbouring island in the south-eastern Aegean Sea, Tilos has no shortage of sun and wind to draw upon. It is 100 per cent energy independent for most of the year, though that rate dips to 70 per cent during the summer due to the higher energy demands of the tourism season, said Mayor Maria Kamma. "This is the solution, especially for the small islands of our country," Kamma told AFP.

Spyros Aliferis, an engineer with Greek renewable energy specialists Eunice Energy, said Tilos has the country's first hybrid power station.

"It's hybrid because it combines more than one renewable energy source, wind and sun," he told AFP. — AFP ■

More record-smashing heat forecast as Canada, US northwest bake

SCHOOLS and Covid-19 vaccination centers closed Monday while community cooling centres opened as western Canada and parts of the western United States baked in an unprecedented heat wave that saw several temperature records broken.

Lytton in British Columbia broke the record for Canada's all-time high Monday, with a temperature of 117 degrees Fahrenheit (47.5 degrees Celsius), just one day after the village set the previous record at 116 degrees. —AFP ■



Kids play in the Salmon Springs Fountain on June 27, 2021 in Portland, Oregon. PHOTO: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lack of water rules out life on Venus: study

A study measuring water concentration in Venus's atmosphere concluded Monday that life as we know it is not possible among the sulphuric acid droplets that make up the planet's famously cloudy skies.

The search for life on our nearest neighbour has so far proved fruitless, although a 2020 paper rekindled hopes for Venus when it claimed to have detected phosphine gas -- known to be produced by bacteria on Earth -- in the planet's clouds.

The authors have since called their own findings into question.

But the claim inspired scientists led by Queen's University Belfast to test the theory from a different angle: whether there is enough water in Venus's atmosphere to make life possible.

In 2017, microbiologist John Hallsworth discovered a terrestrial fungus that can survive at 58.5 per cent relative humidity -- the driest conditions at which biological activity has ever been measured.

"We bent over backwards to argue that the most extreme, tolerant microbes on Earth could potentially have activity on Venus," said Hallsworth at a press conference.

But he said nothing could cope with the miniscule amount of water in the planet's atmosphere, which is equivalent to a relative humidity of 0.4 per cent. "It's more than 100 times too low. It's almost at the bottom of the scale, at an unbridgeable distance from what life requires to be active." —AFP ■

India's Mumbai to have 200 MLD desalination plant by 2025

India's financial capital Mumbai will have a 200 million litres per day (MLD) desalination plant by 2025, located at Manori in the northwest part of the city.

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between the city civic authority - BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation and Israel's IED Technologies for the proposed plant on Monday.

The plant will help reduce the city's dependence on the monsoon for drinking water in times of climate change, said Aaditya Thackeray, minister for tourism and environment for the western state of Maharashtra, which has Mumbai as its capital.

Along with water security for Mumbai, and possibilities of capacity augmentation, this desalination plant will help avoid financial and ecological costs of dam construction, saving almost 450,000 fully mature trees, ecology and funds further required, the minister said. — Xinhua ■

NEWS
IN BRIEFBritain curbs
cryptocurrency
exchange Binance

THE UK's finance watchdog has banned major cryptocurrency exchange Binance from regulated trading in Britain, as the industry faces greater global scrutiny.

Binance Markets Limited, part of Binance Group, is "not permitted to undertake any regulated activity in the UK", the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) said in a statement published over the weekend.

Three years ago then prime minister Joseph Muscat had announced that Binance was heading to Malta but last year the MFSA distanced itself from the company, saying Binance was not authorised to operate in the cryptocurrency sphere and is not subject to regulatory oversight by it. The ban by the UK watchdog affects options and futures contracts related to bets on price movements of cryptocurrencies.—AFP ■

OPEC+ expected
to move to cool
overheating oil
market

THE OPEC+ group of oil-producing countries will meet on Thursday and are expected to agree to boost production in August in order to meet demand and dampen recent price rises.

While improvement in demand drove the group's most recent rises in production, now price levels will also be a guiding force behind the club's decisions.

After demand dropped when the coronavirus pandemic broke out last year and crude prices briefly turned negative, the club led by Saudi Arabia and Russia imposed sharp production cuts in order to raise prices.

The 13 members of OPEC and their 10 allies in the OPEC+ grouping were rewarded by seeing prices for the two contracts of reference, Brent and WTI, recover to around \$75 per barrel, levels not seen since October 2018.

However that strategy has worked almost too well and the group is currently following a policy of cautiously turning the taps back on.—AFP ■

North American trade deal empowers
Mexican workers

Then-Mexican president Enrique Peña Nieto, then-US president Donald Trump and Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau sign a new free trade agreement in Buenos Aires in November 2018. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

A revamped North American free trade agreement is giving factory workers new muscle to flex in Mexico, where labor unions

have long been accused of shady backroom deals with employers.

The year-old United States-Mexico-Canada Agree-

ment (USMCA) requires the three countries to guarantee worker rights to collective bargaining, union democracy and

freedom of association.

It created a "rapid response labor mechanism" to consider complaints against employers suspected of violating the rules, with potential penalties including tariffs.

A special internet-based "hotline" set up by the United States allows whistleblowers to submit their labor allegations confidentially.

Since USMCA took effect on July 1, 2020, replacing the North American Free Trade Agreement, the United States has invoked the rapid response labour mechanism twice with Mexico.

In May, Washington asked Mexico to investigate allegations of "serious violations" of worker rights during a union vote at a General Motors plant in Silao, in the central state of Guanajuato. —AFP ■

Sri Lanka eyes tougher import controls to halt forex crisis

Sri Lanka's central bank on Monday called for further import restrictions to address a crippling foreign exchange crisis, following a string of loans from Asian neighbours including impoverished Bangladesh.

The island nation's foreign exchange reserves were badly hit last year as the Covid-19 pandemic hit and the local currency came under intense pressure and fell to a record low.

International rating agencies have since expressed fears that Colombo would not be able to service its huge foreign debt.

The Central Bank of Sri Lanka last week tightened its controls on dollar sales, leading commercial financial institutions to impose quotas on importers of

essential commodities.

But central bank governor W. D. Lakshman said more restrictions were needed. "What the central bank is doing now with the participation of all commercial banks, is judicious management of imports and foreign reserves," Lakshman said in a statement.

The bank was "of the view that there is further space to curtail non-essential and non-urgent imports," he added.

Sri Lanka had already banned luxury goods and car imports since last year to combat the outflow of foreign currency.

The ban first imposed in March last year applied to tumeric -- a staple in local curries, tiles, toilets, tyres, cosmetics, vehicle spare parts, electronic and

electrical appliances.

The country's foreign reserves are currently at \$4 billion, down from \$7.8 billion in

late 2019 when the government of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa came to power promising robust growth.—AFP ■



Sri Lanka had already banned luxury goods and car imports since last year to combat the outflow of foreign currency. A Sri Lankan car salesman talks to a customer at a dealership selling Suzuki hybrid models in Colombo on August 1, 2018. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

EU hints at 'sausage war' deal with UK in 48 hours

A deal is likely in the coming days to resolve the post-Brexit "sausage war" between the UK and EU, European Commission vice president Maros Sefcovic said yesterday.

London has angered Brussels by threatening to extend a grace period for conducting checks on chilled meat products to Northern Ireland, sparking threats of reprisals.

But temperatures have

cooled in recent days, with indications of a compromise, after the UK government submitted a formal request for an extension.

Last week, EU member Ireland said it had stepped in to try to resolve the row amicably -- and Sefcovic indicated to Northern Irish lawmakers that progress had been made.

"While I cannot today announce the EU's formal agree-

ment to the UK government's request... I remain confident that we can find a solution within the next 48 hours that will address both sides' needs and concerns," he added.

"I hope that jointly we can solve the issue of chilled meat within 48 hours," he told the Northern Ireland Executive Office committee.

"We will have three months to have another attempt to

solve this issue."

Sefcovic argues that "80 per cent" of the hold-ups caused by checks could be resolved if the UK signed up to a "Swiss-style" form of controls on animals and plants.

The UK formally left the European single market and customs union on 1 January nearly four years after the public voted to leave the bloc in a landmark referendum.—AFP ■

Threat of indictments looms large for Trump Organization

LAWYERS for the Trump Organization were making a last-ditch effort on Monday to ward off what appeared to be an impending criminal indictment of the ex-president's company, according to US media.

A series of reports in recent days seem to indicate that closed-door investigations into the business practices of the former New York real estate mogul - a case opened more than two years ago by the Manhattan district attorney and two Democratic members of Congress, and focusing on alleged financial fraud -- are about to bear fruit.

According several

media outlets, including the Washington Post, lawyers for the Trump Organization, an unlisted family holding company that owns golf clubs, hotels and luxury properties, were presenting their final arguments to prosecutors Monday to forestall charges.

A face-to-face meeting was scheduled, according to CNN.

Other anonymous sources quoted by the New York Times hinted that an indictment was under consideration over fringe benefits paid to the company's financial chief Allen Weisselberg, and not declared to tax authorities.



Trump National Doral Miami is a golf resort in Doral in South Florida in the United States. It currently has 72 holes of golf and its signature course is the Blue Monster at Doral. **PHOTO: AFP**

Questioned by AFP, neither prosecutors nor lawyers for the Trump Organization, nor Weis-

selberg himself would confirm the reports.

Ron Fischetti, a lawyer for the Trump Organ-

ization, simply told CNN that prosecutors have so far not been "receptive" to arguments against filing a

charge.

Trump himself appeared to confirm the reports when he issued a statement condemning the investigation as politically motivated and saying "now they just leaked that we were given one day, today, to make our case about things that are standard practice throughout the US business community, and in no way a crime."

'Days, not weeks'

For Bennett Gershman, a law professor at Pace University and a former Manhattan attorney, an indictment should be a matter of "days now, not weeks."—AFP ■

Hong Kong bans flights from UK over Delta Covid variant



The UK would now be designated in the "extremely high-risk" category of countries, Hong Kong said. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Hong Kong is to ban all incoming flights from the United Kingdom from July 1 to curb the more infectious Delta strain of the coronavirus, the financial hub's government said in a statement Monday.

"All passenger flights from the UK will be prohibited from landing in Hong Kong," the statement said.

The UK would now be designated in the "extremely high-risk" category of countries, it added, the most severe rating the city has for pandemic travel.

The latest measures

over the Delta variant, first found in India, will restrict passengers who have stayed in the UK for more than two hours from boarding passenger flights to the city. The authorities said they upgraded the anti-pandemic measures in view of the "recent rebound" of the epidemic and the "widespread Delta variant virus strain" in Britain.

The Hong Kong government added that the city also recorded a number of cases of the L452R virus strain, a mutation linked to Delta, from people arriving from the UK.—AFP ■

Japan's SoftBank suspends production of chatty robot Pepper

JAPAN'S SoftBank has suspended production of its humanoid robot Pepper, a company spokeswoman said Tuesday, seven years after the conglomerate unveiled the signature chatty white android to much fanfare.

Pepper robots, used to greet people in stores and hotels in Japan and around the world, have become a symbol of SoftBank's strategy of pouring resources into new technology including artificial intelligence.

The pint-sized robot, which costs 198,000 yen (\$1,790) plus rental fees, has also recently been used to ease the loneliness of coronavirus quarantine in Japanese hotels for patients with mild symptoms.

But on Tuesday, a spokeswoman for the

firm's robotics unit told AFP it was halting output owing to an inventory pile-up.

"We are temporarily suspending production of Pepper but are ready to restart anytime depending on inventory situations," she said. "Pepper has chiefly been a rental service and you don't need a lot of new units."

The company does not disclose the number of gadgets it has sold or rented, the spokeswoman said.—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NEGAR VOY.NO. (SCY1103)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NEGAR VOY. NO. (SCY1103)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **30-6-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** 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 LAND AND SEA INTERMODAL LOGISTICS SDN BHD LINE

Facebook wins antitrust dismissal, surges to \$1 trillion value

A US judge on Monday dismissed the blockbuster antitrust action against Facebook filed last year by federal and state regulators, helping lift the value of the social media giant above \$1 trillion for the first time. Judge James Boasberg of the US District Court of Washington, DC dismissed the cases filed in December by the Federal Trade Commission and

more than 40 states, which could have rolled back Facebook's acquisition of Instagram and the messaging platform WhatsApp.

The federal lawsuit "failed to plead enough facts to plausibly establish a necessary element... that Facebook has monopoly power in the market for personal social networking services," the judge said in a 53-page opinion, while

allowing authorities the opportunity to refile the case.

In lawsuits filed in December that were consolidated in federal court, US and state officials called for the divestment of Instagram and WhatsApp, arguing that Facebook had acted to "entrench and maintain its monopoly to deny consumers the benefits of competition."—AFP ■

PESTICIDE TRADE NAME CHANGE ADVERTISING

The following pesticides are distributed by THUKHA MAHAR AGROCHEMICAL CO.,LTD and here we would like to pesticide trade name change advertising. Anyone who would like to object or inquiry about new trade name contact within 14 days to Joint-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon. Thukha Mahar Agrochemical Co.,Ltd. 09.797915818.

Sr.	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number
1.	Xin Carb	Thukha Hmoe Shinn	Propamocarb Hydrochloride 66.5% SL	P2020-4698
2.	Foison Clear	Formula-One	Fomesafen 250 g/l SL	P2019-4728

NEWS
IN BRIEFUS presses allies
to bring back IS
fighters

SECRETARY of State Antony Blinken on Monday pressed US allies to bring back citizens arrested overseas for joining the Islamic State group, warning they could not be held indefinitely in Syria.

Blinken made the appeal in Rome at a meeting of an 83-member coalition on defeating the extremist network, where he and host Italy called for greater attention to the threat in Africa.

About 10,000 suspected Islamic State fighters are being held in northern Syria by Western-allied Kurdish fighters, according to US estimates.

"This situation is simply untenable. It just can't persist indefinitely," Blinken said.

"The United States continues to urge countries -- including coalition partners -- to repatriate, rehabilitate and, where applicable, prosecute its citizens," he said.—AFP

Giant eruption
of Costa Rica
volcano

A volcano in northwest Costa Rica erupted on Monday, spewing an enormous column of smoke into the air in what could be its biggest outburst in years, authorities said.

The Rincon de la Vieja volcano's nearly three-minute eruption in the early hours of the day belched a column of smoke almost two kilometres (1.2 miles) high, depositing ash on surrounding areas but causing no damage or injuries.

The volcano, whose eruption did not trigger any immediate evacuations, is situated in a national park in Guanacaste province some 200 kilometres from the capital, San Jose.

"It was a pretty energetic eruption," said Maarten de Moor, a specialist at the Volcanological and Seismological Observatory of Costa Rica (Ovsicori).

Although the volcano has frequent outbursts -- some 1,400 last year alone -- this "could be the largest since the 1990s," he added.—AFP

Brazil senators file case against
Bolsonaro for malfeasance

THREE Brazilian senators formally accused President Jair Bolsonaro of malfeasance before the Supreme Court Monday over allegations he failed to have a top ally investigated for suspicions of massive corruption in the purchase of Covid-19 vaccines.

The criminal complaint comes after a Senate commission investigating the administration's pandemic response uncovered explosive accusations last week that Bolsonaro knew about suspected corruption in Brazil's \$300 million deal for Indian-made vaccine Covaxin and failed to intervene.

"I filed a criminal complaint today with the Supreme Court because of the serious accusation that the president took no



In this file photo taken on 5 June 2020 Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro (C) waves to supporters during the inauguration of a field hospital in Aguas Lindas, in the State of Goias, Brazil, amid the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic. **PHOTO: AFP/SERGIO LIMA**

action after being notified of a gigantic corruption scheme at the health ministry," said opposition Senator Randolfe Rodri-

gues, the commission's deputy chair. A criminal case against Bolsonaro before the Supreme Court could see him removed

from office -- though Prosecutor General Augusto Aras, an ally, would have to bring charges.

More immediately, the case risks damaging Bolsonaro politically at a time when his support is dwindling and polls place him far behind leftist ex-president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva heading into elections next year.

Massive overbilling

The allegations emerged when a Singapore-based firm now suspected of being a shell company billed the Brazilian health ministry \$45 million for yet-to-be-delivered doses of Covaxin, which did not have regulatory approval in Brazil.

That raised red flags for a health ministry official named Luis Ricardo Miranda.—AFP ■

World's second-largest hydropower dam goes online in China

CHINA began operating the world's second-largest hydropower station on Monday in what officials hailed as a milestone towards Beijing's carbon neutrality goals, despite warnings of environmental damage.

The 289-metre (948 feet) high Baihetan Hydropower Station in southwest China, second in the world only to the country's Three Gorges Dam in terms of power generation, began partial operation Monday morning, state media reported.

Baihetan was built with a total installed capacity of 16,000 megawatts, which means it will eventually be able to generate enough electricity each day

once to meet the power needs of 500,000 people for an entire year, according to state broadcaster CCTV.

The country has been on a hydropower building spree in recent years as it races to meet the ever-growing energy needs of the world's largest population.

The dam spans a deep, narrow gorge on the upper section of the Yangtze, China's longest river, on the earthquake-prone border between Yunnan and Sichuan provinces.

Chinese President Xi Jinping said he hoped the plant would be able to "make greater contributions toward achieving the goals of carbon peaking and

carbon neutrality," in a congratulatory message published by the government.

The Baihetan dam's trial

run on Monday coincides with celebrations of the Communist Party's centenary this week.—AFP ■



The dam spans a deep, narrow gorge on the upper section of the Yangtze, China's longest river. **PHOTO: CNS/AFP**

Israeli settlers agree to leave flashpoint West Bank outpost: officials



About 50 Jewish families moved to Eviatar last month, erecting huts, tents and caravans -- in defiance of international and Israeli law -- on land near Nablus in the occupied West Bank, which Palestinians claim for a future state. **PHOTO: AFP**

JEWISH settlers agreed Monday to leave a new outpost in

the occupied West Bank that has stirred weeks of Palestinian protests following a deal with Israel's government, officials said.

Under the agreement, confirmed by settler leaders and the interior ministry, the settlers will leave the Eviatar outpost within days but their mobile homes will remain and Israeli troops will establish a base in the area.

According to a statement from regional settler leader Yossi Dagan, the defence ministry has agreed to study land claims to assess the prospect of a future recognised settlement.

Dagan said the agreement had been approved by Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, Defence Minister Benny Gantz and Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked.

Shaked's office confirmed the deal, but spokespersons for Bennett and Gantz were not immediately available to comment.

About 50 Jewish families moved to Eviatar last month, erecting huts, tents and caravans -- in defiance of international and Israeli law -- on land near Nablus in the occupied West Bank, which Palestinians claim for a future state.—AFP ■

Biden hosts Israeli president ahead of Bennett visit

PRESIDENT Joe Biden on Monday reassured Israel's president, ahead of a visit by new Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, that the United States will not permit Iran to develop nuclear weapons.

"Iran will never get a nuclear weapon on my watch," Biden told President Reuven Rivlin in the White House.

After the talks, Rivlin told reporters that he was "very much satisfied" by Biden's comments on Iran and said Israel and Washington "have to cooperate."

In his comments, Biden also dismissed congressional critics who have questioned his legal authority in ordering air strikes

against Iranian-backed militias accused of attacking US personnel in Syria and Iraq.

"I have that authority," Biden said.

The close US-Israeli relationship hit a rocky patch when Biden replaced Donald Trump in January. However, the formation of a new government under Bennett, following the downfall of key Trump ally Benjamin Netanyahu, has opened the door to a reset -- and a Bennett visit in the near future.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said the Biden-Rivlin meeting would "highlight the strength of the

relationship from our shared interest in security and stability."

Psaki said there was no date yet for Bennett's White House trip but "the president looks forward to hosting the prime minister and it's soon."

On Sunday, Israel's new foreign minister, Yair Lapid, told US Secretary of State Antony Blinken at a meeting in Rome that he was concerned about US talks with Iran over the country's nuclear ambitions. However, he pledged a more cooperative approach. "We believe the way to discuss those disagreements is through direct and professional conversations," Lapid said.



US President Joe Biden and Israeli President Reuven Rivlin meet at the White House. **PHOTO: AFP**

"In the past few years mistakes were made," Lapid added, referring to Netanyahu's alliance with Trump's Republican party. "We will fix those mistakes together."—AFP ■

UN Security Council confronts growing threat of cyber attacks

THE UN Security Council on Tuesday will hold its first formal public meeting on cybersecurity, addressing the growing threat of hacks to countries' key infrastructure, an issue Joe Biden recently raised with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin.

At their summit earlier this month in Geneva, the US president set out red lines for Russia, which is often accused of being

behind major hacks. In this case, he laid out 16 "untouchable" entities, ranging from the energy sector to water distribution.

"This is the generic list of critical infrastructure which every country has," said one European ambassador who specializes in cybersecurity.

"In the United Nations first committee, we already have agreed in 2015, which is six

years ago, that we are refraining from malicious cyber activities against each other's critical infrastructures as UN member states," the diplomat said.

Tuesday's meeting, called by Estonia which heads the Council for the month of June and is a leader in the fight against hacking, is itself being held online, at a ministerial level.

The Security Council has addressed the subject in the past, but only informally, both in public or behind closed doors.

'Innovative approach'

"It is not something where we can sort of put our head under the sand and say it doesn't exist," said another diplomat, who also requested anonymity.

"It is a new issue and in the Security Council, as always, it is difficult to bring anything new" after 76 years of dealing with more traditional aspects of peace and security, the official added.

— AFP ■



Fuel holding tanks are seen at Colonial Pipeline's Dorsey Junction Station, which was shut down by a cyberattack that disrupted gas supply for the eastern US for days, highlighting the growing threat hackers pose to infrastructure. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Haiti to hold delayed constitutional referendum in September

HAITI'S constitutional referendum, initially slated for April but postponed twice due to the coronavirus pandemic, will be held on September 26, the electoral commission announced late Monday.

Local and municipal elections are postponed until January 2022, the authorities said.

President Jovenel Moise has been ruling Haiti, the poor-

est country in the Americas, by decree, after legislative elections due in 2018 were delayed and following disputes on when his own term ends.

In addition to presidential, legislative and local elections, Moise had wanted to submit a new draft of the island nation's constitution to a popular vote on June 27. The first round of the

presidential and legislative elections had already been due to take place on September 26, and the second to be held on November 21. "The provisional electoral council reaffirms its determination to accomplish its mission in complete independence, in a credible, honest and transparent manner," said an official statement. — AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Peru's Fujimori seeks international vote audit

Peru presidential hopeful Keiko Fujimori -- who narrowly lost the June 6 election, according to unconfirmed results -- on Monday urged the country's current leader to seek an international audit of the vote.

Fujimori, who alleged vote fraud as rival Pedro Castillo took the lead in the ballot count, risks an imminent trial on corruption charges that would be delayed until after her term if she were to win the presidency.

On Monday, she delivered a letter to interim President Francisco Sagasti, urging him to seek an election audit from "international organizations."

An independent entity, she told journalists, should review the voter rolls, voting records and other documentation to "determine whether the results processed... represent an accurate reflection of the popular will."

The United States, European Union and Organization of American States have said the election was free and fair, and have hailed the work of both the ONPE electoral body that organized the election and the vote count, and the JNE jury reviewing disputed votes.

The JNE must ultimately declare the winner -- a process that has been stalled for more than three weeks now by Fujimori's challenge to thousands of votes. — AFP ■

Ethiopia declares Tigray ceasefire as rebels enter regional capital

Ethiopia's federal government on Monday declared a "unilateral ceasefire" in its war-torn Tigray region, state media reported, as rebel fighters entered the regional capital Mekele, sparking celebrations in the streets.

The dramatic reversal for Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's forces signalled a turning point in the nearly eight-month-old conflict in Tigray, which the UN says has pushed 350,000 people to the brink of famine.

The ceasefire announcement came as the rebels, who have branded themselves the Tigray Defence Forces (TDF), marched into Mekele, where residents danced as local officials fled the city.

"An unconditional, unilateral ceasefire has been declared starting from today, June 28," read a statement published Monday night by state media.

The ceasefire will last until the end of the current "farming season" and is intended to facilitate agricultural production and aid distribution while allowing rebel fighters "to return to a peaceful road", it said. There was no immediate reaction from the TDF to the federal government's ceasefire declaration.—AFP ■

Myanmar women's team garner top FIFA rank amidst Asia

THE Myanmar women's national football team is currently among the top ten Asian teams, with 46th world ranking and tenth place at Asia level, according to the latest announcement of the FIFA ranking.

Myanmar has taken 45th position in the world ranking last year, and now has decreased one ranking to 46th, with 1,511 total points. Also, two ASEAN football teams, Viet Nam and Thailand, are included on the top ten list.

Team Viet Nam is currently in sixth place among the best Asian teams, with a 32nd world ranking and 1,667 total points, while Team Thailand is following Viet Nam in seventh place, collecting 1,596 total points and 39th in the world ranking.

Australia remained the best team in Asia, with a 9th world ranking, while Japan is the second-best Asian team,



Myanmar women's national football squad pose for a group photo before an international football match. **PHOTO: MFF**

with a world ranking of 10th.

North Korea's team is the third-best among Asian teams,

with an 11th world ranking, and the world.

China's team is the fourth-best in Asia, ranking 15th in

Meanwhile, South Korea is in fifth place, ranked 18th in

the world, and China Taipei is in eighth place in Asia, ranked 40th in the world. —GNLM

Sterling hails 'big performance' from England

ENGLAND hero Raheem Sterling hailed the team's desire to rewrite history after beating Germany in a knockout game at a major tournament for the first time since 1966 on Tuesday to reach the Euro 2020 quarter-finals.

Sterling opened the scoring with his third goal of the tournament before Harry Kane silenced his critics to seal a 2-0 win four minutes from time.

"It sounds good," said Sterling on ending England's hoodoo against Germany. "We knew we needed to put in a big

performance against a very good side and we did that today."

Sterling had not scored in a major tournament before the Euro, but has been his country's standout performer en route to the last eight.

"Doing it for your country is always special and it's definitely a special moment for me," he added.

"I celebrated (the goal) then for half a second I thought let it not be offside. I'm really happy it went in and we got the win."—AFP

France desperate to move on from 'immense sadness' of Euro exit



EURO 2020 was supposed to be the next step on Kylian Mbappe's path to greatness and France's golden chance to become world and European champions, only for their campaign to end with a painful failure in a penalty shoot-out.

A defeat on penalties by Switzerland, with Mbappe having the decisive spot-kick saved, after a remarkable 3-3 draw in the last 16 saw France become the first World Cup holders to fail to reach the Euro quarter-finals since Italy did not qualify for the tournament in 1984.

The recall of the exiled Karim Benzema had appeared to

further strengthen the team who lifted football's biggest prize three years ago, but Didier Deschamps' men never managed to hit those heights again.

Questions will be asked in France of why a team boasting a plethora of attacking talent were unable to beat Hungary and Switzerland, with Deschamps' tactics, Mbappe's lack of goals and a shaky defence sure to be under the microscope. "It's very difficult to move on from this," Mbappe said on social media. "There's an immense sadness after this elimination." — AFP ■

Czechs frustrated by Baku trip for Denmark quarter-final

THE Czech Republic expect a tough Euro 2020 quarter-final against Denmark this weekend, but they are more concerned about the trip to Baku that will likely discourage many fans from attending the game.

The Czechs got a taste of what post-Covid football may be like when they beat the Netherlands 2-0 in Budapest on Sunday in a packed stadium including 7,000 Czech fans.

But it will be far more difficult for supporters to travel to the Azerbaijani capital for Saturday's last-eight tie.

"I don't understand this and I haven't got over it yet," midfielder Antonin Barak told reporters on Tuesday. "We won't be able to get our fans and our families there. If we played in Copenhagen, they (Denmark) would be at home but we could still get lots of Czech fans

there."

Their support in the group stage was reduced to just handfuls of fans due to Covid restrictions in Britain where they played all three games.

"Concerning Baku, we are terribly sorry because in Budapest we experienced a real Euro atmosphere for the first time," said assistant coach Jiri Chytrý, slamming the "unfortunate decision". — AFP ■



England's forward Raheem Sterling scores England's opening goal during the UEFA EURO 2020 round of 16 football match between England and Germany at Wembley Stadium in London on June 29, 2021. **PHOTO: FRANK AUGSTEIN / POOL / AFP**