

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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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.

Extension of public holidays for further prevention, control and treatment over infection of COVID-19

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Notification No 226/2021
5th Waxing of Wagaung 1383 ME
12 August 2021

Extension of public holidays for further prevention, control and treatment over infection of COVID-19

THE State Administration Council has set the successive public holidays for four times to head off the infection chains of COVID-19 for the people to abide by the

restricted disciplines during the public holidays. In order to soonest reach the normal situation by controlling the infection of COVID-19, the notification was announced that the period from 16 to 22 August 2021 was further set as the successive public holidays in accord with Section 25 of the Negotiable Instruments Act.

By Order,
Aung Lin Dwe
Lieutenant - General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Press Statement

One-sided remarks based on unverified sources and inaccurate information are unacceptable

MYANMAR strongly rejects the briefing on current situation of Myanmar by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar, Ms. Christine Schraner Burgener, to the journalists through video-conferencing on 10 August 2021 at 10:00 am in New York.

During her briefing, she stated one-sided remarks based on unverified sources and inaccurate information. While making the remarks, she ignored the government's efforts to restore the democratic transition amid acts of sabotage committed by the terrorist groups and the information periodically released by the authorities concerned of Myanmar. Furthermore, her suggestion to establish an international observer group on Myanmar is seemingly undue political pressure on Myanmar.

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Pinkerton avocado starts to sell in third week of August

THE Pinkerton avocado which is successfully planted on a trial basis in PyinOoLwin will be available on the market during the third week of August, said U Myo Nyunt, vice chairman of Myanmar Avocado Producers and Exporters Association stated.

At present, the Pinkerton avocado is yielded. The association is making them available on Yangon market. The price has not been finalized yet, however, it will be set depending on the traders and growers.

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Pinkerton avocado plant bears fruits in the farm.

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Central Committee on Prevention,
Control and Treatment of Coronavirus
Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
Announcement

5th Waxing of Wagaung 1383 ME
12 August 2021

IT is hereby announced that the basic education schools (including private schools and monastic education schools) will be temporarily closed for one more week from 16-8-2021 to 22-8-2021 due to the need to continuously curb the spread of COVID-19.

**One-sided remarks based on
unverified sources and inaccurate
information are unacceptable**

FROM PAGE-1

Myanmar has agreed the appointment of the Special Envoy of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Chair to express its the willingness to implement the ASEAN Five-Point Consensus. Albeit Myanmar rejected the United Nations resolution to appoint a special envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar as a whole, Myanmar has constructively cooperated with the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar since 2018 as a gesture of constructive cooperation with the United Nations.

The formation of Provisional Government is to effectively carry out the assigned tasks. The Provisional Government has explicitly announced its full commitment to hold free and fair multi-party democratic elections and hand over state duties to winner of the elections.

The Provisional Government of Myanmar has been accelerating the COVID-19 preventions, control and treatment activities and the vaccination programme has been conducted across the country. Moreover, it is regrettable to see that the unlawful and terrorist organizations, such as the so-called Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) and the so-called National Unity Government (NUG) and their supporters intentionally disturb the COVID-19 vaccination programme by launching attacks on pandemic control check points and vaccination places. It is observed that the Special Envoy turns a blind eye to those attacks and exaggerates the country situation for the sake of outside interferences.

Therefore, Myanmar urges the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Myanmar to conduct her works in an impartial, objective and constructive manner while upholding her mandate. Myanmar also rejects the remarks of the Special Envoy which violated the Code of Conduct of the United Nations and the basic principles stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Nay Pyi Taw.
Date 12 August 2021

**3,430 new cases of COVID-19
reported on 12 August, total
figure rises to 344,730**

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **344,730** after **3,430 new cases** were reported on 12 August 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **260,025** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **12,667** after **215** died. —MNA

**Imports of essential medical supplies
continue on declared public holidays**



A bowser carries liquid oxygen to be distributed to regions and states.

THE Ministry of Commerce is working hard to ensure people have access to essential medical supplies which are critical to the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities, including liquid oxygen and oxygen cylinders, arranging the continuous importation on public holidays.

Yesterday, a total of 2,296 oxygen concentrators were imported via airways at the Yangon International Airport. In addition, 38.11 tonnes of liquid oxygen, 5,875 empty oxygen containers, 4 oxygen plants, 895 oxygen concentrators, 28,800 PPE suits, 2 tonnes of gloves and 58 tonnes of masks were imported through border trade points, including 30,000 PPE suits from the international port.

A total of 784 tonnes of liquid oxygen, 66 tonnes of oxygen cylinders, 83,679 tonnes of empty oxygen containers, 20 oxygen plants, 10 oxygen generators, 64,849 oxygen concentrators, 150,268



A truck transports oxygen cylinders to respective centres for treatment of patients.

test kits, 400,652 PPE suits, 60 tonnes of gloves and 907 tonnes of masks have been imported by far in August.

Of 65 liquid oxygen browsers imported between July and 12 August, 48 of them were distributed to Yangon, 11 to Mandalay, 2 to Bago, 3 to Mawlamyine and 1 to Thaton, respectively. Among 28 oxygen plants, 4 were transported to Yangon, 5 to Lashio, 4 to Bago, 2 each to Pakokku, Mandalay, Hpa-an and Mawlamyine, one each to Taunggyi, Thanpyu-zayat, Magway, Dawei, Wakema, Myittha and Kyaukpadaung respectively.

The Ministry on 8 August announced that the border trade points will not be suspended from work on declared public holidays, from 9 to 15 August, and import operations will be conducted as usual. The importation of COVID-19 devices will be allowed in accordance with the SOP priority, negotiated by relevant departments, and online import license application will also be allowed as usual during the office hours.—MNA

Pinkerton avocado starts to sell ...

FROM PAGE-1

Additionally, other avocado varieties of Myanmar's origin are also harvested. They fetch K20,000-K30,000 per 30-viss bag (a viss equals to 1.6 kg).

"The Pinkerton avocado planted on a trial basis will be supplied in one or two weeks. The market price will not reach the last year's record price amid the COVID-19 impacts. The avocado will be distributed to both Yangon and Mandalay markets. The association has discussed with the traders re-

garding a marketing strategy amidst the transaction problem and negative consequences of the COVID-19, he elaborated.

The Pinkerton avocado was priced K4,500-K5,000 per kilo last year, while Hass avocado fetched up to K7,000-8,000 per kilo. Nevertheless, the traders cannot expect the high price registered last year. The official price is not finalized yet. Hass avocado will flow into market in October.

The avocado is primarily grown in Chin Hill, Shan pla-

teau, Nawnghkio and PyinOoLwin areas, covering around 25,000 acres. There is a thousand of Myanmar avocado varieties, and avocado of foreign origins are also found in the country.

Myanmar's avocado is abundant in October and the harvest season extends up to April. Myanmar prioritizes the fruit quality that meets international market standards for market potentials.—Min Htet Aung (Mandalay sub-printing house)/GNLM

Emphasis must be placed on development tasks while prioritizing peace and stability, especially political stability

THEY are carrying out the government tasks in a smooth process. It is necessary to consider extension of new sectors. The unrests and terror acts based on vote-rigging in the 2020 election are being combated. Emphasis must be placed on development tasks while prioritizing the peace and stability, especially political stability. The provisional government temporarily takes the responsibility of the country, and when the emergency period runs out, the election will be held under the law. Undertakings will be carried out to hand over the State duty to the government emerged by the election in accord with the Constitution.

(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 8 August 2021)

Efforts must be made for further improvement of media sector through modern technologies for the people to enjoy the rights of knowing information: Union Information Minister

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn yesterday morning inspected the Myanma Alinn and the Kyemon dailies and Nay Pyi Taw Printing Factory in Zeyathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw.

Together with Deputy Minister U Ye Tint, the Union Minister met with staff from dailies at Pho Waziya Hall of the News and Periodicals Enterprise at Khayaybin Junction. The Union Minister viewed round the press room and news room and cordially conversed with service personnel. The Union Minister and party also met with staff at the Nay Pyi Taw Printing Factory of Printing and Publishing Department.

He viewed round arrangements to finish the production of school textbooks in time, operating of work process in line with COVID-19 disciplines, and maintenance of printing machines. He instructed officials to prepare the printing machines to be operated



Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn meets staff of daily newspapers and Nay Pyi Taw Printing Factory.

at full capacity and take security measures for outbreak of fire and cordially greeted the staff.

While meeting with staff from state-owned daily newspapers and Nay Pyi Taw Printing Factory, the Union Minister said State-owned media must strive

for communicating the government and the people and arrange for foreign countries to know true news and real situations. As the Provisional Government of Myanmar has been formed to implement the five-point road map and nine objectives adopted as poli-

cies by the State Administration Council, it is necessary to correctly and speedily release the true information at home and abroad. He said that the Prime Minister of the State emphasizes the role of media including the print media. As such, efforts must be made for

further improvement of media sector through modern technologies for the people to enjoy the rights of knowing information. The Union Minister stressed the need to sustain the momentum of State-owned media through cooperation of township information and public relations departments in raising the public awareness for prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19.

The Printing and Publishing Department needs to publish the books suitable for the people. It is necessary to emphasize the youth sector by prioritizing the publishing of proper books for the youths. The Union Minister stressed the need to educate the citizens to know obligations through literature. It is necessary to strive for publishing the books appropriate with the current time. The Union Minister urged them to do their tasks by abiding by the COVID-19 health guidelines.—MNA

200 liquid oxygen cylinders, 200 flow meters arrive in Sagaing region

WITH the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities are being accelerated in the Sagaing region, more 200 40-litre liquid oxygen cylinders and 200 flow meters arrived in Sagaing region on 11 August under the Sagaing region government plan, said U Zaw Tin Moe, chairman of Monywa District Administration Body.

Colonel Win Tin Soe, Sagaing Region Minister for Security and Border Affairs and officials from District/ Township Committees for Control, Treatment and Emergency Response to COVID-19 inspected the new arrivalls of medical equipment and kept them in tennis ground of Monywa stadium.

“That new arrival medical equipment will be delivered to the district/township public health departments from Sagaing region,”

he added.

COVID-19 prevention, control, treatment activities are being intensified under the guidance of the regional government in Sagaing region. From 22 July to 12 August, about 900 oxygen cylinders were distributed to districts and townships of Sagaing region. Those new arrival 200 40-liter liquid oxygen cylinders and 200 flow meters will be constantly distributed to the district/ township public health departments in the region.

Besides, the vaccination programme started with the priority group of people in 25 townships of seven districts in Sagaing region. The first COVID-19 vaccines were given to 88,134 people including person from religions, people of above 65, public service personnel and public from 3 to 9 August.—Lulay/GNLM



Officials inspect new arrivals of oxygen cylinders and flow meters.

Production of Myanmar pearl exceeds expectations in 2020-2021



Union Minister U Khin Maung Yi views pieces of pearl in respective quality produced from farming sites in Taninthayi Region.

THE pearls produced by the Pearl Farming Company, a joint venture of Myanma Pearl Enterprise were transported to Nay Pyi Taw from Myeik of Taninthayi Region for valuation and proportionate allocation yesterday.

Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi inspected the processes conducted at the Myanmar Gems Museum in accordance with COVID-19 health rules. There are 12 pearl farming sites in Taninthayi Region—four are operated by foreign companies and seven by domestic companies while one is state-owned.

In 2019-2020 financial year; a

total of 1,290,076 pieces of pearl were produced while 1,034,217 pieces of pearl by eight companies until the end of July in 2020-2021. The three companies and one state-owned company are still running the farms. The companies produced 337,912 pieces of pearl and the valuation and proportionate allocation were conducted in accordance with sub-section (a) of Section 25 of Myanmar Pearl Law. The pieces of pearl exceeded the estimated production rate of 2020-2021 FY.

Then, the Union Minister inspected the preparations to reopen the gems museum, and joined the coordination meeting on development of finished jade industry.—MNA

Rakhine State Ex- Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, three ex-ministers charged under Anti-Corruption Law

THE inquiry team of ACC (Anti-Corruption Commission) inspected the bribery cases against former Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu and other officials.

According to the inspection, former Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu, former state Finance, Tax, Planning and Economic Minister U Kyaw Aye Thein, state Electricity, Industrial and Transport Minister U Aung Kyaw Zan and former state Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Mining Minister U Kyaw Lwin did not follow the notification No (1/2017) of President's Office in making low-cost land plots between Ywama and Kinyon wards in Gwa Township of Rakhine State. They permitted their partner company for the operation without analyzing the data of company, investment amount, work experience, skilled workers and the use of machinery. They also misused their authority and made an agreement to manage the low-cost land implementation just with the decision of the state government meeting without seeking the suggestions of the Office of the Attorney-General of the Union, state Advocate-General Office and other relevant

departments.

They did not submit the proposal in accordance with the land related procedures to the Union government, and failed to conduct environmental impact assessment and permitted the project to begin. Therefore, it can cause floodings and affect the nature including marine animals and other things. If so, the numbers of fish decline and affect the keeps of local residents.

They granted K535 million for expense and compensation which were not mentioned in the agreement to the company.

U Nyi Pu, U Kyaw Aye Thein and U Aung Kyaw Zan also permitted the company to run the garment operation at three government-owned buildings without reviewing the company's history to provide job opportunities to the residents. They provided more than K55 million budget of state construction analyzing committee to the company to maintain the buildings. Although the company did not operate, they did not return the buildings to state government so far.

According to the report of state Auditor-General office, on 1 October 2019, they did not transfer more than K865 million of state construction analyzing

committee into the state development fund in accordance with order No 58/2019, and spent the budgets.

The former Rakhine State Development Minister U Min Aung also did not follow the terms and conditions of tender stated in notification No 1/2017 of President's Office in constructing five markets without any permission of the Hluttaw.

When he made agreement with tender winning company for Taungup Myoma market, he signed the agreement for more K1,570 million than the fixed tender prices at K1,450 million on 15 Decemehr 2017. He granted extra K3 million to the construction company when he gave more than K39 million for 25pc in first installment on 21 March 2018. The Taungup Myoma market is still damaged to date. Therefore, former chief minister U Nyi Pu and other former ministers U Aung Kyaw Zan, U Kyaw Aye Thein, U Min Aung and U Kyaw Lwin are found guilty for not obeying the existing laws, regulations and procedures in spending the public budget. They were charged under Section 55 of the Anti-Corruption Law at Sittway Myoma police station of Rakhine State yesterday.—MNA

Public request by Ministry of Health

ONLY when the people cooperate will the work process achieve success in a short time for effective prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 among the people. As such, all the people are requested to abide by the following points: -

1. Stay at home as much as possible.
2. Don't accept the guests at the house. You don't visit other houses.
3. The older persons above 65 or those suffering from chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and heart must be worn masks in the house. They must be placed at well-ventilated sites.
4. Wear masks if you go outside without fail. Systematically wash hands. Take a six-foot distance from others. Avoid visits to the rooms where ventilation is not good.
5. Avoid the crowds.
6. If possible, go shopping once a week. Don't buy anything from the vendors who don't systematically wear masks.
7. Take care of carrying the virus to the houses whenever return home from outside. Systematically discard the used masks and single disposable equipment outside the houses. Avoid close contact with family members before changing clothes or washing the body.
8. As the vaccines for your quota is the best, accept vaccinations for full time. Despite receiving the vaccination, you should abide by the protective ways.
9. Systematically cooperate in prevention, control and treatment of the disease with manpower, money, materials and expertise.

Ministry of Health (2-8-2021)

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

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.

Domestic black bean price hikes up to over K1.3 million per tonne

THE price of black bean in the domestic market has hiked up to 1,315,000 per tonne, according to the Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Bayint-naung Brokerage).

Although the black bean price on 1 May was K 888,500 per tonne, the price jumped to about K 1,315,000 per tonne on 12 August, an increase of over K 420,000 per tonne in over three months, according to the bean market data.

The price of black bean has risen when India, the primary buyer of Myanmar pluses, has redefined black bean, green gram and pigeon pea from a restricted commodity to a free import commodity. That is the reason the black bean price reached over K1.3 million per tonne that recorded in the end of 2019.

Since 2017, India has been



A merchant checks pulses and beans in bags displayed at depot.

setting import quota on beans, including black beans and pigeon pea under India government plus foreign trade policy for 2015-2020.

At present, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India issued proclamation S.O.1858

(E) on 15 May 2021 that the three pulses have been changed from a restricted commodity to a free import commodity as of 31 October, 2021.

The issuance of bill of lading to import pigeon pea, green

gram and black bean needs to be completed by 31 October, 2021 and the port clearance of imported cargos should be completed by 30 November, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of India notified.

A memorandum of understanding was signed on 18 June to export a total of 350,000 tonnes of Myanmar pulses including 250,000 tonnes of black bean and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon pea to India in five consecutive years (from 2021-22 FY to 2025-56 FY), according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The black bean plantations are yielding around 400,000 tonnes annually in Myanmar. Besides, Myanmar has also produced about 50,000 tonnes of pigeon peas yearly. The black bean, which is mainly bought from India, is mainly grown in Myanmar. Other pulses including green gram and pigeon pea are grown in Africa and Australia in addition to Myanmar, according to Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association.—NN/GNLM

External trade tops \$24.7 bln during Oct-July period



An ocean liner prepares to unload cargo at the port.

MYANMAR'S external trade between 1 October and 30 July in the current financial year 2020-2021 exceeded US\$24.7 billion, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

During the same period in the previous FY, the international trade stood at over \$31 billion, according to data released by the ministry.

During the past ten months, Myanmar's export was worth over \$12.45 billion whereas the country's import was relatively low at \$12.25 billion. Myanmar recorded a positive trade balance as of July-end.

Both sea trade and border trade dropped amid the coronavirus impacts. The neighbouring countries tightened the border security and the border posts came to abrupt stop amid the COVID-19 surging in Myanmar. At the present time, the traders have transaction problem triggered by the restriction of the private banks. Furthermore, as the pandemic triggered the cargo shipping

crisis, a market observer shared his opinion.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods, while it imports capital goods, raw industrial materials, and consumer goods.

The country's export sector relies more on the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. However, the suspended trade in the border checkpoints and the order cancel from the western countries amid the political changes exacerbate the export sector for now. The Ministry of Commerce is focusing on reducing trade deficit, export promotion and market diversification.

The external trade stood at \$36.73 billion in the 2019-2020 FY, \$35.147 billion in the 2018-2019 FY, \$18.728 billion in the 2018 six-month interim period, \$33.578 billion in the 2017-2018 FY and \$29.209 billion in the 2016-2017 FY respectively, as per the Commerce Ministry's statistics.—KK/GNLM

Myawady border trade up by US\$499 mln in ten months

THE border trade through Myawady between Myanmar and Thailand climbed up to US\$1.52 billion between 1 October and 30 July in the current financial year 2020-2021, reflecting an increase of \$499.49 million as against a-year ago period.

The trade through Myawady border stood at over \$1 billion in the corresponding period of last FY 2019-2020.

Myawady-Mae Sot border trade is remained normal although Thailand ordered restrictions in Mae Sot, according to Myawady Chamber of Commerce.

Myawady border trade did not halt owing to the restriction orders by Thailand. Myanmar trucks cannot enter Mae Sot, but trucks from Thailand come and pick up the goods at Myawady post, the chamber stated.

We have experienced trade suspension via Myawady in October 2020. The halt in trading undoubtedly harms the traders and truck drivers from both sides. It is good that trade does not stop at the present time, said a trader from Myawady.

At the present time, Myawady border does not have trade barriers except transaction problem, as per Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

Myanmar is currently shipping thousands of tonnes of corns to Thailand through Myawady border every day.

Myanmar is allowed for corn export between 1 February and 31 August with Form-D, under zero tariffs.

Myanmar corn exports were exempted from tax between February and August. Thailand imposed 73 per cent of tax on corn import to protect the rights of their growers if the corns are imported during the corn season of Thailand, in accordance with the notification of World Trade Organization regarding corn import of Thailand.

During last fiscal year, Myanmar has increasingly exported corns to Thailand through Myawady border gate. Myanmar's corn exports to Thailand significantly soared to over 1.2 million tonnes through border gates between Myanmar and

Thailand during October and May period in the FY 2019-2020, said an official of the Ministry of Commerce.

There are seven border posts between Myanmar and Thailand namely Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Htikhee, Myeik, Mawtaung and Meisei. Majority of the border trade with Thailand is conducted via Myawady.

Myanmar primarily exports corn, natural gas, fishery products, coal, tin concentrate (SN 71.58 per cent), coconut (fresh and dry), beans, and bamboo shoots to Thailand. It imports capital goods such as machinery, raw industrial goods such as cement and fertilizers, consumer goods such as cosmetics and food products from the neighbouring country.—KK/GNLM



Small and large vehicles are passing the gate of Myawady Trade Zone.

State Administration Council
Press Release

Re-invitation to Myanmar citizens who reside in various regions for many reasons

1. Some student youths, State service personnel and citizens, with worries, have evaded to areas of EAOs and foreign countries due to the incitements and intimidation of NLD members, extremist followers, unlawful associations and terrorist groups such as CRPH and NUG, stimulation of CDM, and persons and organizations at home and abroad not wishing to restore peace and stability of the State since Tatmadaw assumed the State responsibilities on 1 February 2021.
2. They are further worried about the dictatorship statement and speeches of unlawful association and terrorist group CRPH and NUG, and some relevant persons. As they face no security guarantee and difficulties in socio-economic life in those areas, they wish to return to their native lands.
3. **The State Administration Council will specifically ease restrictions for service personnel, intellectuals and intelligentsia, and persons from various arenas and citizens who, with worries, absconded from the country except for persons who committed murders, robberies, setting fires, mine explosions and intentional attacks on security troops, those who crowded to attack public service personnel and some people, those who destroyed government and private-owned buildings and those who are highly involved in the CDM activities by providing monetary assistance and other means.**
4. As those who evade their native areas are also citizens, the State Administration Council will arrange their returns from the evaded areas to various parts of Myanmar.
5. As such, the information was released that if those who evaded to various areas, except for persons who committed any kinds of crime, wish to return to their native lands in Myanmar of their own accord due to multiple worries, the citizens abroad can contact nearby ward, village, township and district administration bodies and relevant embassies, military attaché offices and consulates in accord with the easing restrictions under the law.

Information Team
State Administration Council

The State Administration Council will specifically ease restrictions for service personnel, intellectuals and intelligentsia, and persons from various arenas and citizens who, with worries, absconded from the country except for persons who committed murders, robberies, setting fires, mine explosions and intentional attacks on security troops, those who crowded to attack public service personnel and some people, those who destroyed government and private-owned buildings and those who are highly involved in the CDM activities by providing monetary assistance and other means.

Price-gouging medicine retailers face action



Departmental officials inspect medicines and medical equipment not to rise prices.

YANGON Region Government is organizing township-based inspection teams to examine the medical stores to ensure the price of medicines not to rise during the third wave of COVID-19 in accordance with the instructions of State Administration Council. In doing so, the combined team that includes the officials of township general administration department, police force, criminal force,

bureau of special investigation, consumer affairs department, FDA, township public health departments and municipal department inspected 24 medicine warehouses together with the relevant ward administrators, warehouse owners and collected the remaining materials, inventory, and also checked whether they have permits, they used to import and sell medicines in the past, they now purchase or store

the medicines, and whether the medicines are under control or intended for profits. They did not check the medicine wholesale shops in Mingala market, Shwe Pyae Sone market, Theingyi and Bogyoke market not to affect their daily transactions.

During the inspection, the joint inspection team allows the free delivery of medicines by marking the lists of goods to be shipped and the place of delivery

so as not to affect the regular sale of medicines. On 11 August, the inspection team inspected all 24 warehouses and so the medicine prices drastically declined.

Of the 24 medicine warehouses under inspection in the first batch, it found that sales of medicines at nine warehouses were controlled with the aim of rising prices, lack of documents for local and foreign procurement and due to the large amount of stockpiled, the medicines were kept to manipulate

the prices, and so such warehouses will face legal actions in accordance with the law.

The pharmacies that sell the medicines at normal prices must sign a form promising not to increase the medicine prices, not to control the distributions in the market and not to sell for profits. The companies that import the medicines in accordance with the procedures will not face any actions.

The joint inspection team also raided 19 medicine warehouses yesterday.—MNA



Officials check packages of medicines in medicine warehouse.

COVID-19 mortality rate drops, but infection rate remains around 30% after 5 Aug

THE mortality rate of COVID-19 drops, but the infection rate is remaining around 30 per cent after 5 August, according to the announcement of Ministry of Health.

A total of 2,904 people died in ten days. The number of COVID-19 cases had risen in Myanmar since 27 May, with over 100 to 1,500 cases reported in June.

Similarly, more than 2,000 to 6,000 people were infected with COVID-19 in July, and the number of infections increased daily. The death toll from suspected COVID-19 rose in Yangon region, with volunteers carrying at least 20 death bodies a day in July.

Likewise, the number of infection rose from four per

cent to nearly 20 per cent daily. And, the death toll rose from one to 14 daily in June, it is learnt.

Around 1.75 million people have so far been vaccinated in the country of 54 million, according to the authorities.

The country has used vaccines donated by India, China and Russia. The military has also purchased two million doses of COVID-19 vaccine from Russia and plans to buy another seven million doses, it is learnt.

After containing the number of COVID-19 cases at the beginning of the pandemic, Myanmar is now struggling in third wave, recording 341,300 cases and 12,452 deaths.—Aye Maung/GNLM

One child killed, two people injured in brutal assassination attempt in Myingyan

INNOCENT civilians are being ambushed and assassinated without reason by one-sided extremist gangs who are listening to the extremist motives of domestic terrorists living at home and abroad.

An ambush was committed yesterday morning in Myingyan Township, Mandalay Region, killing a child, and one man and a woman were injured.

The incident took place at around 7 am in front of the house of U Nyein Chan when he was preparing to set up the Mohinga shop, holding his eight-month-old daughter, Ma Nyein Nyein in his arms.

Four terrorists came to the shop and shot him four times, and ran away by their motorbike. Ma Nyein Nyein was shot to death in the forehead and



Photo shows scene of shooting to innocent people in Myingyan.

U Nyein Chan was shot in the arms, and Daw Tin Tin Mar who was at the scene was also shot to her right feet.

Security forces are accelerating the investigation to take

effective action to the terrorists under the law. The people are also requested to report any information about them to the nearest police stations and security troops.—MNA

After 60 years of Indian rule, Goa's disappearing Portuguese legacy



Only a handful of homes influenced by old Portuguese design trends have been earmarked for protection. **PHOTO: AFP**

AS Lorraine Alberto begins her Portuguese class at Goa University, students from the former colony are in short supply.

Across Goa, a tiny coastal state once administered by Lisbon, there is little appetite for the territory's 450 years of European heritage after a few short generations of Indian rule.

Ramshackle colonial homes and Bollywood's increasing cultural dominance portend the disappearance of local history in a place where speaking Portuguese was once a passport to status and power.

"My children don't speak it at all," Alberto told AFP. "They just don't see the point of learning it." Those alive in 1961, when Indian troops marched into Goa

and incorporated it into the rest of the country, recall an overnight transformation.

India's exit from the British empire in 1947 spurred many Goans to demand an end to Portuguese rule, but few expected so much to change so quickly.

"It was a very strange feeling... The changes came so fast," said Honorato Velho, a retired school principal.

The 78-year-old once lived next to the grandfather of Antonio Costa, Portugal's current prime minister, and he fondly remembers a childhood peppered with European and local influences.

But his enthusiasm has not been inherited by the next generation. "My wife and I still

speak Portuguese out of habit, but never with our children," Velho told AFP.

Across the state, homes influenced by old Portuguese design trends are falling into disrepair or being pulled down to make way for apartment blocks.

The gradual disappearance of covered terraces and mother-of-pearl shell windows -- built to diffuse harsh sunlight -- is not just a loss to architecture, said author Heta Pandit.

"These houses are evidence of Goan history, they are capsules of our culture," she said.

Only a handful of traditional homes have been earmarked for protection from development or destruction, Pandit added. — AFP ■

JR East to promote Japanese craft beers in Singapore

EAST Japan Railway Co. will hold a six-week Japanese craft beer sales campaign in Singapore beginning Aug. 19 as part of its efforts to help bolster pandemic-hit sales of locally made products.

The railway operator, known as JR East, will offer mostly beer brands of regional brewers in Japan, including four companies that will make their debut in Singapore, in the promotional event running through Sept. 30.

Local consumers visiting the JR East's Japan Rail Cafe will be able to taste offerings from Kanazawa Brewery and Waku Waku Tezukuri Farm Kawakita, both in Ishikawa Prefecture, and Yokohama Beer and Kamakura Beer Brewing Co., both in Kanagawa Prefecture, as well as

Okinawa-based Orion Breweries Ltd.

Also available will be Kanazawa Brewery's ginger liquor that tastes similar to ginger ale and a mandarin orange-based ale from Kiuchi Brewery Inc. in Ibaraki Prefecture.

JR East said similar craft beer campaigns will be held at its Japan Rail Cafe outlets in Taipei and Tokyo under the same "Jibiru (locally brewed craft beer) Time" slogan.

The company chose the companies from among brewers across Japan that responded positively to its campaign proposals. It treats the upcoming promotional event as a test-marketing of broader ranges of regional products from Japan for possible sales expansion. — Kyodo News ■



The photo shows a lineup of locally brewed Japanese craft beers to be offered at East Japan Railway Co.'s Japan Rail Cafe in Singapore. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Seek the best ways to earn income for people and nation

The government is striving for narrowing the development gap between urban and rural areas of the nation. In this regard, emphasis is being placed on creation of opportunities for the people to have the good income for their families.

In the society, those who do not have income can do nothing. In the tenures of previous governments, they have been making efforts for alleviation of the poverty rate but they do not have the result of cent per cent success till today. During the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, these projects indicate the worse results. So it is necessary to seek the best ways and means for the people to create the job opportunities so as to earn income.

So, all the people themselves should improve their nature, lives and society with keenness for working in line with the motto: "all works are honorable".

To have the good income, everybody needs to try hard in working. It is necessary to increase the volume of products in the various sectors. They need to remove the spirit of shirking. Domestic products must be improved as value-added products with the export purpose so as to occupy the shares of international market. If so, they will face easier process of earning income from exportation not only for the families but for the country.

So, all the people themselves should improve their nature, lives and society with keenness for working in line with the motto: "all works are honorable".

■ ■ ■

As part of efforts to create chances for the people to earn incomes, it is necessary to engage agriculture and livestock tasks on vacant and virgin lands as Myanmar is based on earning foreign exchange through export of agricultural and livestock products.

Significantly, anyone should not be lazy in works and should always seek the best ways for improvement of their living standard. Only when individual living standard meets improvement, will the whole country have development. So, those wishing to enjoy the high living standard must utilize the utmost efforts, diligence, perseverance and courage in carrying out their respective tasks.

Not only the people but the government needs to have the good economy and income. Only when the government has income, will it carry out development tasks of the country such as establishment of parks and proper drainage facilities. If individual people have good income, the whole country will be well-off. If so, the government can fulfill the needs of all the people in various sectors.

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WHO Mass-Testing Three Potential COVID Treatments

The coordinated research across dozens of countries allows the trial to assess multiple treatments using a single protocol, thereby generating robust estimates on the effect a drug may have on mortality, including moderate effects, said the WHO.

THE World Health Organization (WHO) on Wednesday announced major international trials of three drugs to find out whether they improve the condition of hospitalised COVID-19 patients.

Artesunate, imatinib and infliximab will be tested on thousands of volunteer patients in more than 600 hospitals in 52 countries.

"Finding more effective and accessible therapeutics for COVID-19 patients remains a critical need," said WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

Artesunate is a treatment for severe malaria; imatinib a drug used for certain cancers and infliximab a treatment for immune system disorders such as Crohn's and rheumatoid arthritis.

The coordinated research across dozens of countries allows the trial to assess multiple treatments using a single protocol, thereby generating robust estimates on the effect a drug may have on mortality, including



Medical staff dressed in protective gear test a woman for the COVID-19 novel coronavirus at a drive-through testing centre at Vibhavadi Hospital in Bangkok on March 25, 2020. **PHOTO: JACK TAYLOR/AFP**

moderate effects, said the WHO.

The drugs were chosen by an independent expert panel for their potential in reducing the risk of death in hospitalised COVID-19 patients.

They were donated for the trial by their manufacturers and are already being shipped out to the hospitals involved.

Previous Trial's Dead End
The testing of artesunate,

imatinib and infliximab on COVID-19 patients is the second stage of the WHO's Solidarity hunt for effective treatments against the killer disease.

Previously, four drugs were

evaluated by the Solidarity trial, involving almost 13,000 patients in 500 hospitals across 30 countries.

The provisional results issued in October showed that remdesivir, hydroxychloroquine, lopinavir and interferon had little or no effect on hospitalised patients with COVID-19.

The final results are due out next month.

"We already have many tools to prevent, test for and treat COVID-19, including oxygen, dexamethasone and IL-6 blockers. But we need more, for patients at all ends of the clinical spectrum, from mild to severe disease," Tedros told a news conference.

The WHO COVID-19 Therapeutics Advisory Group recommended evaluating the anti-inflammatory properties of artesunate, which has been extensively used in the treatment of malaria and other parasitic diseases for more than 30 years, and is regarded as being very safe.

A randomised clinical trial in the Netherlands reported that

imatinib, a small molecule tyrosine kinase inhibitor, might confer clinical benefit in hospitalised COVID-19 patients.

Meanwhile infliximab has shown favourable efficacy and safety in restricting broad spectrum inflammation, including in the elderly populations who are the most clinically vulnerable to COVID-19.

300 Million Cases Warning
The novel coronavirus has killed at least 4.3 million people since the outbreak emerged in China in December 2019, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP, while nearly 204 million cases have been registered. Lamenting that the 200 millionth known case came just six months after the 100 millionth, Tedros said the real number of cases was "much higher".

"Whether we reach 300 million, and how fast we get there, depends on all of us," the United Nations (UN) health agency chief said.

SOURCE: AFP

Indonesia's study shows Sinovac 95 pct effective against COVID-19 mortality among elderly

The study found that two shots of the Sinovac vaccine were 85 per cent effective in preventing COVID-19 symptomatic illness, 92 per cent effective against hospitalization, and 95 per cent effective against mortality caused by the disease.

A new study conducted by the Indonesian Health Ministry has showed that China's Sinovac vaccine was proven to effectively protect those aged above 60 years old from having COVID-19 symptoms and from mortality caused by the disease.

The ministry's study was aimed at examining the effectiveness of the Sinovac vaccine, and measuring how well it works when given to the elderly in the community outside of clinical trials.

The Sinovac vaccine, also known as the CoronaVac, has an efficacy rate of 65.3 per cent as announced by the country's Drug and Food Control Agency (BPOM) in January for its emergency use authorization (EUA).

Indonesia began its massive

COVID-19 vaccination program using the Sinovac vaccine in mid-January. Between March 4 and 29, about 40,000 people belonging to the elderly group had received their complete vaccinations, according to the ministry.

The review, which was published last Friday, based the results on nearly 87,000 elderly people in the national capital Jakarta during March and April.

It focused on those having received the first and second doses of the Sinovac vaccine, and those having not been vaccinated with no records of positive swab tests, also called polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests.

The study found that two shots of the Sinovac vaccine were 85 percent effective in preventing COVID-19 symptomatic illness, 92 percent effective against hospital-

ization, and 95 percent effective against mortality caused by the disease. Meanwhile, the effectiveness of a single shot to prevent symptomatic illness among the elderly was 35 percent.

In May, the ministry published a study on the effectiveness of the Sinovac vaccine on medical workers. Looking at about 128,000 healthcare workers between January and March, the review showed that the vaccine was 98 percent effective in reducing the number of deaths among them due to the COVID-19 infections. The Southeast Asian biggest economy has received COVID-19 vaccines from a number of foreign vaccine producers. Sinovac has become the major vaccine in the archipelago. Indonesia has given the first vaccination shots to at least 51.18 million people, and



A staff member works during a media tour of a new factory built to produce a COVID-19 vaccine, at Sinovac, in Beijing, China, Sept. 24, 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

the second shots to 24.48 million people as of Monday, according

to latest figures from the Health Ministry. The country is target-

ing to vaccinate 208.2 million people.—Xinhua

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 4:00 pm Thursday 12 August, 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 13 August, 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Magway Region, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady Regions and and Kayah State, fairly widespread in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay Regions and (Southern and Eastern)Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavy-falls in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Strong monsoon over the Andaman Sea and South Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13 August, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13 August, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 13 August, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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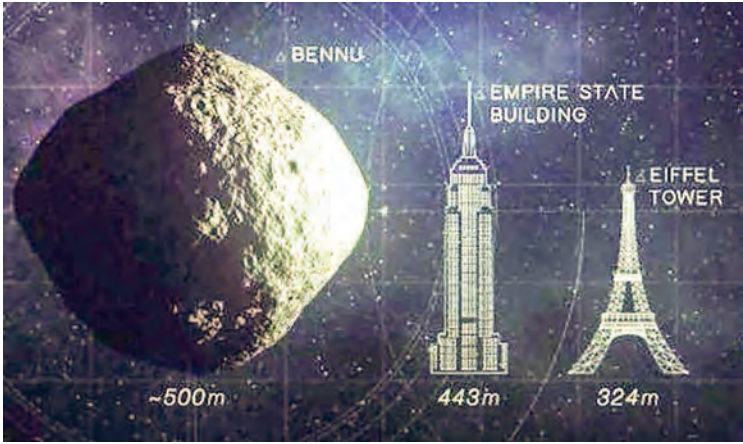
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Only slight chance of asteroid Bennu hitting Earth: NASA



Bennu is a “rubble-pile asteroid” that’s shaped like a spinning top, and it’s wider than the Empire State Building is tall. **PHOTO: NASA/AFP**

AN asteroid known as Bennu will pass within half the distance of the Earth to the Moon in the year 2135 but the probability of an impact with our planet in the coming centuries is very slight, scientists said Wednesday.

OSIRIS-REx, a NASA spacecraft, spent two years near Bennu, an asteroid that is about 1,650 feet (500 meters) wide, observing its size, shape, mass and composition and monitoring its orbital trajectory around the sun.

Using its robotic arm, the

spacecraft also collected a sample from the surface of the asteroid that will help researchers determine the future trajectory of Bennu.

The rocks and dust collected by OSIRIS-REx are scheduled to return to Earth on September 24, 2023. Bennu was discovered in 1999 and is classified as a potentially hazardous asteroid.

It will make a close approach with Earth in September 2135.

Scientists want to figure out how Earth’s gravity and a

phenomenon known as the Yarkovsky effect will affect its future trajectory and the potential for an impact on a subsequent orbit.

“The OSIRIS-REx data give us so much more precise information, we can test the limits of our models and calculate the future trajectory of Bennu to a very high degree of certainty through 2135,” said Davide Farnocchia, a scientist with the Center for Near Earth Object Studies at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California.—AFP ■

WWF sounds alarm over ‘colossal’ Black Sea oil slick

RUSSIAN scientists sounded the alarm on Wednesday over a huge oil slick in the Black Sea, with the World Wildlife Fund saying at least 100 tonnes of oil have leaked off the city of Novorossiysk.

After it emerged that the slick was much larger than initially reported, investigators launched a pollution probe and the General Prosecutor’s Office said officials were studying the coast between the resort town of Anapa and Novorossiysk.

The area is home to some of the country’s best beaches popular with Russian tourists.

A leak occurred at a sea terminal near the southern port city at the weekend as the Greek-flagged Minerva Symphony was loading oil.

On Monday, the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC), which controls the terminal, said the spill was contained, estimating that oil had spread over 200 square metres (2,150 square feet)

and involved around 12 cubic metres (423 cubic feet) of oil.

By early Sunday, “the situation was back to normal” and posed no threat to either the local population or wildlife, said the consortium.

CPC’s shareholders include Russia’s Rosneft, US oil giant Chevron and Italy’s Eni.

The WWF and Russian scientists said the oil slick was much more serious than initially reported and could harm the



Russia’s Black Sea coastline is home to some of the country’s best beaches and is popular with tourists. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

environment.

The conservation group said it had launched its own surveillance and found the slick had covered an area of 94 square kilometres by Sunday.—AFP ■

Experts eye unstable glacier within Italy’s Mont Blanc



Hikers walk near the Brenva Glacier in Courmayeur, north-western Italy. **PHOTO: AFP**

SCIENTISTS on Italy’s side of the Mont Blanc massif are constantly monitoring a melting glacier, where the risk of collapse due to rising temperatures threatens the valley below.

The Planpincieux glacier, at an altitude of about 2,700 metres (8,860 feet), hangs over the hamlet of Planpincieux, underneath the south face of the Grandes

Jorasses within the Mont Blanc massif in Italy’s picturesque northwest corner. Known as a “temperate” glacier, it is already at a melting point, as opposed to polar glaciers that are still frozen to bedrock.

That means the Planpincieux glacier can slide faster, via water just under its surface, making it more unpredictable

and dangerous for the Val Ferret valley below, experts say.

“We’ve got a significant temperature rise and this causes a more rapid formation of the sub-glacial water flow, an important underground circulation of water,” Valerio Segor, the Aosta Valley region’s director of natural risk management, told AFP.—AFP ■

Namibia sells just a third of the elephants put on auction

NAMIBIA said Wednesday it had sold just a third of the 170 live elephants it put up for auction in a bid to reduce tusker populations under pressure from drought and territorial conflict with humans.

In a statement, the environment ministry said it has “successfully sold 57 of the 170 elephants which were put on tender in December 2020”.

It raised 5.9 million Namibian dollars (\$400,000) from the sale.

Forty-two of those pachyderms will be exported to destinations that government did not disclose.

The other 15 will remain in Namibia but under private ownership.

The sparsely-populated semi-arid southern African country is home to some 28,000 elephants, according to official estimates.

Government resorted to selling live animals after being criticised for shooting elephants to control overpopulation.

The ministry spokesman Romeo Muyunda attributed the slow sale to a paucity of buyers and the failure of some bidders to meet the sale conditions.

“It’s an auction, so buying and selling is by chance, there are no guarantees for both the seller and potential buyers,” he told AFP.

Some potential buyers may have stayed away because “there was a lot of negative publicity which surrounded the auction,” he added.—AFP ■

India’s drugs regulator grants approval to study on mixing of COVID-19 vaccines

INDIA’S drugs controller - Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has given its approval to the study on mixing Covishield and Covaxin COVID-19 vaccines, officials said Wednesday.

The study and its clinical trials will be conducted by Christian Medical College (CMC) Vellore in Tamil Nadu.

“Permission has been granted for a research study by CMC Vellore (Tamil Nadu) on mixing

of vaccines doses,” V K Paul, member (health) of government think-tank National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog (commission) said during a press briefing on Tuesday.

Officials said the study will be different from the one conducted by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), which said mixing the two COVID-19 vaccines elicited better safety and immunogenicity results.

Covishield and Covaxin are two main COVID-19 vaccines being administered to people in India.

The ICMR study on the mixing of vaccines was conducted on 18 people, who by mistake received both Covishield and Covaxin doses in Uttar Pradesh’s Siddharth Nagar in May this year. The villagers were administered Covaxin after being given Covishield as the first shot.

The study is yet to be peer-re-



A medical worker inoculates a woman with a COVID-19 vaccine at a hospital in Mumbai, India, Jan. 16, 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

viewed. According to the finding of the ICMR study, immunization with a combination of an adenovirus vector platform-based vaccine, followed by inactivated whole virus vaccine was not only safe but also elicited better immunogenicity.—Xinhua ■

Spain approves human trials of homegrown virus vaccine



Tourists sunbathe at Marbella beach, in Marbella, Spain, June 7, 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

SPAIN’S medicines agency approved Tuesday a first round of clinical trials on humans for a Covid-19 vaccine developed by Spanish firm Hipra.

“This is the first trial on humans of a vaccine made in Spain,” the agency said in a statement. Dozens of volunteers will be recruited from Spanish hospitals “as soon as possible” for the clinical trials, it added.

Hipra, which is based in the northeastern city of Girona, said it could produce up to

400 million doses of the vaccine in 2022 and 1.2 billion in 2023 if the jab is approved. Hipra, which has manufacturing bases in Spain and Brazil, has been working on two Covid-19 vaccines.

One is based on the same RNA messenger technology used in Pfizer and Moderna’s shots, while the second, which has just received approval for trial, uses a recombinant protein like US-based drugmaker Novavax.

The European Union is

currently using four Covid-19 vaccines: the one from Pfizer, which forms the backbone of its vaccination rollout, as well as those from AstraZeneca, Moderna and Johnson and Johnson.

The Pfizer vaccine must be stored at minus 70 degrees Celsius (minus 94 degrees Fahrenheit), making it a challenge to ship and protect.

Hipra said its experimental vaccine can be stored at two to eight degrees Celsius which “will facilitate its logistics and distribution”.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Study finds antibodies to COVID-19 in U.S. white-tailed deer

A study has found antibodies to the coronavirus in white-tailed deers in four U.S. states, but it is not intended to know whether these wild animals are carriers of the virus, Ohio-based daily newspaper The Blade reported on Tuesday.

The study recently completed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health inspection services determined that blood serum samples from white-tailed deer from the wild herd in Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York, and Illinois contained antibodies to the coronavirus.—Xinhua ■

California mandates Covid vaccines for all teachers

All teachers in California will have to be vaccinated against Covid-19 or submit to weekly virus tests, the state’s governor announced Wednesday, as authorities grapple with exploding infection rates.

“To give parents confidence that their children are safe as schools return to full, in-person learning, we are urging all school staff to get vaccinated,” Gavin Newsom said.

“Vaccinations are how we will end this pandemic. As a father, I look forward to the start of the school year and seeing all California kids back in the classroom.” Parent groups welcomed the move. “We want to do everything possible to protect our most vulnerable children and ensure that all children can return to school as safely as possible,” said California State PTA President Carol Green.—AFP ■

Few German firms shift global production back despite pandemic: survey

THE COVID-19 pandemic did not lead to large-scale relocation of production, as most German companies would stick with their global supply chains, according to a survey published on Tuesday.

The study, covering some 5,000 German companies, found that only one tenth of them plan to rely more on domestic supply chains in the future, said the Munich-based Ifo Institute for Economic Research in a statement.

Shifting production back to Germany or nearby European countries, also known as re-shoring or near-shoring, would lead to “a major loss of prosperity,” Ifo said. Relocation of this kind could cause Germany’s real economic output to fall by almost 10 percent, according to Lisandra Flach, director of the Ifo Center for International Economics.

However, the pandemic did prompt companies to adjust their supply chain strategy. Large com-



The COVID-19 pandemic did not lead to large-scale relocation of production, as most German companies would stick with their global supply chains, according to a survey published on Tuesday. **PHOTO: AFP**

panies are increasing the number of suppliers they use, while small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are planning to increase their warehousing capacity, the survey results showed.

Since SMEs often find it difficult to diversify supply chains, trade agreements that are “more SME-friendly would be of great help when it comes to making supply chains more robust,” said Andreas Baur, co-author of the study, in the statement. Among different sectors, 44 percent of the companies in manufacturing said they plan to change their procurement strategy, while the percentage for wholesale and retail are 35 percent and 27 percent, respectively. Only 10 percent of those in the services sector said they planned a different procurement strategy.—Xinhua ■

Japan firms to jointly develop facial recognition payment system



Facial recognition tech 'set for wider usage' at Tokyo Olympics.
PHOTO: KYODO

FOUR Japanese firms will jointly develop a payment system using facial recognition technology that will allow customers to make deposits and withdrawals at banks and shop at stores without presenting anything if they register their facial images in advance.

Banking group Resona Holdings Inc., Panasonic System Solutions Japan Co., a unit of electronics giant Panasonic Corp., credit card firm JCB Co. and Dai Nippon Printing Co. expect the system to be put into practical use in a wide range of fields, including checking in at

hotels and renting cars.

Panasonic has expertise in facial recognition technology and Dai Nippon Printing is strong in the area of identity verification using digital technology, while JCB is engaged in settlement services.

Resona will first use the planned system for access control at its headquarters by the end of March next year.

The banking group will test whether it is possible to use the system to make deposits, withdrawals and transfers as well as purchase investment trusts at some of the Resona Bank

branches without passbooks or cash cards in the fiscal year starting next April.

Resona hopes to expand use of the facial recognition-based payment system among regional banks and other companies that would find it difficult to develop such systems by themselves.

JCB, meanwhile, expects that by using the planned system, its card users who register their facial images in advance will be instantly identified and able to complete payments when they visit its member stores.—Kyodo ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Japan firms cautious on soaring raw material costs amid COVID-19

SURGING raw material costs have become another headache for Japanese companies emerging from the shock of the coronavirus pandemic.

Major manufacturers posted a solid recovery in the April-June quarter with exporters reaping the benefits of strong overseas demand in countries like the United States and China.

But a cautious mood is prevailing among major firms about the outlook, trying to gauge how higher prices for energy, metals and other resources will impact their earnings in the months ahead.

Economists say many Japanese companies are reluctant to pass on higher raw material costs to consumers by raising sales prices, especially when the country's economic recovery is fragile and uncertainty looms over the COVID-19 crisis.

"Japanese companies can absorb higher raw material costs to some extent when sales are growing," said Hideo Kumano, executive chief economist at Dai-ichi Life Research Institute. "The worry is that sales will struggle to rise toward the second half (of fiscal 2021) and therefore profits will face downward pressure."—Kyodo ■

U.S. Fed should start tapering asset purchases in October: official

The U.S. Federal Reserve should announce a plan for tapering its asset purchases in September and start tapering in October, a Fed official said on Wednesday.

"It would be my view that if the economy unfolds between now and our September meeting — if it unfolds the way I expect, I would be in favor of announcing a plan at the September meeting and beginning tapering in October," Dallas Federal Reserve Bank President Robert Kaplan said in an interview with CNBC.

"The reason I'm saying we ought to begin the tapering soon is I think these purchases are very well equipped to stimulate demand. But we don't have a demand problem in the economy," Kaplan said, adding tapering soon would give the Fed more flexibility to be patient on raising interest rates.

"What I don't want to do is keeping running at this speed for too long and then we're going to have to take more aggressive action down the road," he said.

Kansas City Federal Reserve Bank President Esther George also said earlier Wednesday that it's time to dial back the central bank's asset purchases as U.S. economic growth is likely to remain robust.

"With the recovery underway, a transition from extraordinary monetary policy accommodation to more neutral settings must follow," George said.—Xinhua ■

China's anti-sanctions law a new headache for banks in Hong Kong

CHINA'S plan to expand its anti-sanctions law into Hong Kong is a fresh compliance headache for international banks already caught up in deteriorating relations between Beijing and major western powers, analysts and insiders say.

As a finance hub with an in-

ternationally respected legal system, Hong Kong has long marketed itself as a reliable business gateway to authoritarian China.

But swirling geopolitical tensions — and China's crack-down on dissent in the city — have made that business environment less smooth the last two

years. And things could be about to get even more complicated. In June, China passed a broad anti-sanctions law in response to US and European punishments sparked by Beijing's treatment of Hong Kong and its Uighur Muslim minority in Xinjiang.—AFP ■



Finance hub Hong Kong has long marketed itself as a reliable business gateway to China. **PHOTO: AFP**

UK economy rebounds in second quarter as lockdown eases

BRITAIN'S economy rebounded 4.8 per cent in the second quarter as the government began relaxing lockdown restrictions, official data showed Thursday.

Gross domestic product had fallen 1.6 per cent in the first three months of the year, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) added in a statement. "Today's figures show that our economy is on the

mend showing strong signs of recovery," finance minister Rishi Sunak said in a separate statement. Total UK output however remains 4.4 per cent lower compared with before the coronavirus pandemic, or final quarter of 2019.

The ONS, providing also its latest monthly data, said the UK economy grew 1.0 per cent in June, before England lifted

nearly all lockdown restrictions from July.

Markets are looking closely at both growth and inflation data as nations emerge from lockdowns following vaccine rollouts.

Analysts warn that strong price rises could force central banks to hike interest rates sooner than expected, hindering the recovery.—AFP ■

US consumer inflation slows in July, but gas prices still rising

US consumer prices jumped again in July, as spiking gasoline prices continue to fuel inflation, prompting the White House on Wednesday to call for oil producers to open the taps to boost supply.

However, overall inflation came in at a slower pace than the prior month as some impacts of the pandemic shutdowns appeared to dissipate, according to government data released Wednesday.

President Joe Biden hailed the report saying it showed signs of progress

as prices begin to come down. The consumer price index (CPI) rose 0.5 percent last month, seasonally adjusted, after a 0.9 percent surge in June, the Labor Department said.

Energy prices collapsed in 2020 when the Covid-19 restrictions forced business and transport largely to shut down, but have surged recently as widespread vaccinations allowed the economy to begin to return to normal.

Gasoline prices jumped 2.4 per cent last month, and spiked 41.8 per

cent compared to July 2020, the report said.

Prices at the pump have become a political liability for Biden, and the White House called on the OPEC+ producers — the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies — to boost supply to ease the prices spikes.

“Higher gasoline costs, if left unchecked, risk harming the ongoing global recovery,” US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said in a statement Wednesday .—AFP



Spiking gasoline prices are driving US inflation and have become a political liability for President Joe Biden. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Samsung unveils new foldable smartphones as competition heats up

SAMSUNG unveiled two upgraded folding smartphones on Wednesday as the South Korean sector leader sought to head off rising competition from Chinese firms in a fast-evolving market.

The Galaxy Z Fold3 and Z Flip3 offer sleeker designs, improved water resistance and more durable screens are available for pre-ordering for delivery later this month in the United States, Europe and South Korea.

The new devices come with Samsung facing heightened competition from Chinese manufacturers including Xiaomi, which grabbed the number two position in the second quarter.



This undated photo released on August 11, 2021 courtesy of Samsung shows the Samsung Galaxy Z Flip3 5G smartphone and Galaxy Buds2. **PHOTO: SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS/AFP**

The Flip3, with a 6.7-inch display, will start at \$999, in line with other premium and flagship devices, and the 7.6-inch Fold3 at \$1,799. “Samsung is once again redefining the

possibilities with foldable smartphones that empower users with the flexibility and versatility needed for today’s fast-paced world,” said TM Roh, head of Samsung mobile.

“These devices equip consumers with technologies that unlock new ways to maximize and enjoy every moment with an ecosystem built on openness and innovation.”

The Flip3 aims to offer an affordable foldable, and the Fold3 aims to replace the large-screen devices and will include a retractable pen than can be used on the screen.

A recent survey by the research firm Canalsys showed Chinese electronics firm Xiaomi has overtaken Apple as the number two global smartphone maker in a market in turmoil due to a global chip shortage and consumers emerging from lockdowns.—AFP ■

Bank Holiday

ALL Banks will be closed on 16th to 20th August 2021, being public holiday under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

Central Bank of Myanmar

Myanma Port Authority “Notice of High Tide”

Exceptionally high spring from 20.05 feet to 20.67 feet high above the chart datum are expected to occur in Yangon River during the period of August 22nd to August 26th, 2021. Please be noted that it is not serious level of tide because the highest tide level have reached up to 22 feet above the chart datum in year 2014 and 2015, and this notice is normally issued whenever high tide of Yangon River is expected to reach over 20 feet high above the chart datum in order to take precautionary measures to the public living near river foreshore area of Yangon City.

ဆက်သွယ်မှု နာမည်ပြုရာ ဆက်သွယ်နိုင်ဖို့တတ်

09 454 237 515

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V B TRADER VOY.NO. (130S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V B TRADER VOY.NO. (130S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-8-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MERATUS GORONTALO VOY.NO. (131N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MERATUS GORONTALO VOY.NO. (131N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-8-2021** 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 SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MARAKI V.05B/2021

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MARAKI VOY. NO. (05B/2021)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-8-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **TMIT-2** 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: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S INFINITE PROSPERITY SHIPPING PTE LTD

NEWS
IN BRIEFBiden announces
virtual democracy
summit on
December 9-10

US President Joe Biden will convene a virtual "Summit for Democracy" on 9 December and 10 to which heads of state, civil society, philanthropy, and the private sector will be invited, the White House said Wednesday.

The summit "will galvanize commitments and initiatives across three principal themes: defending against authoritarianism, fighting corruption, and promoting respect for human rights," according to a White House statement.

A year later Biden plans to host them once more -- hopefully in person -- to "showcase progress made against their commitments."

He did not give details of the list of countries invited to the summit, which is being seen as an alternative to the G20 and a challenge to Beijing. —AFP ■

New date for
delayed Haiti vote
after president's
slaying

HAITI will hold presidential elections last scheduled for September on 7 November, officials said Wednesday, with the assassination of president Jovenel Moise still shrouded in mystery.

A hit squad burst into the presidential residence and shot Moise dead in the early hours of 7 July. His wife Martine was wounded but survived.

The provisional electoral council said polling day will include the first round of the presidential election, legislative elections that should have been held in 2019, and a constitutional referendum that Moise supported.

The referendum was twice postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

According to the new electoral calendar, the second round of presidential and legislative elections will be on 23 January, 2022 at the same time as municipal and local elections, which have also been delayed for years. —AFP ■

Japan public-private research group to
explore food production on Moon

Supplied image shows a plant factory to be built on the Moon.

PHOTO: SPACE FOODSPHERE/KYODO

JAPAN'S government and its space agency will join hands with food and tech companies to launch research on developing

a sustainable food source on the Moon, in an attempt to encourage the private sector to enter the space business, sources with

direct knowledge of the plan said.

The public-private joint study could start by March, spearheaded by Space Foodsphere, a Tokyo-based space food research group comprised of dozens of entities including the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, seasoning maker Ajinomoto Co. and system integrator NTT Data Corp., according to the sources.

Technology startups such as bio-venture Euglena Co. are also among the participants in the project to be funded by the government.

The basic research is designed to meet demand for a supply of food on the Moon for long-term lunar missions in-

volving a large number of crew members, which would make constant food shipments from Earth impractical.

Long-term travel to the Moon is becoming increasingly likely, with lunar exploration projects launched by the United States, China and other countries. Japan is involved in the NASA-led Artemis program, which outlines the exploration and utilization of resources in space including those on the Moon.

The public-private team will begin research at a domestic facility and then may move to a location similar to the lunar environment, such as Antarctica, according to the sources. —Kyodo ■

S. Korea court
dismisses wartime
labour suit against

A South Korean district court on Wednesday dismissed a damages lawsuit filed by five South Koreans against Mitsubishi Materials Corp. over wartime labour, saying the suit was launched after a statute of limitations on the civil case had expired.

The plaintiffs, who are the bereaved family of a person surnamed Lee, had demanded 100 million won (\$86,600) from the Japanese company, claiming that Lee was forced to work at

coal mines in Japan from 1941 to 1945.

But the Seoul Central District Court said in the day's ruling that by the time the suit was filed in 2017, the statute of limitations on their right to claims had expired.

The South Korean Supreme Court in a groundbreaking decision on May 24, 2012, said the right of individuals such as former wartime labourers to pursue compensation was not nullified



Plaintiffs speak to reporters on Jun 7 in Seoul after the Seoul Central District Court's dismissal of their wartime labour compensation lawsuit. PHOTO: KYODO/FILE

by a 1965 agreement between Japan and South Korea.

The district court held that the plaintiffs should have filed

the case within three years of the top court ruling, before the statute of limitations expired in May 2015. —Kyodo ■

Kyrgyzstan set to complete seizure of Canada-run gold mine



Centerra's subsidiary Kumtor Gold is the largest non-state employer and taxpayer in Kyrgyzstan. PHOTO: CENTERRA GOLD/AFP

KYRGYZSTAN said Wednesday that it had launched the process of kicking out its largest foreign investor, Canada's Centerra

Gold, over "large-scale corruption" at the impoverished country's largest gold mine.

Kyrgyz authorities earlier

this year seized control over the mine formerly operated by the company which accounted for 12.5 percent of Kyrgyzstan's

GDP in 2020 and has long fuelled political struggles in the ex-Soviet republic.

The country's security committee said the process of cancelling the agreement between the Kyrgyz government and Centerra had already begun, with an ongoing investigation finding "large-scale corruption throughout the entire period of cooperation" between the government and the companies operating the mine. Centerra, a company listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange, admitted in May that it was "no longer in control of the Kumtor Mine and can no longer ensure the safety of the mine's employees or operations". —AFP ■

Taliban move closer to capital after taking Ghazni city



The Taliban's capture of Ghazni city brings them just 150 kilometres (95 miles) from the Afghan capital of Kabul. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE Taliban have taken the strategic Afghan city of Ghazni just 150 kilometres (95 miles) from Kabul, a senior lawmaker

and the insurgents said Thursday.

The city — the 10th provincial capital to fall to the insurgents in a week — lies along the major Kabul-Kandahar highway, effectively serving as a gateway between the capital and militant strongholds in the south.

“The Taliban took control of the key areas of the city — the governor’s office, the police headquarters and the prison,” Nasir Ahmad Faqiri, head of the provincial council, told AFP.

He added that fighting continued in parts of the city but that the provincial capital was largely in the insurgents’ hands.

The Taliban also confirmed capturing the city, according to a statement posted by the insurgency’s spokesman on social media.

The Afghan conflict has escalated dramatically since May, when US-led forces began the final stage of a troop withdrawal due to end later this month following a 20-year occupation.

The loss of the Ghazni will likely pile more pressure on the country’s already overstretched airforce, needed to bolster Afghanistan’s scattered security forces who have increasingly been cut off from reinforcements by road.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Zambia votes in closely contested polls

ZAMBIANS were voting in nationwide elections on Thursday after a tense campaign dominated by economic woes and the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Sixteen presidential candidates are vying for the top job, but the frontrunners are incumbent Edgar Lungu, 64, and his long-time nemesis and business tycoon Hakainde Hichilema, 59, who are facing off at the polls for the third time.

Hichilema, who is running for a sixth time, is backed by an alliance of 10 parties.

Hundreds of people waited in long queues in the dark - to cast ballots at a secondary school in Lusaka’s Matero township. President Lungu was among the first people to vote in Lusaka.—AFP ■

New Zealand hopes to relax border controls next year

NEW ZEALAND’S Jacinda Ardern said Thursday that strict border controls would remain this year but she hoped to cautiously reopen to the rest of the world in 2022 while maintaining the country’s virus-free status.

She said the changes would be “careful and deliberate” to avoid allowing variants such as the highly contagious Delta strain into New Zealand, where there is no local transmission and domestic life is close to normal. “Rushing could see us in the situation many other countries are finding themselves in,” she said, citing an outbreak of the Delta variant in neighbouring Australia that has forced its two largest cities into renewed lockdown. Ardern won widespread praise for her decisive early response to the pan-



Under the changes, international arrivals will be assessed on vaccination status and whether they have travelled from a country deemed high, medium or low risk **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

demic, resulting in just 26 deaths in a population of five million. But New Zealand’s vaccine rollout has been less stellar, with under 20 percent of the population fully inoculated.—AFP ■

China issues white paper on human rights progress through moderate prosperity attainment

CHINA on Thursday issued a white paper to elaborate on how its realization of all-round moderate prosperity represents comprehensive progress in ensuring universal human rights in China, and a new contribution to the world’s human rights cause.

Titled “Moderate Prosperity in All Respects: Another Milestone Achieved in China’s Human Rights,” the white paper was released by the State Council Information Office.

The white paper said under the Communist Party of China (CPC) leadership, the Chinese people “completed the historic transformation from poverty to secure access to food and clothing, to a decent life, and finally to moderate prosperity.” Moderate prosperity in China, according to the document, is evident in all respects: a buoyant economy, political democracy, a flourishing culture, social equity, and healthy ecosystems; balanced development between urban and rural areas to the benefit of all the people; and high respect for and comprehensive protection of human rights.—AFP ■

Swiss voters may get last word on ‘inclusive’ writing

Ensuring gender neutrality in writing is a tricky business, and nowhere more so than in Switzerland which uses four languages and may soon put the issue to the popular vote.

Furious over inclusive writing making its way into officialdom, the media and schools, the Swiss branch of the Defend the French Language association is hoping to gather enough signatures to trigger a vote, as is possible under the country’s direct democracy system.

Wrestling with language is part of the national identity in Switzerland, where German, French and Italian are used -- plus a fourth official language: Romansh.

French and Italian nouns have either a masculine or feminine gender; while German nouns have a masculine, feminine or neutral gender. In French, Italian and German grammar, the masculine takes precedence over the feminine in situations describing both men and women — a rule that activists for gender equality say instils the idea that men are superior to women.

As a result, there has been a rapidly spreading trend of filling words up with dots and stars to include their masculine, feminine and sometimes non-binary forms all in one go. But critics say this is going too far, butchering the written language and creating an unreadable mess.



Wrestling with language is part of the national identity in Switzerland, where German, French and Italian are used -- plus a fourth official language: **PHOTO: ROMANSH./AFP/FILE**

Since the 1990s, the Swiss government has tried to avoid the problem by leaning towards neutral terminology, where possible, in the three main languages.—AFP ■

Dave Leduc to conduct lethwei training in Mexico next month

UNDEFEATED 6-times Myanma Lethwei World Champion, Dave Leduc will kick start intensive lethwei training in Mexico in September, said Dave Leduc who is a Professional Bareknuckle (Lethwei) Fighter, representing Myanmar and promoting the dignity of Myanma Lethwei in various countries.

"I will be teaching my Lethwei seminar for the first time ever in Mexico: two Days—September 18th and 19th in Mexico City. I'm excited to train with my Mexican Lethwei army!"

Upon the welcoming speech, the Mexican Mixed Artrial Arts officials said, "For the first time in history Dave will travel to Mexico to teach a two-day seminar on Lethwei kickboxing training and practice methods and preparation.

"We will have a great event in an atmosphere of fraternity between colleagues and lovers of contact sports to learn how he trains and what are his techniques and tips that



Lethwei star Dave Leduc who is currently a World Lethwei Champion. **PHOTO: DAVE LEDUC'S FACEBOOK PAGE**

we can take advantage of every day in our personal practice.

"The seminar will be aimed at both beginners and martial arts professionals who wish to expand their repertoire of training

methods.

"It's official! Dave Leduc is coming to Mexico and will be teaching his Lethwei seminar for the first time ever in the country!" the Mexican MMA officials added.—GNLM

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.

La Liga returns under a financial cloud and without Messi

La Liga, just three years ago the undisputed monarch of European football, returns for a new season on Friday after a traumatic summer that ended with its crown jewel being given away. The free transfer of Lionel Messi to Paris Saint-Germain on Tuesday drove home the financial turmoil that is eroding the power of Spanish football.

While Messi is the biggest star to leave, and his former club Barcelona have been particularly cavalier in racking up debts estimated at 1.2bn euros, Spanish football has money worries

The pandemic has cost the top-flight clubs some 2bn euros (1.4bn dollars)

and the desperation is showing. The league is trying to enforce a tough salary cap, while searching for funds. Its assembly on Thursday will vote on the sale of 10 per cent of commercial rights for 50 years to private equity firm CVC in exchange for 2.7 billion euros. Real Madrid and Barcelona are fighting the deal saying it is selling their futures. Yet the same two clubs are refusing to give up hope of a giant, and potentially toxic, carrot of their own, even though nine of the other Super League clubs have withdrawn and the source of the \$4bn loot, bankers JP Morgan Chase, have apologised to fans. —AFP ■

Premier League braced for four-way title race

THE Premier League's giants have again brushed off the economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic ahead of the start of the new season on Friday with a four-team battle expected for the title.

Reigning champions Manchester City have broken the English top flight transfer record by splashing £100 million (\$138 million) on Jack Grealish.

However, European champions Chelsea showed they were capable of beating City three times towards the end of last season and are not alone in harbouring ambitions of snatching the Premier League title away from Pep Guardiola's men.

Manchester United have also spent over £100 million on Jadon Sancho



Premier League champions Manchester City. **PHOTO: POOL/AFP**

and Raphael Varane, while Liverpool look refreshed after an injury-ravaged 2020/2021 season.

AFP Sport looks at the four leading contenders for the title:

Manchester City

Winning a third Premier League title in four seasons and lifting yet another League Cup was not enough to sate Guardiola's appetite for success.

Fuelled by the frustration of City's limp Champions League final defeat against Chelsea, Guardiola has no intention of resting on his laurels. —AFP ■