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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.

Efforts should be made for ensuring peace and stability based on political and security measures: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister of Provisional Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses meeting 1/2021 of Provisional Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

ONLY when the country is peaceful and stable, can the election be held smoothly, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting 1/2021 of the Provisional Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar at the

Office of the Chairman of the State Administration Council in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

In his opening speech, the Senior General said the Provisional Government was constituted on 1 August, and he took the responsibilities of Prime Minister as the Head of Government. All cabinet members need to collectively carry out development tasks of the State.

A government is responsible for undertaking improvement of the country. The Senior General stressed that they are not a political government with party policies but implement the five-point road map and nine objectives as policies adopted by the State Administration Council for the nation. It is necessary to secure achievement in implementing these policies. The tenure

of the current government is a short time. He has explained it in the address delivered to mark the six months period of the government duty. The legal permission for incompleteness of the tasks within the state of emergency period is mentioned in the chapter of the provision of the State of Emergency. Depending on management of the government and good cooper-

ation of the people, the period for carrying out the tasks can be changed. Although the government takes responsibility for a short period, it is necessary to manage food, clothing and shelters of the people without fail. Likewise, efforts should be made for ensuring political peace and stability as well as security peace and stability.

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China transfers fund for 21 projects to be implemented in Myanmar under Mekong-Lancang Cooperation

U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and H.E. Mr. Chen Hai, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar signed the agreement on the transfer of fund for Mekong-Lancang Special Fund (2021) projects, via video conference in the morning of 10th August 2021.

The Union Minister for International Cooperation, Union Ministers from project receiving Ministries, deputy minister, permanent secretary and senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and officials from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Yangon participated in the signing ceremony.

Although Myanmar received a total of 22 projects under the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation

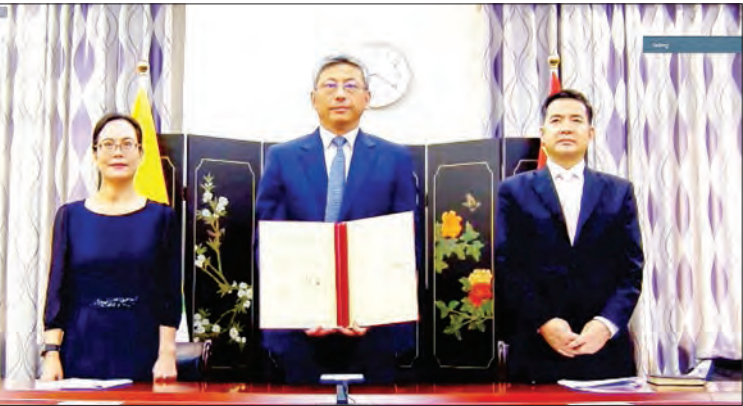


U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and H.E. Mr. Chen Hai, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the People's Republic of China to Myanmar attend Signing of agreement on transfer of fund for Mekong-Lancang Special fund (2021) through video conference.

Special Fund (2021), the transfer will be made over 6.1 million USD for 21 projects, and the fund for establishing "Biosafety level-3 Laboratory" project will be transferred once the internal process of fund supporter has completed. The projects to be implemented in Myanmar, covers in the areas of non-traditional security, human capital development, vaccine pro-

duction for animal diseases, culture, agriculture, natural disaster protection, science and technology, environmental conservation, forestry, border trade, tourism and finance.

China solely established the Special Fund under the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation in 2017 to implement the projects supported to the socioeconomic



development of Mekong countries, and granted the projects annually to each of Mekong countries. Myanmar had received (51) projects between 2017 and 2020 with total value of USD (16.3) million.

The Mekong-Lancang Cooperation was initiated by the Chinese Premier Li Keqiang at the 17th ASEAN-China Summit

held in Myanmar in 2014 to foster cooperation to narrow the development gap and attain sustainable development in the Mekong region. Mekong-Lancang Cooperation was officially launched in 2016 among six Mekong-Lancang countries comprising Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam.— MNA

Medical equipment imports in operation as usual

THE Ministry of Commerce is making continuous efforts to import the anti-COVID-19 equipment including liquid oxygen, oxygen gas, household oxygen concentrators, and medicines via sea, air and border routes on public holidays together with the ministry concerned in accordance with the SOP.

A total of 6,343 oxygen concentrators, 30 empty oxygen cyl-

inders, 1,400 test kits, 1,000 PPE suits and 14 tonnes of masks arrived at the Yangon International Airport yesterday, while nine tonnes of liquid oxygen cylinders at the international port. Moreover, 38 tonnes of liquid oxygen on bowzers, 41 tonnes of liquid oxygen cylinders, 8,894 empty oxygen cylinders, eight oxygen plants, 7,495 home oxygen concentrators, 1,400 test kits, 20,600

PPE suits, 10 tonnes of gloves and 75 tonnes of masks were imported via Muse, Lwejel, Chinshwehaw, Myawady, Kanpaitee and Tachilek border trade checkpoints. These materials were transported by 61 vehicles of 39 companies.

A total of 555 tonnes of liquid oxygen on bowzers, 149 tonnes of oxygen liquid, 65 tonnes of oxygen gas cylinders, 71,106 empty oxygen containers, 15 oxygen plants, nine oxygen generators, 58,770 home oxygen concentrators, 143,042 test kits, 325,892 PPE suits, 50 tonnes of gloves and 801 tonnes of masks have been imported so far in August.

In July, a total of 727 tonnes of liquid oxygen, 567 tonnes of liquid oxygen cylinder, 114 tonnes of oxygen gas cylinders, 40,491 empty oxygen containers, 69,146 household oxygen concen-



trators, eight oxygen plants, 11 oxygen generators, four oxygen filling machines, 322,878 test kits, 1,104 tonnes of mask and 182,975 PPE suits were imported.

From July to 10 August, the liquid oxygen was imported in 61 bowzers. Of them, 45 bowzers led to Yangon, 11 to Mandalay, two each to Bago and Mawlamyine and one to Thaton. Of 23 oxygen plants, four were distributed to Yangon, another four to

Lashio, three to Bago, two to Pakokku and one each to Mandalay, Taunggyi, Thanbyuzayat, Magway, Hpa-an, Dawei, Wake-ma, Myittha and Kyaukpadaung townships.

The Ministry of Commerce has posted contact persons and department announcements on the Ministry's website, Commerce.gov.mm, to access direct contact with relevant authorities if assistance is needed.—MNA



Cargo trucks are transporting medical equipment to be distributed to regions and states.

The need to call back citizens who arrive in foreign countries

THE SENIOR GENERAL stressed the need to call back the citizens who arrive in foreign countries with various reasons. So far, 6,209 citizens returned from China, Thailand and Laos from 25 July to 6 August. Among them, COVID-19 patients are being admitted at the hospitals. Relief flights are arranged to call back the citizens from other countries.

(Excerpt from the speech to the meeting 13/2021 of the State Administration Council made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 2 August 2021)

Efforts should be made for ensuring peace and stability based ...

FROM PAGE-1

Only when the country is peaceful and stable, can the election be held smoothly.

The Senior General stressed the need to continuously fulfill the needs of respective regions in undertaking regional development tasks in addition to the basic needs of the people. The democratization process has been implemented since 2011 for the country to walk along the multiparty democracy route. In the time of President U Thein Sein, necessities were undertaken in accord with the Constitution (2008) and the government elected in 2016 implemented the reform processes as much as it can. There remain to fulfill the needs in implementing the multiparty democracy. In reviewing the various situations which happened in last six months period, a lesson was obtained for carrying out many tasks related to democracy. Records and documents showed that although the people demanded to implement democracy in 1988, there were a few number of persons who deeply understood the measures of democracy. Hence, it is necessary to realize the democracy in conformity with the current situations of Myanmar.

There are some 55 million of population in the country, most of who believe in Buddhism. Hence, there are many Myanmar's national characteristics under the advice of Buddhism. Hence, it is necessary to consider the national characteristics in building a country. Myanmar is home to some 135 ethnic nationals. All the people and ethnic nationals accept the multiparty democracy system. They wish to enjoy the fruits of development, unity and prosperity. Myanmar with proper climatic conditions

Relevant ministries are to cooperate with each other in improvement of education qualification of the people from regions and states. All regions and states need to set aims for the people to complete basic middle school education through the literacy campaigns.

is teeming with Ayeyawady, Chindwin, Thanlwin, Sittoung, Laymyo and Kaladan rivers and others streaming from the north to the south. Based on these rivers, the country is operating agriculture and livestock breeding tasks and other businesses.

With regard to increasing number of educated persons, Myanmar has been striving for turning out many numbers of educated persons while reducing the poverty rate. Due to political conditions and outbreak of COVID-19, the country is struggling in downtrend of economy. So, some people went abroad to seek jobs in foreign countries because of shortage of job opportunities at home. Since 1948 when the country regained her independence, the armed conflicts of ethnics have been long-lasting for some 75 years. Due to immigration problems related to some neighbouring countries, citizenship problems came out. It was scrutinized that there are some four million of citizens who do not have citizenship scrutiny cards after turning 18. These are actual situations of Myanmar. Depending on these facts, the government needs to consider how to develop the country.

It is necessary to encourage the education sector for ensuring the citizens to have skills and knowledge. Relevant ministries are to cooperate with each other in improvement of education qualification of the people from regions and states. All regions and states need to set aims for the people to complete basic middle school education through the literacy campaigns.

Efforts must be made to increase number of agriculturists and breeders under the proper plans similar to economists, legal experts, technologists, engineers, medical doctors and nurses. Region and state chief ministers need to turn out the educated persons. Ensuring plentiful of educated persons is the first priority of current government.

The Senior General stressed the need to create chances for individual people to have income and generate jobs for them at home. If the regions manage the increase of per-acre yield of crops for food sufficiency, it will contribute to regional development. Job opportunities can be created from establishment of factories based on agriculture and livestock breeding tasks. Priority must be given to culti-

vation of paddy and wheat in the food insufficient areas.

Myanmar faces trade and budget deficits. Hence, it is necessary to reduce import volumes while increasing the volume of domestic products. With regard to cooking oil, more than 391,000 acres of oil palm plantations were allowed in Myeik and Kawthoung districts in Taninthayi Region. If the plants can be grown on the lands, it

can yield 450,000 tons of oil per year. Hence, businesspersons were urged to produce edible oil crops to become the Taninthayi Region as an oil pot so as to reduce import of palm oil. The government will encourage legal export of goods to earn foreign exchange.

Regarding cotton cultivation, Myanmar imports textile worth US\$100 million per year. Cotton plants should be grown for operating cotton ginning factories at home. As Sagaing, Magway and Mandalay regions have more than 400,000 acres of cotton plantations, their per-acre yield is down. Efforts must be beefed up for increasing per-acre yield of cotton plantations. The Senior General stressed the need to reduce import of cements. If cement plants at home operate production at full capacity, they can meet the local demand, reducing the spending of foreign exchange.

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Efforts should be made for ensuring peace and stability based ...

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The government will provide necessary assistance for operating of cement plants at full capacity while relevant organizations need to control the quality of products.

The country requires a large volume of steel wears per year. So, foreign exchange is spent on import of steel wears. So, efforts are being made to resume Pinpet steel plant and Myingyan steel plant. It is necessary to upgrade the techniques of suspended plants for manufacturing of quality products in full swing.

Arrangements will be made to operate the State-owned factories through public-private partnership system while improving the private sector by creating the chances for them. On one hand, it is necessary to encourage the SME industries of ethnic nationals. Such efforts will contribute to surging the State economy so as to shape the good image of the country.

The government is encouraging the generating of hydro-power and solar energy for realizing the renewable energy in the electric sector. Efforts will be made to efficiently utilize the water sources of the nation. It is necessary to consider how to utilize the main rivers of the countries to benefit the country and the people. These rivers and creeks should be utilized as generating electricity as well as fishery sector. Natural gas and coal are to be used for benefiting the State.

The government is striving for narrowing the development gap between regions and states, districts and townships as much as it can. Especially, it makes efforts for improvement of living standard of the people from rural areas. Manufacturing is based on rural areas. As such,



The meeting 1/2021 of Provisional Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is in progress.

efforts to increase income of rural people will be prevailing rule of law and ensure peace and stability of the country based on political and security measures.

The Senior General also stressed the need to improve the sports sector and build gymnasiums and stadiums in regions and states. Moreover, the officials were urged to issue citizenship scrutiny cards and household registrations to all ethnic people and those deserved to be citizens.

The Union Minister sought the approvals for their reports in respective sectors.

Next, the Senior General said that the income of the government obtained from levying the tax was lesser because of COVID-19 impacts. So, ministries need to scrutinize the spending of budget as well as to systematically consume drinking water and electricity.

Last year's drought caused

Especially, it makes efforts for improvement of living standard of the people from rural areas. Manufacturing is based on rural areas. As such, efforts to increase income of rural people will be prevailing rule of law and ensure peace and stability of the country based on political and security measures.

shortages of drinking water in the country. This year's rain-falls can remove such worries of water scarcity. However, it is necessary to take preventive measures of damage and overflow of water from the dams.

Currently, infection rate of COVID-19 declined to lesser 30 per cent. But, efforts must be made to further decline the infection rate. Local people should be supervised to follow the orders, directives, rules and

regulations for prevention and containment of the disease. Moreover, health awareness must be raised for the people to know the health guidelines for COVID-19.

Experts reviewed that COVID-19 would not totally disappear. Hence, people need to abide by the prescribed rules and disciplines for prevention of COVID-19. Arrangements are being made to produce preventive medicines and treatment medicines for COVID-19 pandemic at home. Currently, two variant viruses were found in some countries. As such, all need to take care of COVID-19 infection. Officials need to arrange smooth flow of medicines to the people. And, the guidance has been given to take action against those who keep the vaccines, medicines and related equipment in hand for the people to face difficulties with selfishness.—MNA ■

4,434 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 10 August, total figure rises to 337,561

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **337,561** after **4,434** new cases were reported on 10 August 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **253,313** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **12,234** after **220** died. —MNA

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MoALI discusses increase of paddy and crop production in Sagaing Region

UNION Minister for Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock U Tin Htut Oo addressed a meeting on summer/monsoon paddy and crop production development in Sagaing Region yesterday morning.

The Union Minister said Sagaing Region has been cultivating summer paddy, mainly relying on the Thaphanseik Dam, which has reduced supply of water since 2019 due to insufficient rainfall.

Therefore, it is necessary for the relevant departments to make effective plans to increase crop yields and production for the coming monsoon paddy season so as not to affect domestic consumption and exports.



The meeting emphasizes the plans how to increase high yield of paddy and other crops in Sagaing Region.

He instructed officials to manage water supply and consumption at all water canals systematically for effective and efficient use of irrigation water.

He added the necessary arrangements for increased crop yields, including measures to prevent crop damage due to pest infestation, dissemination

of technologies to reduce the use of expensive fertilizers and inputs, pre-negotiation with relevant departments to get timely planting cost and a

stockpile of equipment needed for disaster prevention, mitigation and timely remediation. At the meeting, directors-general of the respective departments presented reports on the activities of each sector, and the Union Minister and the Deputy Minister discussed the requirements.

During this year's monsoon paddy season, more than 670,000 acres will be irrigated in Sagaing Region—more than 48,000 acres with river water, more than 17,000 acres with groundwater and more than 1,070,000 acres with rainwater. Hence, over 1,800,000 acres of monsoon paddy will be cultivated in Sagaing Region this year.—MNA

MoHT Union Minister discusses necessities to revive hotels and tourism sector

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Htay Aung held an online meeting with the Chairmen of the Myanmar Tourism Federation and affiliated associations yesterday morning.

During the meeting, he said it is necessary for the affiliate associations, including the Myanmar Tourism Federation, to actively work hand in hand with the ministry for the development of the hotels and tourism sector although there may be many challenges in reviving tourism.

The Union Minister is currently in Kawthoung and will submit to the higher authorities to coordinate with the relevant departments to start direct motorboat trips to the archipelago

starting from the coming October in accordance with the COVID-19 disease prevention guidelines. This trip is a good plan to revitalize the motorboat tourism business that was stopped due to the outbreak, and will be able to provide job opportunities for the locals.

He also called for the continued cooperation of regional organizations, adding to coordinate for the participation of private organizations in the CLMVT Forum 2021 Webinar to be held from 24 to 26 August.

The president and officials of the Myanmar Tourism Federation and its affiliate associations discussed the need to include representatives from the Myan-



Meeting participants discuss surging of hotels and tourism sector.

mar Restaurant Entrepreneurs Association in the Destination Management Organizations

(DMOs), to select a suitable travel destination for the resumption of tourism, conditions for day trips

in regions and states and the necessity for the re-establishment of tourism companies.—MNA

Statement to appreciate teachers' efforts

TEACHERS are honoured as part of the Five Infinite Venerables, and the manner of paying respect to the teachers can be only seen in Myanmar as a tradition. The teachers teach their pupils based on their goodwill like their own children and dutifully serve a teacher's duties. They must train their pupils and students in the best discipline. They see that they grasp their lessons well. They instruct them in the arts and sciences, they provide for their safety in every quarter, and they introduce them to their friends and associates.

As the COVID-19 infection rate is controlled to a certain extent, the basic education high, middle and primary schools under the Department of Basic Education have reopened across nation for the 2021-2022 academic year starting 1 June.

Those who want to seek good sake of one party, political extremist NLD members and supporters, NUG, CRPH and PDF committed arson attacks at the schools using mines, homemade bombs and grenades to fail the teaching processes, and threatened the teachers in addition to the incitements, social punishment and threats against education staff to join CDM while the officials made preparations for the reopening of schools and during the current teaching period. Their doings left some casualties, and the State Administration Council has expressed its deepest condolences and sympathy to the victims' families.

The SAC also appreciates the concerted efforts of teachers, who understand two virtues, Hiri — shame at doing evil —and Otappa—fear of the results of doing evil —for teaching the new generations of the country amid such difficulties and challenges.

The security forces will take extraordinary measures to ensure the safety of teachers who are making efforts in the academic sector for the next generations in order to promote the education qualification. The people should keep security awareness and cooperate with the security members in community peace and peaceful learning of children.

Information Team
State Administration Council



Dragon fruit plants are thriving in farm.

Dragon fruit cultivated in Kyaukhtu

THE local farmers from Kyaukhtu, Magway Region are growing dragon fruit on a trial basis and their cultivation has succeeded.

“The dragon fruit are grown using of teak, concrete and acacia catechu posts. The dragon fruit are cultivated four feet apart and they are growing well using natural fertilizer such as natural compost and cow dung. After cultivating the dragon fruit branches in the sandy soil, the plants are needed to be used pesticides to protect crops from insect,” said a local farmer.

The dragon fruits need to be irrigated to keep the soil moist. There are two types of dragon fruit species—white and red. After one year, the fruits can be started to pick up. The red dragon fruit is used for diabetes and hypertension, according to a health researcher.

The price of dragon fruits moved in the range of K300 and K500 per one depending upon the size.—Sein Kyaw/GNLM

Covid-19 vaccinations begin in Tonzang

THE Covid-19 vaccination programme started in Tonzang township general administration department’s meeting hall on 9 August, said U Cho Lin Aung, chairman of Tonzang township management body.

A total of 126 people including 16 departmental staff, five staffs’ members, 14 religious leaders, 55 elders over the age of 65 and above and 14 volunteers and its five family members, four private transport staff and 13 vendors started receiving COVID-19 vaccines while one departmental staff, two volunteers and 23 adults of above 65 years and older were given the vaccine in Cikha sport ground.

A total of 152 people have so far been vaccinated in Tonzang township, it is learnt.

“The COVID-19 vaccination programme has been launched under the national plan. The priority groups will be elders over the age of 65, volunteer from charity organization and its family members, religious leaders, departmental staffs and its family members, private transport staff and vendors. Today, about 152 people are vaccinated. The vaccine is highly effective in preventing COVID-19 infections. Our

township received COVID-19 vaccines for 520 people. So far, about 152 people have been administered and the remaining persons will be vaccinated against COVID-19,” said U Cho Lin Aung.

Tonzang township received 1,020 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine. In order to prevent the spreading of COVID-19 in Tonzang, the township general administration department is carrying out awareness campaigns in cooperation with Myanmar Fire Brigade members and the staff from Information and Public Relations Department.—Lulay/GNLM

Trade volume between Myanmar-Thai border up \$33 mln this FY

THE trade volume between Myanmar and Thailand in financial year 2020-21 hit a total of US\$3.36 billion in total, Ministry of Commerce statistics showed.

According to the ministry, Myanmar’s exports to Thailand reached \$ 3.2 billion while imports hit \$2.1 billion. This FY’s figures are increased by \$33 million, compared to the same period in the last FY.

Myanmar mainly conducts border trade with neighbouring Thailand through seven border checkpoints namely Tachileik, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Meisei gates.

Among those trade points along the Myanmar-Thailand border, Myawady-Mae Sot route is the most important, carrying about 70 per cent of trade between two countries. As of 23 July of this FY, Myawady border checkpoint topped with \$1.49 billion of bilateral trade.

In Myanmar, most of the goods mainly imported from Thailand are raw materials for manufacturing, and construction material. So, the transportation route is import for two countries’ economies and businesses.

Myanmar’s exports to Thailand were primarily agriculture and livestock products, and imports from Thailand were mainly non-alcoholic beverages, fabric and yarn, motorcycles and related parts, and construction material.

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



Vehicles large and small are queuing at the checkpoint of Myawady trade zone.



Sample pulses and beans are displayed at the brokerage.

Beans prices hit record high on Indian demand

THE mung bean and pigeon pea prices hit record high within five years due to the higher India demand.

In Mandalay market, the price of mung bean for three-basket bag is K120,000 while the pigeon pea fetches K115,000 per three-basket bag this year.

“The price of pigeon pea reached the record high during five years. The price of bean declined to K30,000 per three-basket bag in 2017 due to the import restrictions of India. During that period, the bean farmers and traders faced losses.

This year, we can grab a good situation for farmers as India would buy the bean for five years,” said U Soe Win Myint (Soe Win Myint brokerage) in Mandalay.

As the local consumption rate of chick pea, lablab bean, dolichos lablab and green pea is high during COVID-19 period, the bean prices also creep up. Currently, the price of lablab bean is K150,000 per three-basket bag while chick pea K124,000, dolichos lablab K140,000 and green pea K 150,000 in Mandalay market.

The farmers should grow the quality seedlings and expand the pigeon pea cultivation during this period as they have good export potential, he suggested.—Min Htet Aung/GNLM

Raw materials import by CMP businesses plunge into \$1.2 bln nearly ten months

IMPORTS of raw materials by CMP (cut-make-pack) businesses have sunk to US\$1.24 billion as of 23 July in current financial year 2020-2021 since October 2020, which reflects a decrease of \$558.26 million compared with the year-ago period, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The figures plunged from \$1.79 billion registered last FY2019-2020, the Commerce Ministry's data indicated.

Myanmar's garment exports witnessed a decline of over 20 per cent in the past eight months (Oct-May) of the current financial year 2020-2021 compared with a-year ago period on the back of slump in demand by European Union market. The raw materials import by the CMP businesses fell simultaneously, the Ministry of Commerce stated.

Exports of garments manufactured under the cut-make-

pack (CMP) system were valued at US\$2.2 billion between 1 October and 28 May in the current FY, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

The figures plunged from \$2.7 billion in the corresponding period of last FY 2019-2020.

The garment industry is facing cancellation of order and slump in output, new orders. However, The Swedish fashion retailer H&M is gradually placing orders from Myanmar again after it paused in March. Then, more international fashion retailers such as Primark and Bestseller start to resume new orders. Additionally, Germany will also continue its support for Myanmar garment businesses so that Myanmar women can continue their livings, Germany Embassy Yangon's Facebook posted. Nonetheless, the COVID-19 infections are spiking in the country and all



Photo shows daily work process at garment factory through CMP system.

the CMP factories are temporarily closed down during the official public holidays (17-25 July).

The garment sector is among the prioritized sectors driving up exports. The CMP garment industry emerged as a promising one, with preferen-

tial trade from Western countries. Nevertheless, we cannot still expect normalcy for now due to the possible disruption in logistics and supply sector and other serious consequences amid the COVID-19 impacts, traders stressed.

Myanmar's manufacturing

sector is largely concentrated in garment and textiles produced on the Cutting, Making, and Packaging basis, and it contributes to the country's GDP to a certain extent.

Myanmar mainly exports CMP garments to markets in Japan and Europe, along with the Republic of Korea, China, and the US.

The export value of CMP garments was only \$850 million in the 2015-2016 FY, but it has tripled over the past two FYs. In the 2016-2017 FY, about \$2 billion was earned from exports of CMP garments. The figure increased to an estimated \$2.5 billion in the 2017-2018 FY and \$2.2 billion in the 2018 mini-budget period (from April to September). It tremendously grew to \$4.6 billion in the 2018-2019 FY and \$4.8 billion in the 2019-2020 FY, according to the Commerce Ministry.—Htet Myat/GNLM

Agro exports climb up about 29 per cent as of 23 July

THE agricultural exports soared to US\$4.19 billion nearly ten months of the current financial year 2020-2021, despite the downward trend in other export groups amid the tightened coronavirus containment measures in the border and increase in container shipping cost.

The figures reflect an increase of \$941 million this FY. The agro exports topped \$3.249 billion in the corresponding period of the 2019-2020 FY, according to the trade figures released by the Ministry of Commerce.

The agricultural exports surged even though the main trade partner China shut down all the border in wake of COVID-19 surge in Myanmar.

The coronavirus pandemic impacted the foreign demand for other export groups such as agricultural products, fishery, livestock, mineral, forestry, finished industrial goods and other goods.

In the exports sector, the agriculture industry performed the best, accounting for 37 per cent of overall exports. The chief items of export in the agricultural sector are rice



Employees are working at rice production at modern rice mill.

and broken rice, pulses and beans and maize. Fruits and vegetables, sesame, dried tea leaves, sugar, and other agro products are also shipped to other countries.

Myanmar agro products are primarily exported to China, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka. Sometimes, the export market remains uncertain due to unsteady global demand.

The country requires specific export plans for each agro product, as they are currently exported to external markets based upon supply

and demand. The G to G pact also ensures the strong market for the farmers. Contract farming systems, involvement of regional and state agriculture departments, exporters, traders, and some grower groups, are required in order to meet production targets, the Agriculture Department stated.

The Commerce Ministry is working to help farmers deal with challenges such as high input costs, procurement of quality seeds, high cultivation costs, and erratic weather conditions.—KK/GNLM

Black gram price up by K400,000 per tonne over past three months

THE price of black gram (urad called in India) has risen by K400,000 per tonne over the past three months, according to Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung Wholesale Centre).

The black gram fetched only K885,000 per tonne in domestic market on 1 May, whereas it touched a high of K1,297,500 per tonne (FAQ/RC) on 10 August.

The price rise is attributed to the relaxation on bean import quota by India. Nonetheless, the prevailing price has not reached a record high of K1.3 million per tonne registered in 2019-end.

India set import quota on beans including black gram and pigeon pea starting from 2017. Myanmar earlier had to export black bean and pigeon pea under the quota system and limit period.

On 15 May 2021, India's Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare approved not only black gram but also other pulses being imported from Myanmar that have bill of landing up to October-end 2021, with relaxations of conditions regarding clearance consignment up to 30 November 2021.

According to this statement, the previous notifications dated 19 March 2021 and 26 March 2021 were revoked.

Additionally, Myanmar can export 250,000 tonnes of black gram (urad) and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon pea under the G to G (government to government) pact during April-March period between the 2021-2022 financial year and the 2025-2026 FY, as per the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Commerce and India's counterpart signed on 18 June.

Myanmar yearly produces about 400,000 tonnes of black gram and 50,000 tonnes of pigeon pea.

Myanmar is the top producing country of black gram that India demands. Besides Myanmar, other beans such as pigeon pea, green gram and yellow pea, are also grown in Australia and Africa, Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association stated.—NN/GNLM

Uplift own prestige of honourable city dwellers

THE Yangon City Development Committee is taking responsibilities for giving the development, social welfare and all services to the people on a daily basis.

Dwellers of Yangon City discard some 2,600 tonnes of garbage per day in the municipal area. Such kinds of waste comprise personal protective equipment-PPE, marks and gloves used in prevention of COVID-19 in addition to normal waste. Hence, local dwellers need to systematically pack the COVID-19

preventive equipment before disposing for cutting off the infection chains of the disease.

The environmental conservation and sanitation department of the Yangon City Development Committee collects 5-6 tonnes of clinic disposable waste per day in addition to some 2,600 tonnes of public garbage. Moreover, workers from the department give services to the people to collect the waste thrown on call.

The department takes responsibilities for incinerating the garbage from quarantine centres, hospitals and clinics. So, those who wear the PPE suits need to systematically pack the used suits, masks and gloves for littering. It is because the COVID-19 can spread one person to another through air.

Some 1,500 tonnes out of over 2,500 tonnes of garbage is thrown at Hteinbin landfill on a daily basis. Some 1,000 tonnes of garbage is piled per day at

Daweichaung landfill in Dagon Myothit (North) Township. In addition, waste from families of Dala and Seikkyi-khanaungto townships are also collected by sanitation workers from the department daily.

Thanks to authorities, the recycle power plants are being established to generate electricity from garbage. As such, the volume of waste from the landfill can be reduced while it can be utilized for generating electricity for the people. Waste from the landfills can be incinerated as part of preventing the harmful gases and danger of fire in addition to the impacts of possible infectious diseases to the people.

On the other hand, the people residing in various municipal townships need to throw the garbage in a systematic manner. They have to take responsibilities for prevention of their own acts against others. All the city people need to separate the kitchen waste, commercial garbage, and wet and dried wastes before disposing. Hence, the people must behave the acts of honourable city dwellers by uplifting their prestige.

■ ■ ■

Pharmaceutical firms rake in billions with Covid jabs

AstraZeneca and J&J do not use mRNA technology. They both made more traditional viral vector vaccines, which use genetically-engineered version of a common-cold causing adenovirus as a “vector” to shuttle genetic instructions into human cells.

COVID vaccines have brought billions of dollars to the coffers of pharmaceutical companies.

Germany's BioNTech, maker with partner Pfizer of the pioneering mRNA jab, raised its vaccine revenue forecast for 2021 in its latest earnings report on Monday.

Here are the numbers for the companies that publish financial results:

Biggest winners: Pfizer and BioNTech

US firm Pfizer and BioNTech got a headstart over rivals as they were the first in the western world to announce positive results from clinical trials of their vaccine last year.

They were also first to get authorisation from US and European Union regulators to sell their shot.

Pfizer has earned more

than its competitors, raking in \$10.8 billion (9.2 billion euros) in the first half of this year.

The US company has raised its outlook for 2021, expecting to make \$33.5 billion in sales for the full year.

BioNTech reported on Tuesday revenues of \$7.3 billion euros in the first half. Unlike its larger partner, the company's only product on sale is the coronavirus vaccine.

BioNTech expects vaccine revenues to reach 15.9 billion euros for the full year, up from a previous estimate of 9.8 billion euros.

Moderna the other mRNA champion

US startup Moderna is the only other firm to have produced an authorised mRNA vaccine so far.

Messenger RNA technology



BioNTech is a biotechnology company which manufactures active immunotherapies for patient-specific approaches to the treatment of diseases. **PHOTO: AFP**

works by providing human cells with the genetic instructions to make a surface protein of the coronavirus, which trains the immune system to recognise the real virus.

Like BioNTech, the compa-

ny's only product in the market is the Covid vaccine. The vaccine requires two shots taken weeks apart.

Moderna reported turnover of \$5.9 billion in the first six months of the year.

It expects to make \$20 billion in revenues thanks to the vaccine this year.

AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson trail

British pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca and US firm Johnson & Johnson had their vaccines approved by the EU later than their rivals.

AstraZeneca's vaccine is one of the world's leading vaccines and has been vital in the UK's speedy vaccination drive -- which enabled England's economy to fully reopen this month.

But it has not been approved by US drug regulators.

Johnson & Johnson's vaccine — made by Janssen, its Belgian subsidiary — has the advantage of being administered with one shot instead of two like those of its rivals.

AstraZeneca and J&J do

not use mRNA technology.

They both made more traditional viral vector vaccines, which use genetically-engineered version of a common-cold causing adenovirus as a “vector” to shuttle genetic instructions into human cells.

The two companies also vowed to sell their vaccines at cost during the pandemic, meaning they would not earn profits from them.

They are cheaper than the Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna jabs, which reflects in their revenues.

AstraZeneca's Covid jab generated \$1.2 billion in sales in the first six months of the year.

J&J reported \$264 million in sales and expects to make \$2.5 billion for the full year. AstraZeneca has not provided a detailed full-year estimate.

Source : AFP

Asia-Pacific countries witness rocketing COVID-19 cases

South Korea reported 1,540 more cases, raising the total number of infections to 213,987. Of the new cases, 356 were Seoul residents and 398 were people residing in Gyeonggi province. The virus spread also raged in the non-metropolitan area.

The number of newly infected people in the non-capital region was 658, or 44.6 percent of the total local transmission.

Asia-Pacific countries kept witnessing rocketing COVID-19 cases as India's total tally neared 32 million on Tuesday.

India's total tally rose to 31,998,158 as 28,204 new cases were registered during the past 24 hours across the country, showed the federal health ministry's latest data.

Besides, as many as 373 deaths due to the pandemic were reported since Monday morning, taking the total death toll to 428,682.

There are still 388,508 active cases in the country with a fall of 13,680 during the past 24 hours.

The number of COVID-19 cases in Indonesia rose by 32,081 within one day to 3,718,821, with the death toll adding by 2,048

to 110,619, the Health Ministry said.

According to the ministry, 41,486 more people were discharged from hospitals, bringing the total number of patients recovering from COVID-19 to 3,171,147.

Malaysia reported another 19,991 new infections, the health ministry said, bringing the national total to 1,299,767.

Health Ministry Director-General Noor Hisham Abdullah said in a press statement that all the new cases are local transmissions.

Another 201 more deaths have been reported, bringing the death toll to 11,162.

The Philippines' Department of Health (DOH) reported 8,560 new infections, bringing

the total number of confirmed cases in the Southeast Asian country to 1,676,156.

The death toll climbed to 29,220 after 92 more patients died from the disease, the DOH added, attributing the caseload to lower laboratory output over the weekend.

The government is ramping up the vaccination as it races against the spread of the highly infectious Delta coronavirus variant driving the spike of cases in the country.

Pakistan on Monday added 3,884 new cases into its overall tally of infections, the National Command and Operation Center (NCOC) said on Tuesday.

The NCOC, a department leading Pakistan's campaign

against the pandemic, said the country's total cases rose to 1,075,504, including 967,073 recoveries.

The number of active cases rose to 84,427, including 4,530 critical patients.

According to the NCOC, the pandemic killed 86 people on Monday, increasing the overall death toll to 24,004.

South Korea reported 1,540 more cases, raising the total number of infections to 213,987.

Of the new cases, 356 were Seoul residents and 398 were people residing in Gyeonggi province.

The virus spread also raged in the non-metropolitan area. The number of newly infected people in the non-capital region was 658, or 44.6 percent of the



In Malaysia, more than 13 million people in total have registered for vaccination. **PHOTO: AFP**

total local transmission.

Sixty-four cases were imported from overseas, lifting the combined figure to 12,475.

Nine more deaths were confirmed, leaving the death toll at 2,134.

Source : Xinhua



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 10 August 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 11 August 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Lower Sagaing, Magway Regions, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Bago and Ayeyawady Regions, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing, Yangon Regions and Northern Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayah States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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

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

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11 August 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11 August 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 11 August 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

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Prince Andrew sued in New York court for alleged sex abuse

QUEEN Elizabeth II's second son, Prince Andrew, was sued in a New York court on Monday for alleged sexual abuse of a woman who says she was "lent out" for underage sex by late US financier Jeffrey Epstein.

The filing at the US district court in Manhattan said Virginia Giuffre was the plaintiff in the case against the defendant, named as "Prince Andrew, Duke of York." Giuffre alleged in the filing that she "was regularly abused by Epstein and was lent out by Epstein to other powerful men for sexual purposes. "One such powerful man... was the Defendant, Prince Andrew."

According to the complaint, Giuffre said Andrew sexually abused her at the London home of socialite Ghislaine Maxwell more than 20 years ago, when she was under 18. "Epstein, Maxwell, and Prince Andrew forced (the)



Prince Andrew. PHOTO: AFP

Plaintiff, a child, to have sexual intercourse with Prince Andrew against her will," it said.

Andrew, 61, has vehemently denied claims he had sex with Giuffre, and said he has no recollection of meeting her, but the allegations threaten to damage the British royal family. A spokesman for Buckingham Palace declined to comment on the lawsuit and a

public relations company representing Andrew e-mailed a "no comment" response to AFP on Tuesday. The allegations have dogged the British monarchy for years. The centuries-old institution was also rocked in March by a US television interview in March involving the 95-year-old Queen's grandson, Prince Harry, and his wife, Meghan. — AFP ■

Resource-starved Singapore turns sewage into ultra-clean water

GIANT pumps whirl deep underground at a plant in Singapore that helps transform sewage into water so clean it is fit for human consumption while reducing ocean pollution. The tiny island nation has little in the way of natural water sources and has long had to rely principally on supplies from neighbouring Malaysia. To boost self-sufficiency, the government has developed an advanced system for treating sewage involving a network of tunnels and high-tech plants.

Recycled wastewater can now meet 40% of Singapore's water demand - a figure that is expected to rise to 55% by 2060, according to the country's water agency. While most is used for industrial purposes, some of it is added to drinking water supplies in reservoirs in the city-state of 5.7 million people. And the system helps reduce maritime pollution, as only a small amount of the treated water is discharged into the sea.

This is a contrast to most other countries - 80% of the world's wastewater flows back into the ecosystem without being treated or reused, according to UN estimates.

"Singapore lacks natural resources and it is limited in space, which is why we are always looking for ways to explore water sources and stretch our water supply," Low Pei Chin, chief engineer of the Public Utilities Board's water reclamation department, told AFP. — AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Argentina launches employment program for young people

THE Argentine government Monday launched a training program for young people, aiming to give them equal access to jobs in the software and related sectors.

The program plans to train 60,000 young people by the end of the year. "Young people have historically been the protagonists of change in Argentina," Argentina's President Alberto Fernandez said in a press release.

"The project aims to train and provide jobs for them in an Argentina full of potential."

"Various industries of the knowledge economy, such as software and computer systems, video games, audiovisual production and post-production, directly and indirectly employ 450,000 people and have the potential to create another 100,000 jobs," the press release said. — Xinhua ■

Seven dead as wildfires rage across Algeria

WILDFIRES fanned by blistering temperatures and tinder-dry conditions have killed at least seven people in Algeria, the interior minister said Tuesday, adding the fires had criminal origins.

Photographs posted on social media show huge walls of flame and billowing clouds of smoke towering over villages in the forested hills of the Kabylie region, east of the capital Algiers.

Algeria is the latest Mediterranean country to be hit by wildfires, after blazes hit Greece, Turkey and Cyprus.

Meteorologists said the temperature would hit 46 degrees Celsius (115 degrees Fahrenheit) on Tuesday, and the country is also struggling with severe water shortages.

Fires were reported in multiple locations in 14 districts, 10 of them around Tizi Ouzou, one of the most populous cities in Kabylie.

Interior Minister Kamel Beldjoud told television the fires had claimed the lives of seven people, including six in the region around Tizi Ouzou and one in Setif.

"Fifty fires starting at the same time is impossible. These fires are of criminal origin," said Beldjoud, who headed a ministerial visit to Tizi Ouzou.

The urban centres of Bouira, Setif, Khenchela, Guelma, Bejaia, Bordj Bou Arreridj, Boumerdes, Tiaret, Medea, Tebesa, Blida and Skikda were also hit by fires, the civil protection directorate said on Twitter.

Major fires were also reported in Ait-Yenni, Azazga, Jijel and Yakourene. — AFP ■

Gold rush ends for smugglers as foreign troops leave Afghanistan

ONCE brimming with combat boots, flakjackets and other war paraphernalia, the smugglers' markets in Pakistan are being forced to rethink their business model as foreign troops exit Afghanistan and contraband dries up.

The United States is set to wrap up its military presence in Afghanistan by the end of this month, the end of a campaign that saw hundreds of billions spent -- often with little accounting.

Along the Afghan border after 2001, smugglers' markets mushroomed in Pakistan, offer-

ing military gadgets, clothing and luxury goods meant for American bases and compounds.

It was the latest chapter in a long history of smuggling -- and foreign invasions -- in the area.

For centuries, the mountain passes along the present-day Pakistan-Afghanistan border were a lifeline for armies, traders and smugglers moving between central Asia and the Indian subcontinent.

But in recent years, vendors at the bazaars say they have suffered successive blows that have severed the pipeline of smuggled goods that flowed freely into Pa-

kistan for years.

This market was famous for American and NATO goods and was crowded with customers," said Mehboob Khan, a shopkeeper at Sitara market in the northwestern frontier city of Peshawar.

"Now the border is strictly closed and those goods can't reach here, which has badly affected business."

Pakistan's fencing and sealing of hundreds of kilometres of the border in recent years, and the rapid departure of foreign troops has led to dwindling supplies. — AFP ■



Smugglers' markets mushroomed in Pakistan along the Afghan border after 2001. PHOTO: AFP

Canada welcomes fully vaccinated Americans across reopened border

AMERICAN visitors trickled across the Canada-US border on Monday, cheering the reopening of the world's longest land boundary 17 months after all non-essential travel was halted to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Ottawa lifted quarantine requirements for US citizens and permanent residents arriving with proof of vaccination.

"It's absolutely wonderful," Vicki Poulin said of the border reopening. "We're just so happy to be here."

"I thought there would be more vehicles on the road but to my surprise it was a very nice ride up," she told AFP.

The Canadian-born resident of Queensbury, New York, her



The US-Canada border in Blaine, Washington state, as non-essential travel reopened to fully vaccinated Americans. **PHOTO: AFP**

American husband and their dog Sully used to make the trip to see her extended family in Montreal almost every month,

but have not been able to visit since the border was shuttered in March 2020.

At the Lacolle, Quebec

checkpoint, 65 kilometers (40 miles) south of Montreal, drivers rolled up one after another with proof of vaccination and a negative Covid test prior to travel in hand.

Most travellers interviewed by AFP said their crossings went smoothly. Lineups were much shorter than expected and border agents' review of documents took only a few minutes for each vehicle.

Richard Antaki, who left before dawn and drove nonstop from New York City to be among the first in line at the border crossing, was all smiles.

"I was so happy that they opened (the border) because I have a lot of friends in Canada," he said. — AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Germany: 25% of hospitalisations treated twice as inpatients

A nationwide long-term study published on Tuesday by the Scientific Institute of the AOK (Wido) showed that more than a quarter of all Covid patients treated in the hospital in Germany were later treated again as inpatients.

36 percent of cases were readmitted to hospital because of breathing problems. 29 percent suffered from neurological disorders.

The evaluation also showed a high mortality rate among inpatients treated with Covid-19. According to this, 30 percent of them died during their first hospital stay or in the first six months afterwards. 24 percent of the sick died in the first month after being admitted to the hospital.

Half a year after the initial admission, the proportion of those who died was, according to the information, already 30 percent. The mortality rate was particularly high among those over 80 years of age. — AFP ■

New curfew in Polynesia from Wednesday

THE Polynesian High Commissioner Dominique Sorain announced on Monday the re-establishment of a curfew from 9:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. throughout the territory from Wednesday in the face of the outbreak of the Covid-19 epidemic.

He did not rule out extending the hours of this curfew "very quickly", or even re-defining Polynesia, which had already been subject to restrictions since mid-July.

"On July 16, we had an incidence rate of less than 10, today we are at more than 1,000", Mr. Sorain told local channel TNTV on Monday evening.

After several months of very weak circulation of the virus, the epidemic has experienced a sudden resurgence in early August. — AFP ■

US warns citizens against travel to France



US authorities have advised Americans against travelling to France over coronavirus concerns. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

THE US State Department has advised Americans to avoid all travel to France over rising coronavirus cases in the country.

France is battling a fourth wave of the virus even though

Covid-19 hospitalizations are still way off previous highs.

The State Department issued a "Level 4: Do Not Travel" advisory for France on Monday, based on a parallel warning from the US Centers for Disease Control, the country's top medical body.

"If you must travel to France, make sure you are fully vaccinated before travel," the CDC said.

France has recorded more than 6 million cases and 111,000 deaths in total, and daily cases have crept back up to around 20,000 a day while deaths remain low compared to the height of the pandemic.

A total of 74 million vaccine doses have been administered in France, according to the World Health Organization, and over 55 percent of the eligible population have received both vaccine doses.

It has also enforced a Covid pass for routine aspects of life.

Anger at President Emmanuel Macron's controversial plan to squeeze infections and encourage vaccinations has seen large protests recently, though polls have shown that a clear majority of French back the Covid pass, even including the extension this week to cafes and restaurants. — AFP ■

Final curtain for musical 'West Side Story' on Broadway

THE re-imagined version of the popular musical "West Side Story" will not reopen on Broadway, its producer said Monday, an indirect victim of the Covid-19 pandemic's effect on New York's theater industry.

The revived production opened in February last year but was forced to shutter just one month later as the coronavirus pandemic took hold in the city.

"It is with great regret that we are announcing today that the 2020 Broadway revival of West Side Story will not reopen," producer Kate Horton

said in a statement.

The pandemic was not the show's only obstacle: its original producer, Scott Rudin, stepped aside for Horton to take the job following allegations of workplace harassment.

And one of the main actors, Amar Ramasar, was embroiled in allegations of inappropriate behavior dating back to his years in the New York Ballet Troupe.

Theaters on Broadway, which are set to reopen in September, have announced that they will require the audience and all production members to be vaccinated. — AFP ■



The re-imagined version of "West Side Story" opened on Broadway in February 2020, just one month before the coronavirus pandemic forced theaters to close down. **PHOTO: AFP**

US Democrats unveil massive \$3.5 trillion spending blueprint



US Senator Bernie Sanders, shown here at the White House on July 12, 2021, said the budget blueprint would be the “most consequential piece of legislation” on social spending since the New Deal. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

US lawmakers on Monday laid out a \$3.5 trillion budget framework, calling it the “most consequential” social spending plan since the 1930s, and launching

what are expected to be tough congressional negotiations over the programs it covers.

US lawmakers on Monday laid out a \$3.5 trillion budget

framework, calling it the “most consequential” social spending plan since the 1930s, and launching what are expected to be tough congressional negotiations over the programs it covers.

The 10-year budget blueprint pushes Congress towards the next step in President Joe Biden’s ambitious vision for his first term in office, following on the heels of the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure plan, which the Senate is expected to approve Tuesday in a 11:00 am (1500 GMT) vote before the measure is sent to the House of Representatives.

The dollar amount is staggering, almost matching the size of Germany’s economy in 2020.

The budget resolution “will be the most consequential piece

of legislation for working people, the elderly, the children, the sick and the poor since FDR (President Franklin Delano Roosevelt) and the New Deal of the 1930s,” said independent Senator Bernie Sanders, chair of the Budget Committee.

“It will also put the US in a global leadership position to combat climate change and make our planet healthy and habitable for future generations,” he wrote.

The spending plan published Monday includes funding for climate measures, new investments in infrastructure including items left out of the targeted Senate package, residency status for millions of migrant workers, and two years paid tuition at public universities. — AFP ■

Hong Kong leader says city set to adopt China’s anti-sanctions law

CHINA’S anti-sanctions law will be implemented in some form in Hong Kong, the city’s leader confirmed Tuesday, a move that will add fresh regulatory pressure on international companies in the finance hub.

Beijing’s rubber-stamp legislature passed the law in June in response to Western penalties that were imposed following crackdowns in Hong Kong and Xinjiang.

Its powers include denying visas, deportation, or seizing assets of those who formulate or comply with sanctions against Chinese businesses or officials.

Foreign companies can be sued in

Chinese courts for applying sanctions and the law can also be wielded against family members.

Rumours that China was planning to extend the law to Hong Kong have swirled for days ahead of next week’s meeting of the Chinese legislature after state media said some unidentified new measures were being planned for Hong Kong and Macau.

On Tuesday, Hong Kong’s chief executive Carrie Lam confirmed Beijing had consulted her on adding the law to the city’s mini-constitution, known as the Basic Law.

“The purpose of the Anti-Sanctions Law

is to defend our country’s sovereignty, security and development interests,” she told reporters.

Lam said her advice had been for Hong Kong to pass its own legislation.

But she said Beijing could also impose the measures directly like it did with a sweeping national security law last year that snuffed out dissent.

“Some foreign forces, foreign governments and western media will definitely stir up this issue, hoping to weaken our status as a financial centre or the outside world’s confidence in Hong Kong,” she said. — AFP ■

Philippine economy grows by 11.8 pct in Q2, ends recession

THE Philippine economy accelerated in the second quarter of 2021, growing by 11.8 percent compared with the 17-percent contraction in the same period last year, the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) said on Tuesday. PSA head Dennis Mapa said that the gross domestic product’s growth rate is the highest since the fourth quarter of 1988.

“The main contributors to the April to June growth, with their corresponding increase, were manufacturing, 22.3 percent; construction, 25.7 percent,” Mapa said in an online briefing.

The data showed that all sectors expanded except agriculture on the production side,

which slightly contracted by 0.1 percent because of the decline in pork production. Meanwhile, the industry sector grew by 20.8 percent and services by 9.6 percent.

On the expenditure side, total investment grew by 75.5 percent, driven by the near doubling of private investments growth at 94.9 percent.

“Our policy to allow both public and private construction even during the enhanced community quarantine period in March and April 2021 shows that we can revive the economy while addressing the COVID-19 infections,” Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Karl Kendrick Chua said in the same briefing. With improving



Workers work at the construction site of the China-funded Binondo-Intramuros Bridge in Manila, the Philippines, Nov. 18, 2020. **PHOTO: XINHUA/ROUELLE UMALI**

consumer confidence, Chua said household spending growth also turned positive at 7.2 percent as

millions regained their jobs and income sources in the first half of this year. — Xinhua ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sales of new-energy passenger vehicles soar in China

CHINA saw a surge in sales of new-energy passenger vehicles in July, industry data showed.

The retail sales of new-energy passenger cars reached 222,000 units, up 169.4 percent year on year, according to the China Passenger Car Association.

The wholesale volume of new-energy passenger vehicles grew 202.9 percent year on year to reach 246,000 units.

BYD, Tesla China, SAIC-GM-Wuling, SAIC Passenger Vehicle Branch and GAC Aion all sold more than 10,000 units of new-energy passenger vehicles last month.

In July, China’s retail sales of passenger vehicles, including sedans, sport-utility vehicles and multipurpose vehicles, dropped 6.2 percent year on year to 1.5 million units. — Xinhua ■

Bayer loses another appeal against Roundup cancer verdict

GERMAN pharmaceutical and chemical giant Bayer on Monday lost another appeal against a verdict that found its Roundup weedkiller causes cancer, the latest setback in its bid to end thousands of lawsuits over the product.

An appeals court in San Francisco upheld the 2019 ruling in favor of a couple who claimed they got non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma after using Roundup for years.

The court also upheld a judge’s decision to reduce the jury’s compensation award to Alva and Alberta Pilliod from \$2 billion to \$86.7 million.

Bayer has been plagued by problems since it bought Monsanto, which owns Roundup, in 2018 for \$63 billion and inherited its legal woes. The German firm says it has not committed any wrongdoing, and maintains that scientific studies and regulatory approvals show Roundup’s main ingredient glyphosate is safe. — AFP ■

Stocks mostly higher as recovery hopes offset virus, Fed woes

EUROPEAN and Asian stock markets mostly rose Tuesday as hopes for the long-term global outlook offset concern about the fast-spreading Delta variant and expectations that the Federal Reserve will soon begin withdrawing its vast financial support.

Oil prices recovered from heavy losses on Monday that had been attributed to fears about the impact on demand of new coronavirus lockdowns.

The dollar hit a four-month high against the euro on expectations of tighter monetary policy from the Fed. "A stronger dollar theme is starting to emerge given the recovery story in the US and that might be a short-term drag for crude prices", said Edward Moya, market analyst at OANDA trading group.



Oil enjoyed a much-needed bump after suffering steep losses since hitting a multi-year high last month. PHOTO: AFP

While vaccinations are being rolled out, infection rates continue to climb around the world, forcing some governments -- particularly China and Australia -- to impose fresh lockdowns and other containment measures. That has led some observers to re-evaluate the outlook for growth.

However, at the same time, the US recovery appears to be on track, with the economy adding more than 1.8 million jobs in June and July and some of the world's top companies reporting healthy earnings.—AFP ■

Lee Jae-yong: paroled leader of S. Korea's biggest business

THE life of soon-to-be-released Samsung chief and South Korean billionaire Lee Jae-yong epitomises the privileges, power and perils of the super-rich in the world's 12th-largest economy, a country sometimes dubbed the "Republic of Samsung".

Best known internationally as one of the world's largest smartphone and chipmakers via flagship subsidiary Samsung Electronics, at home the wider group pervades every facet of life -- and even death -- from homebuilding to funeral parlours via health care and theme parks.

Samsung is by far the largest of the chaebols, the sprawling family-controlled conglomerates that drove the South's transformation from war-ravaged ruin to a leading world economy.

But chaebols are criticised for stifling innovation and competition, while family feuds and criminal charges -- often related to tax evasion or bribery -- regularly make headlines. Lee, 53, is serving a two-and-a-half-year prison sentence for embezzlement, bribery and other offences in the corruption scandal that brought down former president Park Geun-hye. The justice ministry announced Monday he had been paroled and would be released later this week, citing concerns over the coronavirus pandemic's impact on the economy.—AFP ■

German train drivers call strike in escalating wage spat

GERMAN train drivers voted to go on strike from Tuesday over a wage dispute, their union said, in a blow for summer vacationers and adding to logistics and supply woes already plaguing the industry.

The walkout will affect cargo trains from 7 pm (1700 GMT) on Tuesday, before extending to passenger traffic at 2 am on Wednesday, said the leader of the train drivers' GDL union, Claus Weselsky.

Some 95 percent of union members had voted for the first round of

industrial action, which is due to end on Friday.

Train operator Deutsche Bahn slammed the decision as an "unnecessary escalation on the back of rail customers".

"Just as people are travelling more again and using trains, GDL leaders are destroying the upswing that we urgently need given the huge damage from the coronavirus pandemic," said Martin Seiler, DB board member for human resources and legal affairs.

But Weselsky argued that the GDL "intentionally chose this timeframe

in the week to limit the impact on weekend and holiday traffic" and that it was "never the best time" for a strike.



The strike is a new setback at the height of the key summer vacation season for the travel industry which was only starting to recover after months of shutdown over coronavirus infection risks. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

He in turn accused DB managers of "lining their pockets while the little guys are getting their pockets picked."—AFP ■

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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
Dated: 11 August 2021

SoftBank Group Q1 net profit down 39% on-year

INVESTMENT giant SoftBank Group said on Tuesday net profit plunged 39 per cent in the first quarter, following gains in the same period last year related to the US merger of T-Mobile and Sprint.

Net profit in the three months to June was 761.5 billion yen (€5.9bn), the Japanese conglomerate

said, compared with 1.26 trillion yen in the same period in the previous financial year.

The merger of US telcoms operators T-Mobile and Sprint -- formerly controlled by SoftBank Group -- was completed in April 2020, releasing 734.5 billion yen in net income, SoftBank said in a statement.

SoftBank Group has poured money into some of Silicon Valley's biggest names and hottest new ventures from AI to biotech through its \$100-billion Vision Fund.

Last financial year, the telecoms firm turned investment behemoth reported Japan's biggest ever net profit thanks

to tech share rallies as people moved their lives online during the coronavirus pandemic.

But SoftBank's investment approach means large transactions can cause unpredictable fluctuations in its results, said Mariko Semetko, senior credit officer at Moody's Japan.—AFP ■

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NEWS IN
BRIEFJapan apologises,
pledges reform after
woman's death in
immigration detention

JAPAN on Tuesday apologised for the death of a Sri Lankan woman in immigration detention and pledged to reform conditions in the system.

Justice Minister Yoko Kamikawa said a report on the March death of 33-year-old Wishma Sandamali concluded she received inadequate treatment as her health deteriorated. Sandamali was detained for overstaying her visa after seeking police protection, reportedly to escape an abusive relationship.

She reportedly complained repeatedly of stomach pain and other symptoms starting in January, and campaigners allege she was given inadequate medical care.

"I express my heartfelt condolences to her mother and bereaved family, and my heartfelt apologies for (the) loss of this precious life in the detention centre," Kamikawa said.—AFP ■

Thousands flee as
Taliban noose tightens
around Afghan north

THE Taliban were in control of six Afghan provincial capitals on Tuesday following a blitz across the north that has seen tens of thousands of people flee their homes for the relative safety of Kabul and other centres.

The insurgents now have their eyes on Mazar-i-Sharif, the biggest city in the north, whose fall would signal the total collapse of government control in a region that has traditionally been anti-Taliban.

Government forces are also battling the hardline Islamists in Kandahar and Helmand, the southern Pashto-speaking provinces from where the Taliban draw their strength. The United States -- due to complete a troop withdrawal at the end of this month that will end its longest war -- has largely left the fighting to the Afghans but is sending special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad to Qatar this week in another bid to convince the Taliban to accept a ceasefire. Khalilzad "will press the Taliban to stop their military offensive", the State Department said, and "help formulate a joint international response to the rapidly deteriorating situation".—AFP ■

S. Korea, U.S. begin preliminary military
drills, irritating N. Korea

South Korea and the United States began a preliminary military training drill Tuesday ahead of their annual summertime exercise starting next week, Yonhap News Agency reported, swiftly triggering a backlash from North Korea. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

SOUTH Korea and the United States began a preliminary military training drill Tuesday ahead of their annual summertime exercise starting next

week, Yonhap News Agency reported, swiftly triggering a backlash from North Korea.

Seoul and Washington have decided to carry out the four-

day training exercise, which is mainly focused on checking how to handle unexpected situations, as planned despite a warning from Pyongyang that

it will negatively affect inter-Korean relations, according to the report.

The main summertime exercise, which will be computer-simulated, is scheduled to be held on Aug. 16-26. The United States, South Korea and Japan are watching whether the North will take any provocative action, such as testing a ballistic missile, during the period.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's sister and close side Kim Yo Jong said in a statement that the joint military drills would "further imperil the situation on the Korean peninsula."

"I would like to express my deep regret at the perfidious behavior of the south Korean authorities," Kim Yo Jong said in the statement, carried by the official Korean Central News Agency.—Kyodo News ■

London's Tower Bridge
reopens to traffic after
being stuck

LONDON'S Tower Bridge reopened Tuesday to traffic, after a "technical failure" left the 19th-century landmark's arms pointing skyward for almost twelve hours.

The two sections of the bridge had been stuck since mid-afternoon on Monday, when they had been due to open for a tall wooden ship, the Sailing Vessel Tenacious, according to the bridge's schedule.

It is the second time in a year that the bridge, one of the most recognisable features of London's skyline, has become stuck.

The bridge reopened to traffic at 01:45 BST (0045 GMT) on Tuesday, according to the BBC.

The bridge connects the Square Mile financial district to Southwark across the River Thames, and its closure caused



London's Tower Bridge is stuck in an open position due to a technical fault. **PHOTO: AFP**

long queues to build up on either side of the crossing.

Built between 1886 and 1894, the landmark was at the

time considered "the largest and most sophisticated bascule bridge ever completed", according to its website.—AFP ■

China rejects Canadian man's death sentence
appeal for drug smuggling

Canadian Robert Lloyd Schellenberg was sentenced to death on drug smuggling charges in 2019. **PHOTO: INTERMEDIATE PEOPLES' COURT OF DALIAN AFP/FILE**

A Chinese court on Tuesday rejected a Canadian man's appeal against his death sentence for drug smuggling, in the latest move that will further deteriorate relations between the two countries. Robert Schellenberg was detained in 2014 and handed a 15-year prison sentence in 2018. In 2019, the court in Dalian, northeastern China, sentenced him to death even though he denied the allegations and challenged the ruling. The rejection of the appeal came after Canadian authorities in Vancouver in December 2018 arrested Meng

Wanzhou, a top official of China's tech giant Huawei Technologies Co., on U.S. fraud charges linked to an alleged breach of sanctions on Iran. Two Canadians living and working in China, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, were subsequently taken into custody on allegations they were harming China's national security. It is feared that they were detained in retaliation for Meng's arrest.

In 2019, Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau criticized China for "arbitrarily" sentencing Schellenberg to death.—Kyodo ■

Between the Holocaust and Israel: the Jews jailed on Cyprus

AFTER surviving the Holocaust, trekking the Alps in winter and crossing the Mediterranean in an overcrowded boat, Rose Lipszyc clearly remembers her months incarcerated in harsh British camps in Cyprus.

“After all that, we were back behind barbed wire again,” 92-year-old Lipszyc said, speaking 75 years after British soldiers began imprisoning Jews on the eastern Mediterranean island, dark events whose legacy resonates today.

Lipszyc’s family, from the Polish city of Lublin, were among the six million Jews the Nazis massacred during World War II.

She escaped death using false papers, working as a forced labourer in Germany. After the



More than 52,000 Jews were detained in a dozen camps in Cyprus, according to Israel’s Holocaust memorial and education centre. **PHOTO: AFP**

war, she walked to Italy. Then, joining an exodus of thousands of traumatised refugees dreaming of a Jewish nation, Lipszyc

boarded a rickety boat in Venice bound for British-run Palestine. “There were 300 of us squeezed into the boat,” Lipszyc said. “We

were like sardines.” But as the shores of Palestine appeared on the horizon, two British warships powered out.

“The English soldiers – who I would have kissed the feet of for liberating me in Germany – were leaping into our little boat with batons,” she said, her voice trembling.

‘Traumatic’

She was taken 250 kilometres (155 miles) northwest to Cyprus, also then under British rule. Between August 1946 and February 1949, more than 52,000 Jews taken off 39 boats were detained in a dozen camps in Cyprus, according to Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust memorial and education centre.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Blinken vows no ‘impunity’ for Iran over ship attack

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Monday renewed vows to punish Iran for allegedly attacking a tanker, saying the world cannot allow “impunity.”

Speaking to a virtual Security Council session on maritime security, Blinken said the explosions in late July on the Israeli-linked MT Mercer Street were “part of a pattern of attacks and other provocative behavior.”

“It is on all of our nations to hold accountable those responsible. Failing to do so will only fuel their sense of impunity and embolden others inclined to disregard the maritime order,” he said.

Two crew members, from Britain and Romania, died in the blasts which the US military said were caused by drones built by Iran. Iran has denied responsibility for the blast but analysts have described the operation as part of a shadow war between Iran and Israel which includes strikes on Tehran-linked sites in Syria.—AFP ■

US to review classified 9/11 attacks documents for possible publication

US officials vowed Monday to review classified documents related to the September 11, 2001 terror attacks to see which could be made public – a recurring demand of some victims’ relatives.

The FBI said in a letter to the US attorney for the southern district of New York that it “has decided to review” its prior privilege to not disclose certain sensitive documents and will “identify additional information appropriate for disclosure.”

Agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation “will disclose such information on a rolling basis as expeditiously as possible,” the letter read.

The FBI’s commitment is part of a legal battle waged by relatives of September 11 victims against Saudi Arabia and other nations they believe were



Pedestrians standing on the Brooklyn waterfront look across the East River towards the burning Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan, New York on September 11, 2001. **PHOTO: AFP**

accomplices.

During the legal wrangling, successive US administrations

have invoked state secrecy in order not to publish some documents.

Biden however said in a statement that he welcomed the court filing.—AFP ■

The People’s Mujahedin: Iran’s exiled opposition

THE People’s Mujahedin Organisation of Iran (PMOI) is an Iranian opposition movement in exile that battled the Shah from the 1960s and was once allied to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini before falling foul of his Islamic regime.

Its fighters were later denounced as traitors for fighting alongside Iraqi troops in the latter part of the eight-year Iran-Iraq War which began when Saddam Hussein invaded Iran in 1980, a year after the Islamic revolution.

On Tuesday, an Iranian alleged former prosecutor will go on trial in Sweden over mass executions of Mujahedin militants by the Islamic republic in 1988.

Against the shah, then mul-lahs

The Mujahedin -- known as the MEK in Farsi -- was formed in 1965 to fight the royalist regime of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, with most of its founding members later dying in prison.—AFP ■

Trial over Iran 1988 mass murder begins in Sweden

An Iranian official accused of involvement in the 1988 execution of thousands of political dissidents goes on trial in Sweden on Tuesday in a landmark case likely to stoke tensions in the Islamic republic.

Hamid Noury, 60, is accused by Swedish prosecutors of “intentionally taking the life of a very large number of prisoners sympathetic to or belonging to the People’s Mujahedin” (MEK) between 30 July and 16 August 1988, while he was assistant to the deputy

governor of Gohardasht prison in Karaj, near Tehran.

Human rights organisations have long campaigned for justice for the estimated 5,000 prisoners killed across Iran, allegedly under the orders of supreme leader Ayatollah Khomeini in reprisal for attacks carried out by the MEK at the end of the Iran-Iraq war of 1980-88. Swedish court officials believe Tuesday’s case is the first of its kind against someone accused over the killings.—AFP ■



Photos of some of the thousands of people killed in Iran in 1988 on display in Washington last year. **PHOTO: SAUL LOEB/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.

PSG set to complete signing of Messi

LIONEL Messi arrived at Barcelona airport on Tuesday, set to board a flight to the French capital as Paris Saint-Germain prepare to complete the signing of the Argentinian superstar.

The 34-year-old was accompanied by his wife and three children as he entered El Prat airport just before 1:30 pm (1130 GMT).

His father Jorge, who is also his representative, arrived a short while earlier.

Asked by reporters if his son would sign for the French club,

Jorge Messi said: "Yes".

PSG have spent the last few days trying to finalise an agreement to sign Messi following his departure from Barcelona, the club he has represented for the entirety of his 17-year professional career so far.

The French side's supporters began gathering on Monday outside the club's Parc des Princes home and at Le Bourget airport to the north of the city hoping to catch a glimpse of Messi.

Meanwhile the front page

headline in French sports daily L'Equipe on Tuesday hinted at the mood in Paris. "Growing restless", it said, while inside it spoke of "the longest hours" as fans waited an announcement.

Reports in Spain during the night talked of a "final offer" by Barcelona to try to keep the player at the club. Instead, the mooted move to Paris is on the verge of being completed as Qatar-owned PSG prepare to add the six-time Ballon d'Or winner to an attack already featuring Neymar and Kylian Mbappe. — AFP ■



Argentinian football player Lionel Messi waves to supporters from a window after he landed on 10 August 2021 at Le Bourget airport, north of Paris, to become Paris Saint-Germain's new player following his departure from Barcelona, the club he has represented for the entirety of his 17-year professional career so far. **PHOTO: AFP**

Top-ranked Djokovic withdraws from Cincinnati US Open tuneup

NOVAK Djokovic, seeking to complete a calendar-year Grand Slam at the US Open, withdrew from the ATP Cincinnati Masters on Monday, saying he needed more recovery time after the Tokyo Olympics.

The top-ranked Serbian star, level for the all-time men's record of 20 Grand Slam titles, could become the first man since Rod Laver in 1969 to win all four major titles in one year.

Djokovic, 34, lost at Tokyo to Alexander Zverev in a semi-final and Pablo Carreno Busta in the bronze medal match in what will be his last matches before the US Open after pulling out of the last major tuneup event.



(FILES) In this file photo taken on 31 July 2021 Serbia's Novak Djokovic celebrates a point against Spain's Pablo Carreno Busta during their Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games men's singles tennis match for the bronze medal at the Ariake Tennis Park in Tokyo. **PHOTO: TIZIANA FABI / AFP**

"I am taking a bit longer to recover and recuperate after quite a taxing journey from Australia to Tokyo," Djokovic posted on social media. — AFP ■

Premier League fans to be subject to Covid spot-checks

THE Premier League has announced fans will be subject to random spot-checks of their Covid-19 status in the opening weeks of the new season.

The 2021-22 campaign kicks off on Friday when newly-promoted Brentford host Arsenal with national government restrictions on crowd capacity now eased.

Any limits on attendances are agreed with local authorities and the Premier League clubs hope their protocols will ensure a return to full stadiums across the country.

In a statement, the Premier League said fans going to games should be prepared to show they have been fully vaccinated or have received a

negative lateral flow test in the previous 48 hours.

The UK government has so far refused to introduce a mandatory vaccine passport system, but the English top-flight clubs are preparing in case that changes in the coming months.

"Initially, in the first few matchdays of the season, supporters can expect the introduction of random spot-checks for ticket holders at some grounds as we establish the required processes so clubs and fans are prepared for all match attenders to have their Covid-19 status checked upon arrival, should it become mandatory," the Premier League statement added. — AFP ■