CREATE LITERARY WORKS ON FICTION TO WIN THE SOUL OF READERS PAGE-8 (OPINION)

NATIONAL
SAC Information Team holds 7/2021 press conference
PAGE-4

NATIONAL
Myanmar's export exceeds US$600 mln in May
PAGE-5

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VIII, No. 85, 5th Waxing of Waso 1383 ME www.gnlm.com.mm Tuesday, 13 July 2021

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.

Most people criticize Oxygen in recent days. Actually, we have enough Oxygen: Senior General

State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presides over the second coordination meeting on COVID-19 prevention,control and treatment in Nay Pyi Taw on 12 July 2021.

THE Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered a speech at the 2nd coordination meeting on COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Also present were Vice-Chairman of the SAC Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, SAC member General Mya Tun Oo, Lt-Gen Soe Htut, Secretary Lt-Gen Aung Lin Dwe, Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo, Union Ministers U Wunna Maung Lwin, U Win Shein, U Ko Ko Hlaing, Dr Pwint San, Dr Thet Khaing Win, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye, senior military officers of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army), and the officials of health and sports ministry.

In his address, the Senior General said there have been 192,213 patients to date in the country counting for 0.35 per cent of the population. It ranks 5th among the ASEAN countries.

SEE PAGE-3

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL
Nanttharmyay Thanaka warehouse shuts down for two weeks in Monywa District
PAGE-5

LOCAL BUSINESS
Myanmar sees nitric acid inflow for gold refining
PAGE-6

LOCAL BUSINESS
Myanmar corn export exceeds $392 million in seven months
PAGE-6

Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ministry of Health and Sports

Order No 287/2021
4th Waxing of Waso 1383 ME
12 July 2021

THE Ministry of Health and Sports hereby announced the order by exercising the authority stipulated in Sub-Section (b) of Section 21 of the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law.

1. The Ministry of Health and Sports has taken preventive measures against Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) in real-time. Therefore, people from some townships of Kachin State, Kayin State, Sagaing Region, Magway Region, Shan State and Ayeyawady Region need to stay at home due to the number of confirmed patients on the rise in these townships.

2. Hence, the people residing in the following townships in Kachin State, Kayin State, Sagaing Region, Magway Region, Shan State and Ayeyawady Region are involved in the Stay-at-Home Programme.
   - (a) Kachin State
     - (1) Bhamo Township
     - (2) Myitkyina Township
   - (b) Kayin State
     - (1) Myawady Township
   - (c) Sagaing Region
     - (1) Sagaing Township
     - (2) Monywa Township
   - (d) Magway Region
     - (1) Magway Township
   - (e) Shan State
     - (1) Hsipaw Township
     - (2) Tachilek Township
     - (3) Muse Township
   - (f) Ayeyawady Region
     - (1) Kangyidaung Township
     - (2) Hinthada Township

3. The people inclusive of the Stay-at-Home programme of the townships need to abide by the following disciplines:
   - (a) Reside at their homes only
     - (1) except for service personnel serving at government department;
     - (2) except for those serving at private firms such as banks and monetary services, filling stations, foodstuffs and livestock and fishery, cold storage, medicine and medical equipment production and distribution, purified water production and sales, factories of manufacturing daily personal goods and related industries;
     - (3) except for staff from airlines, such as relief flights, cargo flights and specially chartered flights, general aviation transport services, ground services, fuel services, aviation export and import services, international freight forwarder companies, customer service companies and agencies, boarding foodstuff production and transport services and aircraft maintenance;
     - (4) except for staff from private ports, shipping agencies offices, international freight forwarder companies, customer service companies and agencies, container truck services, port export and import cargo trucks and watercraft, inland container depot and dry ports;
     - (5) except for staff from communication service providers such as post services, line phones and mobile phone communication services, internet services (exclusive of sales of telephone and data at shops), tower and fibre maintenance services;
   - (b) relevant region and state administration councils to issue necessary orders and directives and supervision for the prevention of COVID-19 infection at CMP factories and workplaces;
   - (c) organizations and companies to perform their works from homes;
   - (d) one person from each house to go out shopping;
   - (e) only two persons per house to go to hospitals and clinics;
   - (f) wear masks if they go outside the houses;
   - (g) allow ferries and registered vehicles only to transport returnees from workplaces to pass the wards;
   - (h) allow one person only in addition to the driver in a vehicle for shopping in the ward and two persons except for the driver to go to hospitals or clinics;
   - (i) abide by the standard operating procedures (SOP) for trucks to ensure smooth flow of commodities in the township;

4. People need to inform relevant ward/village administration bodies about seeking approvals to go outside the houses if they have reasons to raise the limited number of participants in the measures and other emergency issues mentioned in subparagraphs (d), (e) and (h) of Paragraph 3. The relevant administrative bodies need not allow ingoing and outgoing persons, except for officials and those returnees from duty.

5. Action will be taken against those who fail to abide by the order under the existing laws.

6. The order came into force at 4 am on 13-7-2021.

Dr Thet Khaing Win
Union Minister

5,014 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 12 July, total figure rises to 197,227

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **197,227 after 5,014 new cases** were reported on 12 July 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, **148,060** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **3,927** after **89** died. —MNA

Health and Sports Ministry opens COVID-19 call centre

THE Ministry of Health and Sports opens the COVID-19 call centre at its office in Nay Pyi Taw as of 8 am on 22 June for the reply to queries on health awareness about COVID-19 and facts for abiding by the restrictions to the people on time.

The people can dial the following telephone numbers from 8 am to 9 pm on a daily basis for facts about the COVID-19 disease.

Contact numbers:
(1) 067-3411508
(2) 067-3411509
(3) 067-3411144
(4) 09-882557991
(5) 09-882557992
(6) 09-882557993

BROADER OUTLOOK AND FARSIGHTEDNESS

Everyone who knows the world's history can consider that the nation-building task is too difficult to avoid encountering various kinds of ups and downs in this mundane world. Therefore, with a broader outlook and farsightedness, we shall seize whatever opportunity we have. That's the way we love Myanmar. We can build our Myanmar.

(Excerpt from the broadcasting speech made by Bogyoke Aung San to the national peoples in November 1944)

Most people criticize Oxygen in recent days. Actually, we have enough ...

FROM PAGE-1

The infection rate in neighbouring countries is on the rise and the country needs an accurate infection rate to control the disease. The people should go to respective health departments if they are suspected of suffering from some symptoms without taking some treatment at home.

He also highlighted the plans to transfer to the hospitals if the regional health officials conducted health checks and recommended to do so, effective treatment of regional health departments, proper communications among people, duties of patients to isolate at the certain places, the needs to have proper health awareness and efforts of respective committees to control the disease with true and accurate infection rate.

> The infection rate in neighbouring countries is on the rise and the country needs an accurate infection rate to control the disease. The people should go to respective health departments if they are suspected of suffering from some symptoms without taking some treatment at home.

Then, the Senior General said, "Most of the people criticize regarding the Oxygen in recent days. Actually, we have enough Oxygen. The anxiety of people rise and they buy it. Some try to do negative activities while gaining political profits. They buy the Oxygen cylinder and spread the rumour that the country does not have Oxygen anymore. **The Oxygen plant in PyinOoLwin was out of order last two days. When I asked the officials, they said the plant was running as normal until 12 noon. I told them to check the factory. According to the final information I receive, the plant is running properly. It means they (unscrupulous persons) spread the rumour to threaten the people.** They seem to cash in on an opportunity. They do various destructive actions. What I want to tell the public is that they should be cautious of such cases. Then, regarding the Oxygen factory, a well-wisher contacted us to transfer an Oxygen plant to us after our discussion held last week (Friday). I accepted their proposal. Now, we start doing the operation. It will be completed in one month. We try hard to complete all processes including the production sector. Currently, the foundation process is completed. However, the next step will take about two weeks. It has a heavyweight and it will take one month to run after all the processes are completed. It can produce 1,440 Oxygen cylinders per day. We carry out that project in Yangon. The people do not need to worry about it so much and should not spread the rumour. I want to call on the people to cooperate with us. **The main thing is that they should not make political profits in this case. It is just a social issue; healthcare and the life of a person. It is not a political but a health issue; the life of a person.** They should not do such destructive actions in this case. If they do so, it is such a silly doing.

> The COVID-19 disease seems to be an incurable infection and it will need a vaccine and so the Ministry of Health and Sports cooperate with the Tatmadaw Medical Research group to produce the vaccine in the country. The COVID-19 protection activity is national duties and the private sectors should cooperate with the government.

He then talked about the 2 million COVID-19 vaccines to be received soon donated by China, the assistance of China in conducting COVID-19 preventive activities especially in Shan State (northern) and Kachin State, the need to follow the COVID-19 health rules in the country, and avoid going outside unnecessarily.

The Senior General also said the government permitted the production sectors to resume the operation and they need to follow the health rules without fail. The preventive measures are being carried out in the agriculture sector. Tatmadaw also makes preparations at 1,278 places to provide medical services to 38,972 patients and at 1,453 locations for 71,475 civilians. It is also necessary to open "Community COVID Positive Centre" respectively in order to benefit the people, he urged.

Public participation is needed in making preparations with the relevant organizations to control the COVID-19 pandemic to a certain extent. The COVID-19 disease seems to be an incurable infection and it will need a vaccine and so the Ministry of Health and Sports cooperate with the Tatmadaw Medical Research group to produce the vaccine in the country. The COVID-19 protection activity is national duties and the private sectors should cooperate with the government. If so, it will benefit the country a lot, the Senior General concluded. — MNA

Warning for visitors to Martyr Beikman

THE people wishing to visit the Martyr Beikman on the 74th Anniversary of Martyr Day are urged to strictly abide by the following points not to suffer from infection of Coronavirus Disease-COVID-19 due to the high infection rate at present.

(a) Systematically wear the mask on the mouth and the nose and if necessary, and wear a face shield during the period of departure from the house to arrival.
(b) Take six feet distance to each other.
(c) Systematically wash hands with soap for at least 20 seconds or use hand gel for cleaning the hands, and not to touch eyes, nose and face without cleaning the hands.
(d) If everybody wishes to sneeze or cough, cover the nose and mouth with a handkerchief or tissue or bunt elbow, after moving to the site in a far distance from the crowds.
(e) Not to take a long time for viewing round there if not necessary.
(f) If anyone suffers from symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever, body pain, tiredness, coughing, defecating, neck pain, headache, suffocation and exhaustion or currently contacts any confirmed patient, they should reside at home and present reports to the relevant township health department.

Health Subcommittee
74th Anniversary of Martyr Day Organizing Work Committee

SAC Information Team holds 7/2021 press conference

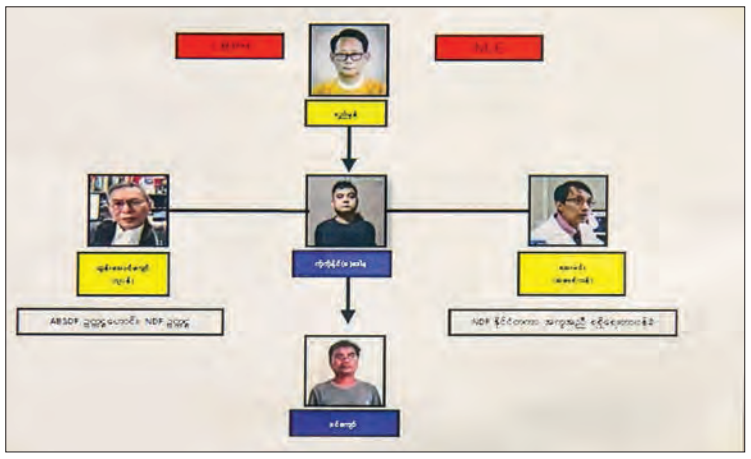
THE Information Team of the State Administration Council held the press conference (7/2021) yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw following the COVID-19 rules and regulations.

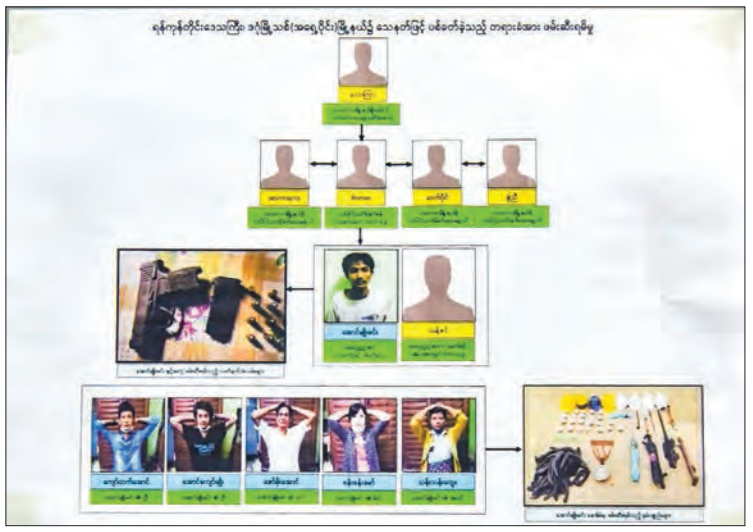
Team Leader Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun, Member of the Union Election Commission (UEC) U Khin Maung Oo, departmental spokespersons and representatives of the departmental information teams replied to the questions raised by the media.

Team Leader Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun extensively explained the Commander-in-Chief's visit to Russia, the status of the COVID-19 disease and preparations for disease control, educational activities, violent acts of the terrorist organizations and misinformation, and the confessions of those involved in the bombings and acts of terrorism in detail with the PowerPoint presentations and video files.

Afterwards, UEC Member U Khin Maung Oo briefed on the status of the voter list scrutiny and unlawful acts and further activities of the UEC with a PowerPoint presentation.

The press conference was concluded after the Team Leader, the UEC member, and the representatives of the departmental information teams replied to the questions raised by the journalists.





Those attending the press conference viewed the displayed facts about the press conference, information about the arrested terrorists, endeavours of the Union Election Commission and findings on voter inspection.

The press conference was also attended by reporters from local news agencies, daily newspapers, local TV broadcasting stations and local-based foreign news agencies and the full interviews will be published soon. —MNA

Public Announcement

11 July 2021

1. The Ministry of Commerce cooperates with the ministry concerned to facilitate the implementation of COVID-19 preventive measures, and allows the imports of medicines and other related equipment via sea route/border checkpoints in a timely manner.
2. The imports of Oxygen Concentrators, the current essentials for the treatment of COVID-19, were exempted from paying 3 per cent tax and applying for FDA approval and import licences.
3. It has now reported that some unscrupulous persons post the false information on social media to raise the prices in the market and public awareness by making a fake office letter that bans on importation of medicines and medical supplies.
4. It is here announced that the spreading office letter is just a fake one and actions will be taken against those who spread fake information under existing law, and the certain restrictions on the import of medicines and medical equipment are eased and allowed in a timely manner.

Ministry of Commerce

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish **"Letter to the Editor"** that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Development of Human Resources

IT is of vital importance that the development of human resources contributes towards the development of the State. We need to inevitably implement the uplift of education so as to generate plenty of educated personnel resources. Nowadays, schools are reopening though teachers are teaching amidst formidable hardships due to the CDM staff and opposite groups. Remaining schools are yet to reopen.

(Excerpt from the speech of the Management Committee Meeting of the State Administration Council by State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 18 June 2021)

Myanmar's export exceeds US$600 mln in May

MYANMAR'S regular export value reached US$642.13 million for May during the financial year 2020-2021.

Next, the value of border exports was US$367.05 million and the total value of exports was US$1,009.18 million.

Meanwhile, the value of regular imports was standing at US$1,031.45 million. The value of border imports was pegged at US$234.16 million and the total value of imports has registered at US$1,265.61 million.

Therefore, the total trade volume for May was US$2,274.79 million and the total trade deficit stood at US$256.43 million.

From October to May during the budget year 2020-2021, the value of Myanmar's regular exports was US$5177.47 million. Border exports were valued at US$4,649.64 million and the total value of exports reached US$9,827.11 million.

Regular imports have registered at US$8,242.48 million. Border imports were pegged at US$1,880.38 million and the total imports were valued at US$10,122.86 million.

Therefore, the total trade volume has registered at US$1,999.97 million and the trade deficit was valued at US$295.75 million from October to May during the financial year 2020-2021, according to the Central Statistics Office's monthly report on exports and imports. — MNA

Announcement on road closure on Martyrs' Day

1. Some Yangon roads will be temporarily closed on 19 July 2021 during the 74th Martyrs' Day ceremony at the Martyrs' Mausoleum in Bahan Township, from 4 am up to the completion of the ceremony.

While roads are temporarily closed, bypass routes will be used passing through West Shwegondine Road to the Link Junction (Yedashe Road), Dhammazedi Road and U Wisara Junction, Dhammazedi Road and Inya Road junction, West Shwegondaing Road and U Wisara Junction, Martyrs' Road from the intersection of West Shwegonedaing Road and U Wisara Road, Martyr's Road from U Htaung Bo Road and Martyrs' Junction, U Wisara Road from U Wisara Roundabout to U Wisara-Dhammazedi Junction. The northern archway of the Shwedagon Pagoda (Thwaysaykan Road) will be also closed on that day.

2. The flag-hoisting ministers' office will be opened from 10:00 am until the end of the ceremony. Thein Phyu Road from Bogyoke Junction, Anawrahta Road from Bo Myat Tun Junction, Mahabandula Road from Pansodan Junction, Bo Aung Kyaw Road from the Merchant Junction will be temporarily closed.

3. Therefore, drivers are advised to drive on other suitable roads during off-road diversion during the ceremony.

Yangon City Development Committee

Nanttharmyay Thanaka warehouse shuts down for two weeks in Monywa District

NANTTHARMYAY Thanaka warehouse was closed down for two weeks from 10 July in Ayadaw town of Monywa District, Sagaing Region, said U Aung Win, secretary of Myanmar Thanaka Planters and Producers Association.

Thanaka, a yellowish-white cosmetic paste made from ground bark, is a natural cosmetic in Myanmar.

"The COVID-19 induced low demand resulted in the shutdown of the warehouse. Thanaka is rarely traded amid the COVID surge and transportation difficulties", said U Aung Win.

This Thanaka warehouse was opened in July 2020 under the Consumer Affairs Department of Ayadaw town. Thanaka market is sluggish amid the COVID-19 crisis. The price is stable.

"Thanaka exports to Bangkok have come to a halt. The COVID-19 pandemic triggered the domestic production slowdown", a producer from Ayadaw Township pointed out.

Thanaka produced by Ayadaw Township were earlier sent to wholesale depots in Pakokku, Yesagyo, Bago and Kyonpyaw towns. The demand from the Thanaka value chain is quite low in the meantime. There are nearly 200,000 acres of Thanaka in Sagaing Region and Ayadaw Township has over 100,000 acres. — Lu Lay/GNLM

Myanmar sees nitric acid inflow for gold refining

Last month, the lack of nitric acid led to the low supply of finished gold and jewellery products. Earlier, about 15 to 20 viss of gold (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) were refined and manufactured per day. At present, only two visses of gold are daily purified.

NITRIC acid used in refining the scrap gold is steadily flowing into the country, said U Myo Myint, chair of Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA).

Myanmar sees the inflow of nitric acid through sea trade and border posts.

Last month, the lack of nitric acid led to the low supply of finished gold and jewellery products. Earlier, about 15 to 20 viss of gold (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) were refined and manufactured per day. At present, only two visses of gold are daily purified, said U Myo Myint.

On 22 and 23 June, the officials from YGEA met with the trade facilitation committee members in Nay Pyi Taw regarding the market needs and requested the requirements of nitric acid in manufacturing.

The committee gave green light to this proposal and nitric acid will be sold under the recommendation of YGEA. The committee urged the YGEA to submit the list of those manufacturers who want to purchase nitric acid.

Therefore, the YGEA called for a listing on 24 June.

"We just call for the list of those in need. The ship loaded with nitric acid arrives at that time. Moreover, the inflow of nitric acid via border posts is also witnessed. The shortage problem has been sorted out accordingly", U Myo Myint elaborated.

Nonetheless, the YGEA will submit a report if the businesses want them. There are more than 630 members under YGEA. – NN/GNLM

Sino-Myanmar border trade down by 17% amid COVID surge: MOC reports

AS the COVID-19 infections are spiking in Myanmar, China has shut down all the border posts since 8 July. Consequently, the border trade plunges by 17 per cent against last year, as per the Ministry of Commerce's data.

Sino-Myanmar border trade was registered a low of US$3.85 billion between 1 October and 2 July in the current financial year 2020-2021 amid the political instability and the COVID-19 surging. According to the Ministry of Commerce, the figures plummeted from $4.63 billion recorded in the year-ago period.

As of 2 July 2021, Myanmar's exports to China through land border were valued at $2.6 billion, while imports are worth $1.2 billion. The Sino-Myanmar border trade showed a slump in both exports and imports.

On 30 March, Man Wein, which is a major border crossing between Muse and Kyalgaung areas, was suspended owing to the COVID-19 cases. The traders have to send goods, including rice and broken rice, various pulses and beans, fishery products, onion, chilli and other export items to China via the Kyinsankyawt checkpoint due to the closure of the Man Wein checkpoint.

Following up on the COVID-19 detection of the staff from Muse 105th mile trade zone, China closed down all the border posts. Wan Ding, Kyinsankyawt and Pan Hseng (Kyukoke) border posts came to an abrupt halt on 8 July. In a bid to contain the spread of coronavirus on the border, China banned border crossing, causing the price hike for the agricultural input, cement and medical devices.

This FY, border trade values totalled $2.948 billion through Muse border, $206.9 million via Lweje, $424.6 million via Chinshwehaw, $267.6 million via Kampaiti, and over $10 million via Kengtung. The Commerce Ministry's data showed a drastic drop in the Muse border. Earlier, China practised a driver substitution programme, and those drivers were tested every three days.

Myanmar exports agricultural products including rice, beans and corns, and fishery products such as crab, prawn, and others. Furthermore, Myanmar's natural gas export to China is also conducted through the Muse-Ruili border. The raw CMP materials, electrical appliances and consumer goods are imported into the country. — KK/GNLM

Myanmar corn export exceeds $392 million in seven months

MYANMAR'S corn exports to foreign countries generated revenue of more than US$392 million in the seven months (October-April) of the current financial year 2020-2021, Myanmar Customs Department's statistics showed. The prices of Myanmar's corn are climbing up in the Mandalay market on the back of strong demand by Thailand, coupled with the growing demand in the domestic market, traders from Mandalay depot said.

Before Thingyan Festival in April, the corn fetched only K28,000 per three-basket bag. Both the foreign demand and domestic demand prompted the sellers to raise the prices starting from the first week of May. Following a gradual upward trend, the corn was priced above K32,900 per bag in early June and the price surged to K36,720 per bag in the second week of July, Soe Win Myint depot from Mandalay stated.

Myanmar has been delivering corns to the neighbouring countries Thailand and China via the land border. The shipment to Singapore, Malaysia and Viet Nam abruptly stopped owing to zero demand, he added. "The lack of demand by sea is attributed to the political changes and disruption in the logistic sector", said U Min Khaing. At present, Myanmar is conveying corn to Thailand through the land border, with a tonne of corn fetching up to about 8,000 baht. Thailand gives green light to corn imports through Maesot under zero tariff (with Form-D), between 1 February and 31 August.

Thailand has granted tax exemption on corn imports between February and August. However, Thailand imposed a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn import to protect the rights of their growers if the corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand, as per the notification of the World Trade Organization regarding corn import of Thailand, said a corn exporter. With the local corn consumption growing, Myanmar's corn export to foreign markets is expected to reach 1.6 million tonnes this year, the association stated.

Myanmar is the second-largest exporter of corn among regional countries. At present, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. Myanmar has three corn seasons— winter, summer and monsoon. The country yearly produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn. The corn crop is mostly demanded by the feedstuff processing business. This being so, it is a potential business for both domestic and external markets, said an official of the Ministry of Commerce.

During last FY 2019-2020 ended 30 September, the country exported 2.2 million tonnes of corns to the external market, with an estimated value of $360 million, the Ministry of Commerce's data showed.

As per data from the Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar exported 1.5 million tonnes valued at $270 million in the 2018-2019FY, 1.4 million tonnes of corn worth over $290 million in the 2017-2018FY, 1.2 million tonnes of corn worth $250 million in the 2016-2017FY, and, 1.1 million tonnes of corn worth $300 million in the 2015-2016FY. — MM/GNLM

Myanmar is the second-largest exporter of corn among regional countries. At present, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. Myanmar has three corn seasons—winter, summer and monsoon. The country yearly produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn.

Thailand imposes tougher Covid-19 curbs, curfew in Bangkok

MORE than 10 million people were placed under fresh Covid-19 restrictions and a curfew in the Thai capital Monday, as the kingdom battled a surge of cases worsened by the highly infectious Alpha and Delta variants.

Thailand has so far recorded more than 345,000 cases and 2,791 deaths -- with the bulk of them coming in this latest wave that started in April.

First detected in clubs frequented by the Thai elite and politicians at an upscale Bangkok nightlife district, the surge has been exacerbated by a slow vaccine rollout and limited testing capacity.

"The situation is worrying," said Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul.

"We have a big toll of new confirmed cases and the Delta strain has spread to other provinces that are home to factories."

Health authorities also said they are monitoring seven people who have contracted both the Alpha and Delta variants.

In addition to the capital, nine other provinces that have seen steady upticks in infections saw more restrictions bite.

Checkpoints sprung up across Bangkok in the early hours of Monday as a 9 pm-4 am curfew came into force, with police wearing masks and facial shields stopping cars in the centre of the capital.

Residents are barred from gathering in groups of more than five people, while public transport networks will shut from 9 pm.

Supermarkets, restaurants, banks, pharmacies and electronics stores within malls will be able to stay open but other shops have shuttered.

Authorities on Monday also approved the use of administering the Chinese-made Sinovac jab as the first dose and AstraZeneca as the second.

It did not elaborate why the decision was taken but it came after officials announced Sunday that nearly 900 medical staff — the majority of whom had received Sinovac shots — tested positive for the virus.— AFP ■

Thailand's capital and nine provinces are under stricter Covid restrictions as virus infections surge in the kingdom. **PHOTO: AFP**

South Africa deploys troops as unrest spirals after Zuma jailing

SOUTH Africa's army said Monday it was deploying troops to two provinces, including its economic hub of Johannesburg, to help crush mob violence and looting as unrest sparked by the jailing of ex-president Jacob Zuma entered its fourth day.

"The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has commenced with pre-deployment processes and procedures in line with a request for assistance," the military said in a statement.

Personnel will "assist law enforcement agencies deployed in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal provinces respectively to quell the unrest that has gripped both Provinces in the last few days," it said.

The violence raged as the Constitutional Court was reviewing a landmark decision to jail Zuma for contempt of court. An announcement is expected later.

The country's top court on June 29 slapped Zuma with a 15-month term for snubbing a probe into the corruption that stained his nine years in power.

Zuma began the sentence last Thursday but is seeking to have the ruling set aside.

"What we are saying is that this court made fundamentally rescindable errors," Zuma's lawyer Dali Mpofu argued in an on-line hearing before nine of the court's 11 judges.

Zuma had been treated unfairly and his "right to mitigation was limited," he said.

But one of the judges, Steven Majiedt, bluntly said Zuma had been convicted "because he disobeyed the order of this court".

Despite his reputation for graft and scandal, the 79-year-old former anti-apartheid fighter remains popular among many poor South Africans. — AFP ■

Violence: A burned-out car in Johannesburg's Jeppestown district. **PHOTO: AFP**

Wounds still raw in French city Nice, five years after attack

On 14 July, 2016, a man drove a 19-tonne truck into a crowd of people celebrating Bastille Day on the waterfront, killing 86 people. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

FOR most French people Bastille Day is synonymous with military pomp and parties, but in the southern city of Nice the country's national holiday also conjures up visions of horror.

On Wednesday, the Mediterranean city will pause to mark five years since a man drove a 19-tonne truck into a crowd of people celebrating Bastille Day on the waterfront, killing 86 people.

Dozens of nationalities were among the victims who were out to enjoy a fireworks show on the palm-fringed Promenade des Anglais with friends and family when Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel struck. The Tunisian-born assailant, who is believed to have been spurred by jihadist propaganda, was shot dead by police after a two-kilometre rampage. Fifteen of his victims were minors, with the youngest aged just two-and-a-half. At the city's Lenval hospital, around 300 children are still being monitored by psychiatrists for the trauma suffered from that night, with around 100 needing regular consultations.

"Five years on, we still have patients who have recurring nightmares which are flashbacks to the attack," Florence Askenazy, head of the service, told AFP. — AFP ■

G-20 hails cooperation, but ease in U.S.-China tensions not in sight

MULTILATERALISM came into play as the finance chiefs of the Group of 20 major economies joined hands on Saturday to back once-in-a-century international tax rule changes, but the move did not signal any better relations between the two key members of the forum — the United States and China.

Some U.S. experts on China expect no breakthrough anytime soon in the strained ties between the world's two largest economies, while other analysts warn that Japan, a U.S. security ally with close trade ties with China, should accelerate efforts to hedge against potential economic risks stemming from what some view as a new "Cold War."

A series of G-20 ministerial meetings have been taking place in Italy in the run-up to a summit meeting scheduled for late October, where U.S. President Joe Biden may have a chance to hold his first face-to-face meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping since taking office in January. But Zack Cooper, an expert on U.S.-China relations at the American Enterprise Institute, was skeptical that momentum is building up toward bilateral engagement. While the two countries may have some interactions later this year, including a possible Biden-Xi meeting, the senior fellow at the Washington think tank said he would not expect "much substantive cooperation" to come out of such talks. — Kyodo News ■

13 JULY 2021
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Create literary works on fiction to win the soul of readers

READING is the best habit for all. Everybody in global countries needs to read for applying new knowledge obtained from books in the practical fields so as to uplift the living standard of the society and themselves.

The reading habit cannot be cultured immediately. It is because those who start to read need to utilize their strength of mind to thoroughly understand the expression from literature. Hence, the readers would be tired of reading. But those readers will not be tired of reading later when they are used to read various subjects of books. If so, they will be happy and active in even reading.

> That is why all the people need to nurture themselves as well as their offspring at a young age to culture the reading habit to be able to successfully shoulder to shoulder with others in the society.

A Myanmar saying mentions the difficulties in various professions. Likewise, the start of reading would be difficult for somebody. This being so, the literature must have attractive to the readers. The books with attractive and interesting expressions will easily lure the readers by paving the way for them to reach the right track.

To be able to do so, writers need to apply their brilliant skills in the art of writing in the creation of literature. The masterpieces of literature will easily be attractive to the readers. At this juncture, the literature will steer the readers on how to choose the best genres of literature appropriate to them, how to note down the quotes from the literature and how to apply new and fresh knowledge from books in the practical fields.

In this regard, most of the readers possess a soft soul. The writers, therefore, need to create fiction literature to lure people to culture the reading habit. Those who have cultured the reading habit will have the capability to expand their scope to further choose the non-fiction books thanks to maturity in reading the fiction books.

In fact, reading is the most important in society. It is because those who have high reading skills can shape the world as they like. They can apply experiences obtained from reading to change everything in the world in the right or wrong way. That is why all the people need to nurture themselves as well as their offspring at a young age to culture the reading habit to be able to successfully shoulder to shoulder with others in the society.

■ ■ ■

FOREIGN INTERFERENCE (PART -II)

By Kyaw Myint Tun (Paris)

FOREIGN forces have withdrawn from Afghanistan. After twenty years and trillions of dollars, the word is that Afghans should decide their own future. That is in the face of widespread acknowledgement of the advances by the Taliban forces and the threat of civil war. Well, there you go! Are Myanmar's neighbours listening?

A British-funded outfit called "Myanmar Witness" has set up a "task force" to "investigate evidence of human rights violations in Myanmar". It went on to say this outfit would be sharing information with United Nations Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar. A British-funded? Seriously? Only in their minds, the sun has not set on the Empire. Are Myanmar's neighbours listening?

For years, some of Myanmar's neighbours have been the biggest investors in Myanmar.

After Myanmar changed course in 2010, some of these neighbours stepped back from investing in the country. Hopes were high that western countries would pour investments into Myanmar. That did not happen. FDI dipped.

As long as memory could recall, the West had been using foreign investment as bait for Myanmar to make a political change. The change came in 2010 but the west did not deliver.

There were all kinds of manipulations to make sure projects never came to fruition. There were manipulations in the name of "transparency". There were manipulations in the name of "sustainable development". There were manipulations in the name of "good governance". All very good but what Myanmar needed desperately were jobs.

From 2015 to 2020, starting from the top, government officials were under the influence of foreign elements. It was "carte blanche" come one come all. Myanmar was extremely fertile ground for foreign interference. A self-proclaimed Myanmar business guru, a George Soros disciple, who was placed in charge of foreign investment, inserted a "Swiss Model" in the process for business tenders. Swiss Model? By inserting the "Swiss Model" the process for tenders goes on and on. Nothing ever gets done. Did Credit Suisse implement the "Swiss Model" when they made investments in Archegoes Capital Management and Greensill Capital and the process, lost billions? Is the "Swiss Model" widely implemented at Swiss Banks, which hold some of the biggest accounts from all kinds of people from all over the world? Repeat, banks accounts in Swiss banks from all kinds of people! Transparency anyone?

Talk about George Soros, his institution was shut down in his own native country. Perhaps there was a realization that the "Open Society" was not open at all. Since George Soros likes to preach "open society" let's open up their books in Myanmar. What have Soros linked outfits been doing in Myanmar? Has anyone in Soros immediate or extended sphere, foreign or domestic pursued any of Myanmar business projects? Let's look into that it should not be difficult to find some trails.

Foreign interference also comes in a form of information gathering. Here too it was free for all! To be designated as conducting business in a "responsible" manner, Myanmar enterprises, including leading banks, are scrutinized by an organization founded by a former British foreign service official. Where's all that information finally ends up is anyone's guess. Yet, these locals' companies, oblivious to the reality and eager to be seen as carrying out good business practices, rendered all kinds of information to outfits established by foreigners.

The intention for the West has always been it was fine as long as investments of small scale dripped into Myanmar here and there. But for big substantial projects, none was meant to come to fruition. In translation, Myanmar people were never meant to enjoy prosperity. As long as the country remains impoverished, the country will always remain at their mercy.

Then there are interferences from international organizations. Let's look at the UN for example. The United Nations Envoy to Myanmar made reckless comments in New York last week after the meeting in the United Nations general assembly. Mrs Schraner Burgener's views and the comments she continues to make would make perfect sense if looked at from "algorithms" and "formulas" she studied in her university classroom. Models and algorithms formulated based on western values and from the western perspective.

It must have been difficult for Mrs Schraner Burgener to leave the tropical cities she has been living in in recent months. Maybe she needed to go to New York so that on the heels of the general assembly meeting her western supporters will hear what she has to say. Maybe her contract is up and she needed to justify the renewal of her contract and thus, she needed to be seen in New York and be seen as saying something. So Mrs Schraner Burgener goes to New York City. She walks down the street and no one knows who she is. She gets into the taxi, no one knows who she is. But she comes to tropical countries in the orient, she demands to meet with government officials at the highest levels. Meetings with prime ministers and such, in comparison, say for example in Washington DC, Mrs Schraner Burgener might be accorded with a meeting with a congressional aide. For Mrs Schraner Burgener's remarks in New York, BBC gave her 20 seconds. Objective achieved!

This is the problem with UN types. They come to poor third world countries and instantly assert the feeling of superiority over the locals. When the matter involves big powerful countries, the UN is nowhere to be found nor heard. But when the crisis involves small countries the UN plays it up to justify its existence.

The first UN envoy was appointed around 1996. All these years what have all these envoys managed to achieve for Myanmar, except to travel in style, pile up mileage and stay at top hotels?

A recent UN report stated that the number of displaced persons around the world are at a record high. High and might people at the UN must be doing a great job. The world seems to be getting more peaceful under the UN's watch! If one listens and believes the misguided, ill-informed, bias, reckless and self-serving statement being made by numerous senior UN officials about the recent developments in Myanmar, it sounds almost like the fate of Myanmar depends on those high and might forces in the UN. Well... there they go again!

(Opinions and views in this article are only those of the author – Ed).

Senegal, EU and US sign deal for new vaccine-production plant

Senegal, the EU, the US, a number of European governments, and different companions, signed an accord within the capital Dakar on Friday to finance vaccine manufacturing within the West African state.

THE transfer comes amid a scarcity of jabs and the third wave of coronavirus infections sweeping Africa, which has highlighted the dearth of vaccination-production services on the continent.

Ninety-nine per cent of vaccines utilized in Africa are imported, in line with a joint assertion from the Senegalese authorities and the European Union.

The new financing deal is meant to kickstart vaccine manufacturing on the Pasteur Institute in Dakar, the assertion defined, decreasing the dependence on imports.

Senegal's Economic system Minister Amadou Hott was quoted within the assertion as saying that the new manufacturing website will lay the muse for "pharmaceutical and medical sovereignty".

It can additionally "enhance entry to inexpensive vaccines in Africa, and allow vaccine manufacturing to quickly reply to new pandemics," he added.

Development of the plant is predicted to start out later this 12 months, in line with the assertion, which added that 25 million vaccine doses are because of be produced every month by the tip of 2022.

The European Fee, European Funding Financial institution, the World Financial institution, in addition to the US, France, Germany and Belgium will fund the venture, alongside the Senegalese authorities and different donors.

Germany will contribute 20 million euros ($23.7 million) in direction of the new plant.

It's not but clear how a lot different donors will contribute. Nevertheless, a number of donors had already contributed hundreds of thousands in direction of a feasibility examine.

At a press convention in Dakar on Friday, European Commissioner Thierry Breton stated the venture ought to value round 200 million euros ($237 million) in whole.

The plant shall be located within the new metropolis of Diamniadio, about 30 kilometres (18 miles) from Dakar, and make use of about 300 folks, he added.

"It is a historic day," Breton stated, referring to the signing.

With some 5.8 million reported Covid-19 instances and round 149,000 deaths amongst its practically 1.3 billion folks, Africa is the world's least-affected continent after Oceania, in line with an AFP tally.

The third wave of virus infections is at present sweeping the continent, elevating fears concerning the penalties of an absence of vaccines.

Vaccination charges stay sluggish, with solely about two per cent of the African inhabitants totally vaccinated.

Matshidiso Moeti, the World Well being Group's regional director for Africa, warned on Thursday that instances are doubling each 18 days.

"Africa has simply marked the continent's most dire pandemic week ever," she stated.

SOURCE: AFP

Senegal, the EU, the US, a number of European governments, and different companions, signed an accord within the capital Dakar on Friday to finance vaccine manufacturing within the West African state. **PHOTO: CGTN/ XINHUA**

Personal preventive practices against COVID-19 infection

(1) Wear the mask systematically when going out in public.

(2) Keep a proper physical distance.

(3) Avoid the crowd.

(4) Wash your hands for 20 seconds frequently.

(5) Avoid entering unventilated closed spaces as much as possible.

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.
(13) If those who do not wear the masks when they go outside, and if those who conduct mass gatherings will face legal actions under the existing laws.

Health Knowledge Awareness Promoting Department
Ministry of Health and Sports

NEWS IN BRIEF

French nationals going 'childfree' to control over-population, reverse global warming

FRENCH nationals are going 'childfree' in order to control overpopulation and reverse global warming as the world's population exceeds 7.8 billion people.

"Having a child would be totally against my principles. I've never wanted children and am more certain of this decision the older I get," said Manon, 26. "I don't see why I would impose another consumer on this world. In the Western world, we consume more than the resources available," she added, reported France24.

Like Manon, more and more young adults are deciding not to have children for environmental reasons in order to help the planet. — ANI ■

Violence in Afghanistan could worsen drug problem in Pakistan: Anti-narcotics official

VIOLENCE in Afghanistan could intensify drug trafficking and the problem of narcotics in Pakistan, an anti-narcotics official told NIKKEI Asia.

Akbar Durrani, federal secretary of Pakistan's Ministry of Narcotics Control said: "If there is no political stability in Afghanistan, it might aggravate the problems which we are experiencing already." He added that Afghanistan is one of the major narcotics challenges for Pakistan.

The security situation in Afghanistan has weakened as the US troops have almost left. The Taliban are capturing more and more areas.

Pakistan has always been a centre of trade in Afghan-produced drugs but the increasing violence in Afghanistan has boosted the trade.

The situation was under control before the US troops entered the country two decades ago but the drug trade is likely to grow in the situation of political vacuum. — ANI ■

New Zealand's Ardern calls emergency APEC Covid meeting

Wellington, New Zealand, in May, 2020 as restrictions began to be eased. **PHOTO: MARTY MELVILLE/AFP**

NEW ZEALAND'S Jacinda Ardern on Monday announced a hastily convened virtual meeting of APEC leaders this week to discuss the Asia-Pacific region's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and its economic impact.

Ardern is scheduled to host the annual 21-nation Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit online in November, but called an additional 'informal' meeting for this Friday to examine immediate steps to address the crisis.

"This is the first time in APEC's history that leaders have had an additional meeting at leaders' level and it reflects our desire to navigate together out of the Covid-19 pandemic and economic crisis," she said in a statement.

"APEC economies have suffered their biggest contraction since WWII over the past year, with 81 million jobs lost – responding collectively is vital to accelerate the economic recovery for the region."

The APEC grouping brings together Pacific Rim countries ranging from the United States to Papua New Guinea, collectively accounting for about 60 per cent of global GDP. As host nation for 2021, New Zealand has already signalled its intention to expedite the trade of Covid-19 vaccines and medical material across the region. — AFP ■

Verdict day in Jordan 'coup plot' trial

A Jordanian court is to rule Monday in the trial of two ex-officials accused of plotting a palace coup that sparked a crisis in a kingdom seen as an oasis of stability.

Former royal court chief Bassem Awadallah and an ex-envoy to Saudi Arabia, Sharif Hassan bin Zaid, have been charged with conspiring with Prince Hamzah to have him replace his half-brother, King Abdullah II.

The prince himself was not on trial.

But the 13-page charge sheet said Hamzah, 41, "was determined to fulfil his personal ambition to rule, in violation of the Hashemite constitution and customs".

Awadallah and Bin Zaid — who both have close ties to neighbouring Saudi Arabia — have pleaded not guilty to "incitement against the ruling system" and "acts that could threaten society and create sedition".

The verdict will be announced by the State Security Court — a military tribunal that also includes civilian judges — winding up a trial that opened on June 21.

Awadallah, who holds Saudi nationality, and his co-defendant face up to 20 years in prison if convicted on all charges.

Regional powerhouse Saudi Arabia has fervently denied any involvement in the alleged plot.

The unprecedented palace crisis erupted in April.

Eighteen suspects were arrested after authorities announced they had foiled a bid to destabilise the pro-Western kingdom, but 16 were later released.

A former crown prince who was sidelined as heir to the throne by the king in 2004, Hamzah accused Jordan's rulers of corruption and ineptitude in a video message posted by the BBC on April 3.

He said the same day that he had been put under house arrest.

Authorities later said he would not stand trial, as his case had been resolved within the royal family, with Hamzah pledging allegiance to Abdullah.— AFP ■

Japan to issue vaccine passports free of charge

THE so-called vaccine passports Japan plans to issue to allow people inoculated against COVID-19 to travel internationally will be free of charge, the government's top spokesman said Monday.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato told a press conference that starting July 26, people will be able to apply for the certificates in the municipalities where they were registered as a resident at the time they got their shots.

The Foreign Ministry's website will feature a list of countries and regions that will ease quarantine measures for those with a vaccine passport, Kato said.

Japan is looking to have its vaccination passports accepted by over 10 nations, including Italy, France and Greece, according to government sources.

Kato said the certificates will be free of charge "for the time being" except for any postal fees, and may be issued as quickly as the same day as the application or take up to several days.— Kyodo News ■

The international departure lobby of Kansai International Airport in Osaka Prefecture is seen. **PHOTO: KYODO/FILE**

The battle for Brazil's indigenous land hots up

BRAZIL'S indigenous peoples are bracing for a legal battle with far-right President Jair's Bolsonaro's government as it seeks to rush laws through parliament to carve away at their land.

Indigenous people, who represent some 0.5 per cent of Brazil's population, hold about 13 per cent of its land under ancestral rights guaranteed by the country's 1988 constitution.

These have been under threat ever since Bolsonaro came to power in 2019 on the promise of ceding "not one centimetre more" to Brazil's native population.

He has sought to open public land up for economic exploitation in one of the world's biggest agricultural producers, and several bills are before parliament seeking to achieve this.

"We are living our worst time," said Joenia Wapichana, the first indigenous lawmaker in the country's history and the spearhead of a protracted legislative and legal fight.

"These (parliamentary) projects which are a setback for us, are being voted on much faster now," she said.

Last month, a commission of the chamber of deputies -- one of two houses of congress -- approved a bill introduced already in 2007 to recognize as ancestral only land occupied by indigenous peoples when the 1988 Constitution was promulgated.

The day before the decision, clashes between indigenous and security forces at a protest against the bill left several injured, including three police struck by arrows.

The bill has yet to pass a full sitting of the chamber, and then the senate. A slew of other draft laws seek to authorize mining and farming on indigenous land where it is now illegal.

Indigenous people, who represent some 0.5 per cent of Brazil's population, hold about 13 percent of its land under constitutionally-protected ancestral rights. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

'Period of highest risk'

"The Constitution already provides for economic activity in indigenous areas and lands," Mines and Energy Minister Bento Albuquerque insisted at a meeting with foreign correspondents last week. — AFP ■

Sumatran elephant found beheaded in Indonesia

A subsequent autopsy found that the elephant had also been poisoned. **PHOTO: AFP**

A critically endangered Sumatran elephant has been found decapitated with its tusks missing in Indonesia, the conservation agency said Monday, as it opened a poaching investigation.

The rotting carcass was discovered Sunday at a palm oil plantation in Sumatra's Aceh region and a subsequent autopsy found that the animal had also been poisoned.

"The remains of the wild elephant were found in a tragic condition with its head gone," said Rosa Rika Wahyuni, a doctor at the Aceh conservation agency.

"We found poison in its digestive system," she added.

It was not clear how long the male elephant, estimated to be about 12 years old, had been dead.

Rampant deforestation has reduced the elephants' natural habitat and brought them into increasing conflict with humans, while their tusks are prized in the illegal wildlife trade.

There have been several elephant poisoning cases in recent years, including one in 2019 when a Sumatran elephant was found decapitated with its tusks ripped off.

Aceh's conservation agency estimated the region has as few as 500 Sumatran elephants still living in the wild.— AFP ■

Brussels sets stage for battle over emissions cuts

THE European Commission will unveil on Wednesday a vast package of draft green legislation designed to govern a faster transition to a low carbon economy.

A dozen legal texts -- already under attack from political interests, industry lobbies and environmentalists -- will seek to ensure emissions are cut by 55 per cent over 1990 levels by 2030.

Behind the "Green Deal" and "Fit for 55" slogans there are eye-catching pledges, such as the expected decision to ban the sales of new petrol-driven cars from 2035.

Perhaps even more importantly, the Commission will seek to reform the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), a carbon market in which industry trade their pollution quotas.

But environmentalists will denounce the laws as not going far enough, even as industry and some EU member states more dependant on coal-fired power push back against the effort.

The ETS cap and trade system covers power generation, steel plants, cement, chemicals and commercial aviation -- between them representing around 40 per cent of European greenhouse emissions. — AFP ■

Goats: unlikely allies in California's fight against wildfires

THEIR mission, should they choose to accept it, is simple: graze.

Goats are an unlikely but increasingly popular weapon in California's fight against the wildfires that rage through the western US state every year.

On a recent hot July morning, a herd of 80 ungulates were deployed to a hilly patch of land in Glendale, just outside Los Angeles.

They had been chomping away for the past 10 days or so, helping to clear away bone-dry vegetation that could go up in flames and threaten the surrounding homes.

The cost of employing the goats is comparable to what authorities would pay for human workers -- at a lower environmental toll. **PHOTO: AFP**

Their work comes up a vital time. Last year was the worst in California's modern history for wildfires, with more than four million acres (1.6 million hectares) scorched.

Due to climate change and a brutal drought, officials fear that months of massive infernos are now the norm.

So any help is welcome.

"We started hearing a lot about goats, both from community members, other fire departments, other cities," said Glendale fire marshal Jeffrey Ragusa.

"And the more we looked into it, the more we realized how effective they can be, how environmentally friendly they can be."— AFP ■

G20 nervous over Delta threat to economic recovery

AS healthcare systems brace for damage inflicted by the quick-spreading Delta variant, G20 finance ministers warned Saturday that it could also slow global economic recovery.

"The recovery is characterized by great divergences across and within countries," and "remains exposed to downside risks, in particular the spread of new variants of the COVID-19 virus," they said in a final statement.

The ministers also warned of the dangers of the "different paces of vaccination" around the world.

The main concern is the Delta variant.

"We have very good economic forecasts for all the G20 countries," French Economy Minister Bruno le Maire explained.

But he warned: "The only thing that could threaten a solid and rapid rebound of the economy is the variant, and a new wave of the pandemic. We must improve vaccination, everywhere in the world."

Britain's Rishi Sunak was more defiant, telling AFP that the UK had showed "vaccines are effective at preventing hospitalizations and deaths, even with the Delta variant."

"I think that gives us the confidence to move forward and slowly and safely reopen our economies and countries," he said.

Many countries, however, from Spain to Thailand, have moved to re-introduce anti-COVID-19 restrictions.

Rising concern over the Delta variant comes on the heels of the easing of restrictions in many countries, which has breathed much-needed fresh air into many of the major economies.

The G20 has called for vaccination campaigns worldwide to be accelerated, pledging to do more to help developing countries give their citizens jabs. While 70 per cent of the population is vaccinated in some developed countries, the figure is less than 1.0 per cent for low-income countries, according to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. — AFP ■

As healthcare systems brace for damage inflicted by the quick-spreading Delta variant, G20 finance ministers warned Saturday that it could also slow global economic recovery. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Nearly 30% see bonuses fall this summer due to pandemic impact

People wearing face masks walk at Shinagawa Station in Tokyo during the morning commute on 7 May, 2021, amid the coronavirus pandemic. **PHOTO: KYODO**

NEARLY 30 per cent of respondents in a private-sector survey said their summer bonuses fell from last year, indicating that more Japanese people are feeling the pinch of the coronavirus pandemic hurting corporate earnings.

The percentage of people reporting falling bonuses rose sharply last year to 30.1 per cent and stayed at 27.6 percent this year, the online survey by Nippon Life Insurance Co. showed. The corresponding figure for 2019 before the pandemic was 14.3 per cent.

Reflecting the severity of a hit to service providers, 38.5 per cent of respondents in the transport and postal services sector said their bonuses decreased, followed by 35.5 per cent in the sector offering entertainment and other services related to life events such as marriage. The manufacturing industry, which had the largest percentage of people experiencing bonus cuts, came in third at 33.7 per cent.

Summer bonuses averaged 564,000 yen ($5,120), up from 554,000 yen a year ago. But the figure was still lower than an average 610,000 in 2019 before the pandemic, according to the survey covering 9,073 respondents between June 1 and 14.

The spread of the novel coronavirus has depressed economic activity globally, affecting both manufacturers and non-manufacturers. In recent months, economist have pointed to the gap in the pace of recovery between manufacturers, benefiting from rising external demand in nations like China and the United States, and non-manufacturers still reeling as Japan is struggling to curb coronavirus infections.— Kyodo News ■

N. Korea's border blockage lets down citizens who want food, vaccines

NORTH Korea's unwavering determination not to open its border with China to ward off the intrusion of the novel coronavirus has been fanning fears that the nuclear-armed country's citizens cannot receive food in satisfying quantities or vaccination anytime soon.

While North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has called for unity of its nationals to overcome the difficulties related to the pandemic by building a self-reliant economy, he may be in a serious dilemma as to whether to end the border blockage, diplomatic sources said.

Should North Korea resume its trade with China, the virus could spread in the nation, but should it keep suspending business with its closest and most influential ally in economic terms, it would be forced to give up obtaining essential supplies.

With Kim so far pledging to strengthen anti-epidemic measures, North Korea is unlikely to restart trade with China in the near future, apparently disappointing its citizens, many of whom want to acquire provisions and vaccines, the sources said.

If Kim fails to cope well with the situation, frustration would be pent-up among nationals, which, in the worst-case scenario, "could jeopardize" his family's dynasty that has continued since North Korea was established in 1948, one of them said.— Kyodo News ■

Syria govt raises bread, diesel prices as crisis deepens

STEEP bread and diesel price hikes went into force in government-held parts of war-torn Syria on Sunday, bringing more pain for civilians in a long-running economic crisis.

Damascus has repeatedly raised fuel prices in recent years to tackle a financial crunch sparked by the country's decade-long civil war and compounded by a spate of Western sanctions.

A Syrian man, wearing a protective face mask and gloves to protect against the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, waits for customers at his bakery in the Qaymariyya quarter of the Old City of the capital Damascus on 14 April, 2020. **PHOTO: LOUAI BESHARA/AFP**

The price of diesel fuel nearly tripled and the price of bread doubled on Sunday, according to the official SANA news agency, only days after Damascus announced a 25 per cent increase in the price of petrol. "This was all expected and now we fear further increases in the price of... food and medicine," Damascus resident Wael Hammoud, 41, told AFP while he waited for more than thirty minutes to hail a cab to take him to work. — AFP ■

Tokyo's taxi drivers face fan-free Olympics

IN his white gloves, dark suit and tie, taxi driver Yuki Kawaguchi is ready to ferry passengers around Tokyo in style.

But while taking a cab in the Japanese capital is a luxurious experience, drivers face the constant threat of coronavirus infection, and recently suffered another blow to business when Olympic spectators were banned in Tokyo.

Kawaguchi, 26, turns up for work at his taxi firm in the busy district of Shinagawa in jeans and a baggy T-shirt.

After changing into his smart uniform, he takes a breathalyzer test and a temperature check, then enters his gleaming black taxi adorned with the logo of the virus-postponed 2020 Games.

Organizers decided last week to hold Olympic events

Many taxis in Tokyo carry the logo of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. **PHOTO: AFP**

in and around the city behind closed doors as Covid-19 infections rebounded.

The fan ban is "inevitable", Kawaguchi told AFP, describing it as "the strongest step (organizers) can take short of cancellation".

Japan has seen nearly 15,000 Covid-19 deaths, and around 17 per cent of the population is fully vaccinated.

Kawaguchi said he wants to get a jab quickly, despite his concerns over side effects.

"I don't deny that I want to get vaccinated as soon as possible, as we drive many people we don't know.

"But at the same time I hear reports of side effects, so I have mixed feelings."

A new virus state of emergency began in Tokyo on Monday, limiting alcohol sales and restaurant opening hours, as well as capping crowd sizes at events.

As passenger numbers fell during the pandemic, Kawaguchi's employer Nihon Kotsu has made up for lost income with a goods delivery service. — AFP ■

Why China is hobbling its tech sector

SCUTTLED listings and share prices hammered by official threats: Beijing has launched a withering and very public assault on some of China's biggest tech names.

The travails of ride-hailing giant Didi Chuxing this week carried a cautionary tale for digital big hitters: what goes up, can come down... and fast.

Days after a New York IPO that raised $4.4 billion, Didi's app was banned from stores in its vast Chinese market over data collection issues, prompting shares to tank and lawsuits from furious investors.

Similar cybersecurity investigations were announced on platforms of two more US-listed Chinese firms a day later.

Motivated by monopoly and data fears or national pride and the control reflexes of the all-powerful Chinese Communist Party, Beijing is wounding its own firms.

Here are a few reasons why.

Party control?

At face value, the aim is to tidy up a once-free-wheeling space where companies holding big amounts of sensitive user data blossomed in an enormous domestic market with little regulation.

More recently, Beijing has beefed up its network security regime while expressing concern over excessive data collection, ostensibly to protect users from abuse -- mirroring US worries over popular Chinese apps. But analysts say deeper forces are also at play. "There's nothing the party likes less than things getting out from under their control," said Kendra Schaefer of consultancy Trivium China, referring to the ruling Communist Party. — AFP ■

Ant Group, the financial arm of Alibaba, saw its $34 billion IPO sunk last year ahead of an anti-monopoly probe of the tech behemoth. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Mitsubishi says paid 25 million euro Dieselgate fine

JAPANESE automaker Mitsubishi Motors confirmed Monday it paid a 25 million euro fine issued by German prosecutors over emissions fraud allegations earlier this year.

German authorities last year raided 10 sites as part of a probe into suspected diesel emissions cheating involving Mitsubishi cars, with prosecutors saying they had opened a fraud investigation.

Mitsubishi Motors said Monday it was issued a fine notice of 25 million euros ($29.7 million at today's rates) by the Frankfurt prosecutors office in late March.

"We have not brought an appeal against the fine notice," a spokesman for the firm told AFP, adding the sum was paid "before the end of March".

The order found no evidence that violations happened "knowingly or wilfully", and did not identify any fraudulent behaviour, he added.— AFP ■

Japanese automaker Mitsubishi Motors confirmed Monday it paid a 25 million euro fine issued by German prosecutors over emissions fraud allegations earlier this year. **PHOTO: JAPANESENOSTALGICCAR/AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Super Mario' cartridge sold for video game record $1.5 million

A cartridge of Nintendo's classic video game "Super Mario 64" set a world record Sunday, selling at auction for $1.56 million. The sale, the first ever of a game cartridge to surpass $1 million, came just two days after a sealed copy of "The Legend of Zelda" -- made for the old Nintendo NES console -- sold for a then-record of $870,000.

Dallas-based Heritage Auctions, which handled both sales, has not identified the buyers.Before Friday, the record for a video game auction was the sale in April of a 1986 "Super Mario Bros." cartridge: it went for $660,000.

Retro video games have become increasingly popular among nostalgic collectors in recent years, driving up prices for old-school consoles and cartridges at auctions.—AFP ■

Amazon restores service after global outage

AMAZON.COM Inc said its online stores had returned to normal services after a global outage disrupted shopping on its country sites.

According to outage monitoring website Downdetector, services were disrupted for nearly two hours and at the peak of the disruption, more than 38,000 user reports indicated issues with Amazon's online stores. They occurred on Sunday evening in the United States and Monday morning for much of the rest of the world.

"Some customers may have temporarily experienced issues while shopping. We have resolved the issue, and everything is now running smoothly," an Amazon spokesperson said. — AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V AEGEAN EXPRESS VOY.NO. (214N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V AEGEAN EXPRESS VOY.NO. (214N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-7-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CONTINENTAL SHIPPING LINES

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rare anti-government protests erupt in Cuba

THOUSANDS of Cubans took part in rare protests Sunday against the communist government, chanting, "Down with the dictatorship", as President Miguel Diaz-Canel called on his supporters to confront the demonstrators.

The anti-government rallies started spontaneously in several cities as the country endures its worst economic crisis in 30 years, with chronic shortages of electricity and food.

Several hundred protesters marched through the capital Havana chanting, "We want liberty," with a heavy military and police presence deployed after demonstrators massed outside the Capitol building.

Police used tear gas to disperse crowds, and at least ten people were arrested, while officers used plastic pipes to beat protesters, AFP journalists witnessed. Several thousand protesters -- mainly young people -- also took to the streets of San Antonio de los Banos, a town 30 kilometres (20 miles) southwest of Havana.—AFP ■

Bulgaria centre-right, populists in election 'photo finish'

FORMER Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov's centre-right party and a new populist party headed by singer-turned-politician Slavi Trifonov were neck-and-neck in exit polls published Sunday evening after polls closed in the country's second parliamentary election in three months.

Several exit polls projected that Trifonov's There is Such a People (ITN) party would finish within 1% of Borisov's GERB party.

Analyst Genoveva Petrova told the bTV station that the vote was heading for a "photo finish".

Badly damaged after massive anti-corruption protests in summer 2020, GERB was isolated in a fragmented legislature after the previous vote in April and failed to find partners to govern despite coming first. — AFP ■

S. Korea regrets "leak" of consultations about Moon's Japan visit

A South Korean official has expressed regret over a "unilateral leak" to news media of the contents of bilateral consultations on President Moon Jae In's possible visit to Japan and talks with Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga later this month when the Tokyo Olympics begin, calling on the Japanese side to act "prudently".

The Foreign Ministry official's acknowledgement Sunday that Moon is considering visiting Tokyo to attend the Olympic opening ceremony on July 23 and holding summit talks with Suga on the sidelines came after Japanese media reports in recent days about those possibilities.

Kyodo News, citing a source at the prime minister's office, has reported that the envisioned talks could be kept to around 15 minutes -- much shorter than the roughly one hour expected by the South Korean side.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in. **PHOTO: KYODO/FILE**

The Nikkei newspaper has reported that the Japanese government appears prepared to "cut short" the talks if South Korea does not show signs of taking concrete steps over compensation claims in its courts stemming from Japan's 1910-1945 colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula. Japan says all compensation issues were settled under a 1965 bilateral agreement.

Claiming that the contents of bilateral consultations on the possible Moon visit and summit talks with Suga have been "unilaterally leaked to the mass media from the Japanese position and standpoint," the South Korean official said those circumstances "make it difficult to continue government-to-government consultations." — Kyodo News ■

Moldova president pledges 'end to rule of thieves' as party leads poll

MOLDOVAN President Maia Sandu pledged an "end to the rule of thieves" Sunday as her pro-European party looked set to win snap parliamentary elections she called to shore up her position against pro-Russia forces.

Sandu's centre-right Action and Solidarity (PAS) party was leading with more than 47 per cent of the vote, with 90 per cent of the ballots counted as of 11:45 pm (20:45 GMT), according to the electoral commission.

"I hope that today will be the end of a difficult era for Moldova. I hope that today will be an end to the rule of thieves over Moldova," she said in a statement on Facebook.

With ballots still being counted, Sandu's supporters were celebrating at her campaign headquarters in the capital Chisinau, an AFP correspondent saw.

"There is no more intrigue. Sandu's party will get the majority," Alexei Tulbure, a political analyst and the country's former ambassador to the United Nations, told AFP.

The PAS's main rivals from the coalition of socialists and Communists, led by former Kremlin-backed president Igor Dodon and former president Vladimir Voronin, picked up about 31 per cent of the votes.

President Maia Sandu wants to take Moldova into the European Union. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Casting her ballot in Chisinau, Sandu said she had voted for change in the small ex-Soviet country beset by poverty and corruption. "I voted for an honest parliament to work with, for a parliament that will appoint honest people, competent people," Sandu told journalists after voting. — AFP ■

Haitian police arrest assassination suspect with 'political' aim

Haiti's Police General Director Leon Charles speaks during a press conference in Port-au Prince on July 11, 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

HAITIAN police announced Sunday they had arrested a Haitian national "who had political objectives" in recruiting the gunmen who assassinated President Jovenel Moise last week.

"This is an individual who entered Haiti on a private plane with political objectives," said Leon Charles, head of the Haitian National Police.

Christian Emmanuel Sanon, 63, who is of Haitian nationality, arrived in the island nation in June accompanied by several Colombians, according to details provided at a press conference.

Several Haitian ministers were also at the conference.

"The mission then changed," Charles said, explaining that the intent had originally been to arrest Moise, and the operation was mounted from within the country.

"Twenty-two other individuals entered Haiti," Charles said.

Eighteen Colombian citizens have been arrested since Wednesday. By interrogating them, the Haitian police learned that Sanon had recruited 26 team members via a Florida-based Venezuelan security company named CTU. "When we, the police, blocked the progress of these bandits after they committed their crime, the first person that one of the assailants called was Christian Emmanuel Sanon.

"He contacted two other people that we consider to be the masterminds of the assassination of President Jovenel Moise," Charles said, without disclosing the identity of the two other suspects. — AFP ■

Billionaire Branson achieves space dream

BRITISH billionaire Richard Branson flew into space Sunday aboard a Virgin Galactic vessel, a voyage he described as the "experience of a lifetime" — and one he hopes will usher in an era of lucrative space tourism.

"Congratulations to all our wonderful team at Virgin Galactic for 17 years of hard, hard work to get us this far," he said during a live feed as the VSS Unity spaceship glided back to Spaceport America in New Mexico.

It reached a peak altitude of around 53 miles (85 kilometres) — beyond the boundary of space, according to the United States — allowing the passengers to experience weightlessness and admire the Earth's curvature.

The trip proceeded without drama, and touchdown occurred at around 9:40 am Mountain Time (1540 GMT), about an hour after take-off.

The mission's success means Branson has beaten fellow billionaire Jeff Bezos in the race to be the first tycoon to cross the final frontier in a ship built by a company he founded. Earlier, a massive carrier plane took off and ascended to 50,000 feet before dropping VSS Unity to complete the rest of the flight using its rocket-powered engine.

Space base

Branson, who founded the Virgin Group — which today has interests in everything from commercial aviation to fitness centres — is known for his appetite for adventure and has set world records in hot air ballooning and boating. "As a child, I wanted to go to space," the brash 70-year-old wrote a few days ahead of his trip. — AFP ■

Inside the cabin of Virgin Galactic's spaceship. **PHOTO: VIRGIN GALACTIC/AFP**

Obituary

Mrs. Nargis aka Aster Jane
(84) Years

Wife of late Dr. M Jan, beloved mother of U Win Naing & Daw Thin Thin Myint, Dr. Than Tun Win & Daw San Kywe Khaing, Mr. Eric Amenulla Faiz & Yasmin Faiz, U Lin Naing & Daw Su Su and U Hla Win & Daw Hnin Pan Khaing passed away on 9 July 2021 (28 Dhul Qa' dah 1442) in Yangon residence. May Allah Accept her good deeds and grant her jannat ul Firdous. The Janaza prayer and burial was held on the same day at Ye Way Muslim Cemetery at 1730 hours. Thanks to all the relatives and friends for their support and assistance.

Bereaved Family

Afghanistan urges Europe to halt forced deportations of Afghans for three months

AFGHANISTAN has urged European countries to halt forced deportations of Afghan migrants for the next three months, as security forces battle a wave of violence triggered by a dizzying Taliban offensive.

The country is facing a crisis as the insurgents snap up territory across the countryside, stretching government forces and leading to a fresh wave of internally displaced families, complicated by a renewed outbreak of Covid-19.

"The escalation of violence by the Taliban group in the country and the spread of the third wave of (Covid-19) have caused a great deal of economic and social unrest, creating concerns and challenges for the people," Afghanistan's refugees and repatriation ministry said in a statement on Saturday.

"The government's decision emphasises that host countries should refrain from forcibly deporting Afghan refugees... for the next three months," the ministry said, adding that the return of Afghans from Europe was worrying. — AFP ■

Millions sweltering in US west as Canada takes emergency steps

MILLIONS of people across the western United States and Canada were hit Sunday by a new round of scorching hot temperatures, with some roads closed, train traffic limited and new evacuations ordered.

In Canada, with wildfires continuing to spread -- including 50 more blazes erupting in the past two days -- the government announced new emergency measures aimed at preventing further fires.

Sweltering conditions hit much of the Pacific seaboard and as far inland as the western edge of the Rocky Mountains over the weekend.

"A dangerous heat wave will affect much of the western US, with record-breaking temperatures likely," the National Weather service said on its website Sunday, while Canadian meteorologists predicted highs approaching 90 Fahrenheit (32 Celsius) in parts of western Canada -- well above seasonal norms.

Las Vegas on Saturday matched its all-time record of 117 degrees Fahrenheit, according to the National Weather Service (NWS) -- a temperature recorded in the desert entertainment city once in 1942 and three other times since 2005.

Sunday was expected to be only a few degrees cooler there, while Death Valley, California -- often the nation's hottest spot -- was headed for a high of 126 degrees Fahrenheit.

Forecasters issued an excessive heat warning for several other urban centres including the southern city of Phoenix and San Jose, the center of the Silicon Valley tech industry south of San Francisco.

The weekend's hot weather follows an earlier heat wave that struck the western United States and Canada at the end of June. — AFP ■

Heat waves begin when high pressure in the atmosphere moves in and pushes warm air towards the ground. **PHOTO: AFP**

Eleven people were killed when lightning struck two watchtowers on the 12th century Amer Fort in the Indian city of Jaipur. **PHOTO: AFP/FIL**

Lightning strikes kill more than 50 in India

MORE than 50 people were killed in lightning strikes across several states in India, authorities said Monday, including 11 people at a historic fort.

Hundreds of people are killed each year in intense storms at the start of the monsoon season, which bring respite from the summer heat across the northern Indian plains.

At least 42 people died Sunday in different districts of Uttar Pradesh, according to disaster-response authorities in India's most populous state.

In Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan state, bolts hit two watchtowers at the 12th-century Amer Fort, which were packed with visitors watching the storm cross the city.

"It was already raining when the people were there. They huddled in the towers as the rainfall intensified," Saurabh Tiwari, a senior Jaipur police officer, told AFP. People had flocked to the fort, which gives a panoramic view across Jaipur, after several weeks of intense heat in the state.—AFP ■

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.

Three Myanmar athletes qualify for Tokyo Olympics

THREE Myanmar athletes have qualified for the XXXII Tokyo Olympic Games to be held in Tokyo, Japan from 23 July to 8 August.

The three athletes are Thet Htar Thuzar from the Badminton category, Ye Tun Naung from the Shooting category and Chu Myat Noe Wai from the Judo category respectively.

Badminton star Thet Htar Thuzar has won the Olympic qualifiers with the top 50 Women's Single World position.

Ye Tun Naung, has qualified for the shooting event of the 2016 Rio Olympics and is eligible to compete again this year as a Wild Card priority.

Judo athlete Ma Chu Myat Noe Wai has won a bronze medal in the previous SEA Games in the Philippines and was selected to compete in the Tokyo Olympics with a wild card.

Deputy Minister for Ministry of Health and Sports U Myo Hlaing will leave for Japan on 22 July for the Olympic tourney, according to the Department of Sports and Physical Education. —GNLM ■

Djokovic wins 20th Grand Slam with sixth Wimbledon triumph

NOVAK DJOKOVIC won a record-equalling 20th Grand Slam title and sixth Wimbledon on Sunday with a four-set victory over battling Matteo Berrettini of Italy.

The world number one triumphed 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-4, 6-3 to move level on 20 majors with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal.

His win also put him three-quarters of the way to the first calendar Grand Slam of all four majors since 1969.

A sixth victory at the All England Club for Djokovic, who was playing in his 30th final at the Slams, added to his nine Australian Opens, two Roland Garros titles as well as three at the US Open.

Should he win a fourth title in New York in September, he will become just the third man in history after Don Budge (1938) and Rod Laver (1962 and 1969) to complete the calendar Grand Slam.

"It was more than a battle. He is a true Italian hammer I felt it on my skin," said Djokovic of Berrettini.

"It means none of us three will stop. Roger and Rafa are legends they are the reason I am where I am today."

Novak Djokovic won a record-equalling 20th Grand Slam title and sixth Wimbledon on Sunday with a four-set victory over battling Matteo Berrettini of Italy. **PHOTO: AFP**

Federer — who bowed out in the quarter-finals while Nadal did not play – tweeted his congratulations.

"Congrats Novak on your 20th major," he said.

"I'm proud to have the opportunity to play in a special era of tennis champions. Wonderful performance, well done!"

The Serb also now has 85 career titles while he has become the first man to break the $150 million prize money barrier. A gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics could give him the first ever Golden Grand Slam by a male player. — AFP ■

Italy 'dominated' England in Euro 2020 final, says Mancini

Italy coach Roberto Mancini hailed his side's performance and said Italy "dominated" England after conceding an early goal at Wembley on Sunday to win the Euro 2020 final. **PHOTO: AFP**

ITALY coach Roberto Mancini hailed his side's performance and said Italy "dominated" England after conceding an early goal at Wembley on Sunday to win the Euro 2020 final.

"We did well. We conceded a goal straight away and struggled, but then we dominated the game," Mancini told RAI Sport following the 3-2 win on penalties after the match ended 1-1 after extra time.

"The lads were wonderful, I don't know what more to say. It's important for all the people and all the fans.

"I hope they're celebrating (in Italy)."

Leonardo Bonucci cancelled out Luke Shaw's half-volley in the second half, and the two teams could not be separated in extra time.

It went to a shoot-out, with Gianluigi Donnarumma making two decisive saves after Marcus Rashford hit the woodwork.

Italy won the title for the second time after 1968.

"It's incredible, when I think back to where we started," said 34-year-old defender Bonucci.

Italy are now on a 34-match unbeaten run, bouncing back in style after suffering the humiliation of failing to qualify for the 2018 World Cup.

"When you are at the bottom of the hole, you see how great men regain their strength," Bonucci added. "I want to say thank you to our great coach, our great team, our great country. We are full of joy and happiness."

Captain Giorgio Chiellini said "there was something magical in the air" since the tournament kicked off in Rome a month ago.

"A few tears fell. We all deserved it, at this age we realise even more what it means to win such a trophy," said the 36-year-old. — AFP ■