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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.

State Administration Council Chairman Provisional Government of Myanmar Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends meeting No 4/2021 of Security, Stability and Peace, and Rule of Law Committee



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 delivers the address at the meeting No 4/2021 of Security, Stability and Peace and the Rule of Law Committee in Nay Pyi Taw on 31 August 2021.

THE Security, Stability and Peace, and Rule of Law Committee of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar held meeting No 4/2021 at the Office of the State Administration Council Chairman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, with an address by Chairman of the Committee 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.

In his opening speech, the Senior General explained the situation of the Security, Stability and Peace, and Rule of Law Committee in taking the important measures of the State, systematic security management at border trade camps, and full management of the government as these camps are located in the Myanmar territory, systematic utilization of forest lands, no need to use the cultivable lands for other purposes, long term plans for urban and rural man-

agement, necessary measures for ensuring security, peace and stability and the rule of law for the State, peace and stability and development of the country and socio-economic improvement of the people in detail.

Meeting participant Council members, Union ministers, deputy ministers and state/regional chief ministers reported on respective sectors, and measures of security, peace and stability and the rule of law. The Senior General gave necessary clarifi-

cations.

The meeting came to an end with the concluding remark of the Senior General.

Also present at the meeting were members of the State Administration Council Admiral Tin Aung San, General Maung Maung Kyaw, Mahn Nyein Maung, Jeng Phang Naw Taung and Lt-Gen Soe Htut, Chief Justice of the Union U Htun Htun Oo, Union ministers Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung, U Ko Ko, U Tin Htut Oo, U Khin

Maung Yi, U Khin Yi, U Myint Kyaing, Dr Pwint San, Dr Thet Khaing Win, U Shwe Lay, Dr Thet Thet Khine, Dr Daw Thida Oo and deputy ministers together with Chin State Chief Minister U Ngun Hsan Aung, Taninthayi Region Chief Minister U Myat Ko, Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Maung Ko, Rakhine State Chief Minister Dr Aung Kyaw Min and Shan State Chief Minister Dr Kyaw Tun who joined the meeting via videoconferencing. — MNA

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

9th Waning of Wagaung 1383 ME
31 August 2021

- The State Administration Council issued Notification No 255/2021 dated 30-8-2021 to set the successive public holidays from 1 to 10 September 2021.
- To effectively prevent the spread of COVID-19 during these public holidays, the people must obey the following rules: -
 - Reside at homes or dormitories, and not to travel at all except for duty and funeral services;
 - Manage to open the Central Bank of Myanmar and its subsidiary government banks and private banks as usual;
 - Not to decline the productivity, the factories and industries must operate under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour, Nay Pyi Taw Council and region/state governments in line with the COVID-19 health rules of the Ministry of Health;
 - To adopt the work-from-home system or other proper methods for important office work of the relevant departments;
 - To open shops on sales of basic essential things like fuel, drinking water, meat, fish and foodstuffs;
 - To manage the opening of pharmacy and medical shops and medical companies;
 - To sell foodstuffs at restaurants in a take-away system;
 - To continue healthcare services (government hospitals/private hospitals and clinics);
 - To wear protective gears, including masks, if they go outside;
 - To operate the land, sea and aviation services under the supervision of the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Nay Pyi Taw Council and region/state governments;
 - To comply with the SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) of trucks to facilitate the flow of goods;
 - To continue opening of cargo ports;
 - To follow the COVID-19 health rules of the Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment for COVID-19 and the Ministry of Health without fail.
- Action will be taken against those who fail to abide by the above-mentioned orders under the existing laws.

Announcement on Extension of the
Precautionary Restriction Measures
Relating to Control of the COVID-19 Pan-
demic until 30 September 2021

- With a view to the further strengthening of measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has issued the following announcements regarding temporary entry re-strictions for visitors from all countries. All those restrictions were extended until 31 August 2021 by the Ministry's announcement dated 30 July 2021.
 - Announcement dated 15 March 2020 regarding precautionary measures for all travellers visiting Myanmar;
 - Announcement dated 20 March 2020 regarding additional precautionary measures for travellers visiting Myanmar and temporary suspension of issuance of visa on Arrival and e-visa;
 - Announcement dated 24 March 2020 regarding additional precautionary measures for travellers from all countries visiting Myanmar;
 - Announcement dated 28 March 2020 regarding temporary suspension of all types of visas (including social visit visas) and visa exemption services.
- In order to continue its effective response measures to protect the population of the country from the risks of importation and spread of the COVID-19, the Provisional Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has decided to extend the afore-mentioned entry restriction measures until 30 September 2021.
- In case of urgent official missions or compelling reasons, foreign nationals, including diplomats and United Nations officials, who wish to travel to Myanmar by available relief or special flights, may contact the nearest Myanmar Mission for possible exception with regard to certain visa restrictions. However, all visitors must abide by existing directives issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports relating to the prevention and control of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nay Pyi Taw
Dated. 31 August 2021

Public Announcement

31 August 2021

- DURING the public holidays from 1.9.2021 to 10.9.2021, the border trade posts will not be closed from their duties and will be allowed to import and export as usual, and import of anti-COVID-19 equipment and medical aids will be given priority as per the SOPs coordinated with the relevant departments.
- On these days, it is announced that the Export and Import Branch of the Department of Trade (Head Office) and the Export and Import Office (Yangon) will allow online export and import licence applications as usual during office hours.

Ministry of Commerce

Public Notification

31 August 2021

DURING the period from 1 to 10 September, which has been extended as public holidays, matters related to investment and company registration submitted to the Myanmar Investment Commission will be accepted at the Head Office of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) located at No. (1), Thitsar Road, Yankin Township during office hours.

Matters related to departmental coordination for investment will be accepted at the One-Stop Service-OSS office of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (Yangon Region branch) located at No. (49), Sein Lae May street, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road, Yankin Township during office hours.

Directorate of Investment and Company Administration

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanmar Alinn, the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit www.moi.gov.mm/mal, www.moi.gov.mm/km, www.moi.gov.mm/nlm and www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper.

Infection rate of COVID-19 in the third wave has declined to some extent

The infection rate of COVID-19 in the third wave has declined to some extent thanks to the utmost efforts of the government and systematic restrictions with examining the contact persons and managing the stay-at-home programme. The government set an aim to decline a half down of infection rate. It was found that the declining rate had registered by 24.17 per cent since 3,180 patients tested positive on 1 August and a total of 2,173 patients tested positive out of 8,991 on 22 August. The good supervision and well control of the authorities concerned as well as the collaborative efforts of the people could help drop the infection rate.

(Excerpt from the speech to the 9th coordination meeting on COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities made by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of Myanmar Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 23-8-2021)

Union Information Minister inspects Photolitho Printing Press, meets Myanmar Press Council

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn visited the Photolitho Printing Press on Ngar Htat Kyee Pagoda Road in Bahan Township of Yangon yesterday.

First, the Union Minister inspected the Cityline machines, the printing process of Oliver, storage of raw materials and CTP room. Then, he met the officials of the printing and Director-General of Printing and Publishing Department (PPD) U Win Kyaw Aung reported on the work plans of the press.

The Union Minister said it should seek ways to increase the productivity and income of the State. It also should conduct printing processes carefully and keep the machines systematically.

He also talked about the important role of the ministry

despite changing political landscapes of the country, creation of proper activities full of responsibilities and accountabilities, creative work programmes, innovative services for the different ranks and fields and wider public recognition. He then stressed the need to ensure the safety of the factory, especially for fire.

The Union Minister also held a meeting with the Chairman of Myanmar Press Council and other officials at the Central press in Theinbyu Road at the afternoon.

During the meeting, the Union Minister highlighted the directives of the Prime Minister of the State regarding the artistes from literature, movie, theatrical and music fields, duties of media to inform the public with the correct ways as most of the youths lead to wrong ways due to the unscrupulous persons and un-



MoI Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn views around the Photolitho Printing Press in Yangon on 31 August 2021.

ethical media outlets.

He also called for the participation of media council members for their experiences and skills in implementing the five-point

roadmap and nine objectives of the Provisional Government of Myanmar and in creating a peaceful and pleasant community.

Then, the attendees to the meeting, including Yangon Region Advocate-General U Htay Aung, participated in the discussion. — MNA

Union Election Commission probes into political parties



THE Union Election Commission looked into the political parties whether they conducted systematically for the memberships of the parties, party funds and property, savings, maintaining, usage, audition and liquidation and parties' procedures according to the Union Election Law Section 10 (1) "supervising, causing

The Union Solidarity and Development Party is under probe by the UEC.

to supervise and guiding the political parties to carry out in accord with the law".

The UEC inspected USDP at the Union Territory election subcommission office in Ottarathiri Township and Union Betterment Party (UBP) at Ottara District election subcommission office starting 31 August.

The inspection team included officials of UEC, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Finance and Union Auditor-General Office. — MNA

3,399 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 31 August, total figure rises to 399,282

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 399,282 after 3,399 new cases were reported on 31 August 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 351,372 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 15,389 after 102 died.—MNA

Foundation work of Thanlwin Bridge (Takaw) in Kunhing completed

THE Department of Bridge of the Ministry of Construction is carrying out the construction of Thanlwin Bridge (Takaw) on the Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung-Tachilek road, in Kunhing Township, Loilem District, Shan State (South) and now the foundation work has been completed.

The construction of the new bridge’s substructure is scheduled to be completed by the end of April 2022, according to Deputy Director U Thant Zin who is in charge of the bridge construction project, which is estimated to cost K26,350 million.

The bridge will be 351 metres long (1,151.631 feet), 39.4 feet wide (27 feet and 10 inches wide for carriageway, 5 feet and 9 inches wide for a sidewalk on each side) with a load capacity of 75 tonnes, and is made of a steel truss with reinforced concrete floor.

The new Thanlwin River-Crossing Bridge, Thanlwin Bridge (Takaw), is being built about 70 feet apart from the old Thanlwin Bridge (Takaw) which was built in 1965 by Chinese and Myanmar engineers to mark the Myanmar-China Friendship. The construction took 9 years from 1965 to 1974.

The 780-foot-long old bridge is mainly connected with Shan State (South) and Shan State (East) on Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung-Tachilek Road, which is vital to access to Laos, Thailand and China through Kengtung and Tachilek from the central part of Myanmar. As the road is being used to transport goods, the Ministry of Construction has upgraded the bridges on the road to a load capacity of 60 tonnes. The new Thanlwin Bridge (Takaw) project was launched



The bridge will be 351 metres long (1,151.631 feet), 39.4 feet wide (27 feet 10 inches wide for carriageway, 5 feet 9 inches wide for a sidewalk on each side) with a load capacity of 75 tonnes, and is made of a steel truss with reinforced concrete floor.

since April 2018, as the load capacity of the 45-year-old bridge has been reduced to 24 tonnes due to its deterioration.

The new bridge is expected

to be completed by the end of September 2023, and the Meiktila-Taunggyi-Kengtung-Tachilek road will also be a key road for the country’s market economy

as export-import products will be transported through the road and the bridge. – Pwint Thitsar/ GNLM

Oxygen plant construction in Homalin completed 30%

THE construction of oxygen plant was completed 30 per cent near Department of progress of Border Areas and National Races, in Homalin township, in Hkamti district, Sagaing region, said U Thein Zaw, chairman of Homalin Township Administration Body.

The construction of the oxygen plant was started on 31 July 2021 and the project has been completed 30 per cent so far.

“The construction was started on 31 July. The foundation of the project is finished. The concrete pillars are erected. Earlier, we expected that the construction project will take only one month. But the project wasn’t completed due to the unexpected rain. Hopefully, the pro-

ject will be finished on 15 September,” said U Thein Zaw.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be about K25 or K40 million. The machines, which will be able to produce about 40 40-litre oxygen cylinders, will cost K68 million.

“Homalin township currently receives only 12 oxygen cylinders a day. Sometimes, the township could produce the 20 oxygen cylinders by running day and night due to the high demand for oxygen in town” he added.

Oxygen is the key to saving lives. Some people have died because they had to struggle to breathe and no oxygen was available.

The construction of the oxygen plant was led by the

Sayadaw from Homalin Township. Then, the oxygen plant implementation committee was formed together with the township administration, relevant departments and residents.

“People also donated cash to establishment of the oxygen plants in Homalin township. Upon completion of the project, it can fulfil the oxygen requirement in the township. Now, we have to bring the oxygen from Pauk township due to the high demand for oxygen in town,” said U Thein Zaw.

Homalin township has reported a total of 1,632 cases with 80 deaths and 1,501 recoveries as of 28 August 2021. — Lulay/GNLM

Central Body for Suppression of Trafficking in Persons



Myanmar Anti-Trafficking in Persons Day

13th September



2021 Anti-Trafficking Persons in Days' Objectives

- ❖ To mobilize the participation of all citizens in combating human trafficking as a national duty;
- ❖ To have the public instilled with awareness about and knowledge of trafficking in persons;
- ❖ To protect and care trafficked victims with empathy; and
- ❖ To strengthen cooperation and coordination among all counter trafficking stakeholders government agencies, civil society organizations, UN agencies, international organizations and general public.



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

MoC allows import process of anti-COVID-19 devices, medical aids daily

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

On 31 August (yesterday), anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products, including oxygen plants and concentrators were imported by 10 companies and transported with the use of 17 vehicles, including two bowsters.

A total of 40 tonnes of oxygen (liquid) carried by two bowsters, three tonnes of liquid oxygen, 2,322 empty oxygen cylinders, 11 oxygen plants, one oxygen generator, 353 oxygen concentrators, 100 sets of COVID-19 test kits, eight tonnes of gloves, and 100 tonnes of masks were imported via Muse, Chinshwehaw, Myawady and Hteekhee border



Anti-COVID devices and medical supplies are imported daily through land borders.



trade posts and Yangon International Airport.

Two vehicles carrying liquid oxygen plus eight oxygen plants were transported to Yangon and one oxygen plant each were transported to Magway, Mawlamyine and Dedaye.

For the quick and easy im-

port of anti-COVID-19 medical products and equipment, including liquid oxygen, oxygen gas, and oxygen concentrators, the Ministry of Commerce will allow regular import activities at border trade camps from 1 to 10 September that is designated as public holidays.

Relevant departmental officials are cooperating to facilitate and expedite the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), including online registration for the import process during the long public holidays.

It is reported that the Ministry of Commerce is coordinating

with relevant departments, facilitating the importation of essential medical supplies required in prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19, as well as contact persons for inquiries can be reached through the Ministry's Website — www.commerce.gov.mm. — MNA



The lorries carrying oxygen tanks and anti-Covid equipment seen transporting them to the needed areas.

Statement called for fight against terrorism, for rewarding whistle-blowers, informants

1. Terrorist groups, including the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw-CRPH, National Union Government-NUG and the People's Defence Forces-PDF groups, which were formed under various names, are committing terrorist acts every day to disrupt the government administrative machinery to prevent it from implementing the five-point roadmap of the State Administration Council and to gain the support of the people by intimidating them.
2. As acts of violence are threatening the social security of the people and raising concerns, as well as degrading the dignity of the country and the people, it is essential for the people to work together to eradicate it.
3. Not only terrorists who involve in the terrorist acts personally, but also those who commit one of the following acts will be considered as terrorists and will be taken action under the Anti-Terrorism Law.
 - (a) Urging people to take part in terrorist activities, involved in recruitment, propaganda and mobilization.
 - (b) Hiding and letting a member of the terrorist group in the property in order to prevent them from being arrested.
 - (c) Allowing a terrorist or a member of a terrorist organization to use a building or a place to gather, to hold a meeting, to conduct terrorist training courses, as well as arranging transportation.
 - (d) Providing financial support, collecting, accepting, transferring money, and participating in instructing to do so.
4. Under the Counter-Terrorism Act, the money and property of the accused will be confiscated and if convicted, it will be confiscated as a State treasury.
5. As information is crucial in fighting against terrorism, people are requested to inform respective police stations or security organizations about terrorists and terrorist organizations and social media users who spread fake news; Responsible citizens who report such information will be provided as follows: -
 - (a) Informant can report without mentioning name and address.
 - (b) Informant will be kept strictly confidential and will not be questioned or witnessing.
 - (c) Informant and related persons will be provided with security.
 - (d) Depending on the accuracy of the information, the informant and whistle-blower will be rewarded with a disclosed amount of money.
6. Therefore, in order for the people to have full security in their social life and to be free from fear, please identify members of any terrorist group around them.

Central Committee on Counter Terrorism

The Sixth Month of the State Administration Council

By Kanaung

CONTINUED FROM
YESTERDAY

From 12 to 31 July, when cases of the deadly delta variant of COVID-19 surged nationwide, Myanmar imported 1,476 tonnes of liquid oxygen, 114 tonnes of oxygen cylinders, 69,146 tonnes of home oxygen concentrators, 322,878 test kits, 1,104 tonnes of masks, eight oxygen plants, 11 oxygen generators and four oxygen refilling machines.

Tatmadaw hospitals and temporary emergency hospitals were able to provide healthcare services to a total of 276,181 outpatients and 80,718 inpatients from 5 February to 31 July. In addition, the Tatmadaw medical corps helped out by providing services in public hospitals that had been undermined by a shortage of staff due to doctors and nurses leaving their patients to join the civil disobedience movement.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and the Ministry of Home Affairs coordinated with volunteers and charitable organi-



Officials from Myanmar and Laos held a meeting at Wanbon Port in Mongphone (A) Village-Tract, Tachileik Township, Shan State (East) on 30 July and 1 August discussed the repatriation process for over 400 Myanmar migrant workers who are facing difficulties in Laos.

zations to prevent and control the resurgence of disease in regions and states. The COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee urged



The inoculation programme for the above 65-year-old elders is underway in Amarapura Township.



An inmate is seen receiving health condition test before inoculation.

and mobilized the public to donate essential COVID-19 devices, medicines and foods directly to hospitals, quarantine centres and COVID-19 treatment centres in need.

All schools were closed from 9 to 23 July and later extended until 8 August, as the COVID-19 delta variant cases continued rising precipitously. In addition, the State Administration Council declared public holidays from 17 July to 1 August, in conjunction with public holidays, and enforced stay-at-home orders to control disease transmission. Officials from the relevant ministries are loosening regulations and striving to make sure that imports of essential medical supplies go smoothly even on public holidays, at airports, seaports and border trade towns such as Myawady, Tachileik and Chinshwehaw.

To meet the needs for medical oxygen, two oxygen plants under the Myanmar Economic Corporation have been producing 149,000 cubic feet of oxygen each day, while Myaung Tagar oxygen plant

has been producing 12,000 cubic feet of oxygen each day. As well, the 1,000-bed hospital, 300-bed hospital and 300-bed Tatmadaw Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Children's Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw have been installed oxygen plants.

Since 13 July, the Ministry of Health has been strengthening the healthcare system through the recruitment of nurses and doctors on a contract basis in hospitals and COVID-19 treatment centres. COVID-19 call centres have been set up to receive calls from the public from 8 am to 9 pm every day. The government has licensed reputable private hospitals and laboratories for COVID-19 diagnostics so that the public will have a wider range of options.

The National Strategic Investment Corporation (NSIC) bought a shipment of 30,000 Remdesivir, a drug used for the treatment of COVID-19 worth K3 billion from India and donated them to the people of Myanmar through the State Administration Council. The shipment arrived on 20 July.

Additionally, in July, Myanmar received a total of three million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, comprising two million doses of Sinopharm donated by the People's Republic of China and one million doses of Sinovac purchased by Myanmar. Since 26 July, vaccines were administered to priority groups, including senior citizens, frontline health workers, monks and prison inmates.

Public information and media developments

The following announcement is placed regularly in national newspapers.

With the exception of those who had committed murder and deliberate destruction, citizens in hiding or on the run or are stranded in other places for various reasons are invited by the State Administration Council to return home. In return, the authorities will exercise leniency, including the dropping of charges and the closure and withdrawal of their cases under the law.

The State Administration Council's Information Team

held its seventh press conference on 12 July 2021. Head of the Information Team Major-General Zaw Min Tun and Member of the Union Election Commission U Khin Maung Oo responded to the questions raised by the media on the points presented, such as the COVID-19 control plans, the testimony of criminals arrested for the terrorist attacks and the latest findings of the Union Election Commission. Also in July, numerous media inquiries to the press release team were continually answered by telephone to ensure accurate information for the public.

Snapshots of other sectors
Events of note in July were as follows:

- On 13 July, the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee held its Eighth Plenary Meeting, which was attended by 47 State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee members in Yangon, who discussed religious affairs.
- The Myanmar Women’s Day event was held on 3 July, and the State Administration Council Chairman sent a video message to the event urging all to work together to empower Myanmar women to secure the future of new generations.
- On 19 July, the 74th Martyrs Day Ceremony was held and attended by military and departmental officials, to pay tribute to the fallen martyrs including General Aung San. The ceremony was held in accordance with COVID-19 regulations.



The MoH Union Minister is receiving Remdesivir for the treatment of COVID-19 from the donor National Strategic Investment Corporation Co. Ltd (NSIC) at Nay Pyi Taw Airport on 20 July 2021.

- Officials from Myanmar and Laos discussed the repatriation of Myanmar migrant workers stranded in Laos and agreed on their repatriation on July 30 and August 1.
- The 99th International Cooperative Day was celebrated on 3 July. There are a total of about 40,000 cooperative societies comprising 4.2 million members. Plans are underway to reform, improve and modernize the production, trading, and service industries.
- The Union Minister for Science and Technology inspected the Research and Innovation Department in Yangon on 6 July, and spoke about the need for enhancing research activities, and promoting technology transfer and cooperation related to renewable energy.
- It was announced that previously unregistered motorcycles must register within 30 days starting from 7 July under the One-Stop Services plan. The measure is expected to reduce crimes committed by motorcycle riders and improve transportation and safety for the law-abiding public.
- Displaced persons in the respective regions and states are being provided with household census and citizenship by the Pan Khin project.
- In the industrial sector, a USD 5 million investment in garment manufacturing based on the CMP (Cutting, Making, and Packing) system was launched on 7 July. This is expected to create more than 800 local jobs. In addition, the Yangon Region Investment Committee has given its decision on submissions of 14 companies.
- Myanma Insurance has made it possible to pay online for various types of insurance since 8 July.
- The Internal Revenue Department is also providing online services for the quarterly commercial tax return and quarterly special commodity tax.
- A workshop on rehabilitation of the industrial sector was held at the Ministry of Industry on 9 July to identify ways to reform the

- operations of suspended state-owned factories.
- The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism is coordinating plans for tourism development, and licensing and management issues, with a view to promoting safe travelling in the “new normal” situation.
- Efforts are being made to expand the use of high-quality agricultural equipment and to promote agro-technology.
- During the third wave of COVID-19 in the country, the Ministry of Transport and Communications is undertaking public transportation services via rail, air and road in accordance with the health guidelines.
- The rainy season has triggered floods and assistance is being provided to flood victims in the affected regions. People are urged to contact the Disaster Management Department in various areas to seek assistance.

Overall, the sixth month of the State Administration Council has centred on efforts to respond to the COVID-19 emergency. Despite the many challenges, the State Administration Council is continuing to work hard to control the pandemic while promoting measures to ensure stability and security and accelerate the country’s return to normalcy as soon as possible. Clearly, these efforts are being undertaken in the best interests of the people.



Air China carrying the third batch of 2 million vaccines arrives, and cargoes are seen at Yangon International Airport on 24 July 2021.

Don't stop but march forward to fight COVID-19

THE Union government and authorities of regions and states are joining hands with the people in battling the COVID-19 to decline a half down of infection rate against this August.

The infection rate of COVID-19 accounted for 40.82 per cent on 23 July and 40.07 per cent on 25 July. It was the first stage to reduce the infection rate in August. On 29 August, 3,166 persons of 29,127 persons were approved as the positive patients in medical examination, accounting for just 10.87 per cent. It was satisfactory for plunging the infection rate into less than 20 per cent that the government expected. Such success was based on the

Since early August this year, the government set an aim to ensure a half down of COVID-19 infection rate in August. In the coming months, the country should strive for applying the united tripartite strength of health personnel, local people and authorities in fighting against COVID-19 under the health restrictions.

ees in order to plunge the infection rate of COVID-19 in border areas as well as the whole country.

For the time being, efforts are being made to prevent and control the spreading of variant COVID-19 virus not only in border areas but also in regions and states including Nay Pyi Taw Council Area by systematically vaccinating the local people.

Since early August this year, the government set an aim to ensure a half down of COVID-19 infection rate in August. In the coming months, the country should strive for applying the united tripartite strength of health personnel, local people and authorities in fighting against COVID-19 under the health restrictions.

harmonious cooperation of the people and management of organizations.

To be able to reduce the infection rate of the pandemic, the government contacted the friendship countries as well as neighbouring countries for buying the anti-COVID-19 vaccines and medical equipment to vaccinate the people in time.

Moreover, the already arrived anti-COVID-19 are distributed to regions and states by military aircraft and vehicles without delay. In this regard, the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Ministry of Defence was ordered to transport the anti-COVID-19 devices and accessories to all regions and states as part of the timely distribution.

Local ethnic people from Kachin, Shan, Kayah and Mon states and Taninthayi Region working in China, Lao and Thailand returned home but they did not inform the local authorities about their return to the home via border gates. After arriving at home, they suffered from the impacts of COVID-19. That is why officials at different levels need to provide necessary medical examinations and protection for those return-

By Shoon Lei Win

IT is undeniable that the coronavirus disease has turned the world into a chaotic place, which infected nearly 198 million people and killed more than 4 million. The disposable face masks, gloves, hand sanitizer bottles and other personal protective equipment (PPE) have become essential to protect ourselves and communities from virus transmission. With the escalating need to contain the spread of the virus, the use of these productive tools has mounted and so does the increase of waste production. Experts estimated that every month, we are using and disposing of roughly 129 billion face masks and 65 billion gloves globally. And every minute, we are throwing away 3 million face masks.

To add fuel to the flame, strict lockdowns and banning consumers from dining in at restaurants have pushed consumers to order meals and groceries online



People walk in a street in Tokyo. According to environmentalists, Japanese coasts and waters have witnessed an apparent increase in the number of disposable masks recently. PHOTO: AFP

resulting in a surge of disposable packaging. Our reliance on food-delivery services and online shopping platforms has become

a new normal for all of us. We are buying more plastic wrapped items because we are scared of getting infected. Plastics are light

and easily thrown away.

Plastic pollution has already been threatening our planet before the outbreak of the pandemic.

Globally, we are producing over 380 million tonnes of plastic every year and this has been exacerbated by the wake of COVID-19. We are using plastic bags, food containers, bottles and other clinical materials 50% more than usual. Clinical waste like face masks and gloves are not recyclable in the most municipal system. These plastics will remain in the environment for up to 450 years until they turn into invisible microplastics.

Inevitably, a lot of medical and plastic waste is ending up in roads, landfills, choking our waterways, polluting our oceans and killing marine life. According to the estimation of Ocean Asia, as many as 1.56 billion face masks have entered the oceans in the year 2020. But such predictions will be further aggravated by the excessive use and consumption of single-use plastics including medical plastics and masks.

Take a walk, and you will see a face mask on the ground. No one wants to touch which has

covered someone's potentially virus-laden breath. It will stand still until it is blown away. Used face masks can be hazardous and easily transmit the virus to garbage collectors, if not dispose of with utmost care. Thus, individual needs to change their habits and discard with proper packaging. Without question, lockdowns and strict quarantine measures have also weakened the recycling activities and waste management regulations. Clearly, we cannot reduce plastic use immediately, but we can take our own clean and reusable food containers to the restaurant. Moreover, washable cloth masks and regular handwashing with soap and water are more effective than plastic gloves and face masks.

So, to conclude, we must not turn the blind eye to plastic pollution. Each and every one of us must act now to create a healthier and more beautiful planet for all.

■ ■ ■

Glaxo, SK bioscience start final trial of Covid jab

The vaccine is facing a Phase 3 clinical trial to assess its "safety and immunogenicity" when compared with AstraZeneca's Covid vaccine.

BRITISH drugs giant GlaxoSmithKline and South Korean peer SK bioscience have begun final stage trials of a Covid-19 jab after positive early results, they announced Tuesday.

The vaccine is facing a Phase 3 clinical trial to assess its "safety and immunogenicity" when compared with AstraZeneca's Covid vaccine, the two companies said in a joint statement.

GSK is still trailing in the wake of Anglo-Swedish rival AstraZeneca, which rapidly developed a successful jab alongside Oxford University despite having little prior experience in vaccine development.

The new jab

The new jab combines SK bioscience's Covid vaccine candidate GBP510 with Glaxo's pandemic adjuvant that bolsters the immune response.

"The advance to Phase 3 study follows positive interim Phase 1/2 data which showed

that all participants who received the adjuvanted vaccine candidate developed strong neutralizing antibody responses," the pair said Tuesday.

Those responses demonstrated a rate of seroconversion — or production of antibodies — of 100 per cent, they added.

No safety concerns have so far been identified in the study.

The vaccine is then expected to be supplied via COVAX — the distributor backed by the World Health Organization and the Gavi vaccine alliance — subject to positive results and regulatory approvals.

"While many countries have made good progress with vaccination, there remains a need for accessible and affordable COVID-19 vaccines to ensure equitable access and to protect people across the world," said GSK chief global health officer Thomas Breuer.

"We are pleased to contribute with GSK's pandemic adjuvant and to be working with SK to

deliver the vaccine at scale via COVAX if it is approved."

Results from the Phase 3 trial, which will enrol 4,000 participants from various nations, are expected in the first half of next year.

The first Phase 3 study

This will be the first Phase 3 study to compare outcomes of two different Covid-19 vaccine candidates.

SK has received funding from the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Initiative and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to help it develop a low-cost jab.

"Taking this important step towards overcoming the global pandemic situation, SK and GSK will bring our technical expertise together for the development of an adjuvanted protein-based vaccine candidate, GBP510," noted SK chief executive Jaeyong Ahn.

Glaxo is also working with French pharmaceutical giant Sanofi on final Phase 3 tests of a different Covid vaccine, which



An employee at the factory of British pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline in Wavre on 8 February 2021, where the Covid-19 vaccine will be produced. PHOTO: AFP / KENZO TRIBOUILLARD

they hope to launch by the end of this year.

Phase 2 trials of that jab have already showed a strong immune response after a single shot in

participants who had previously contracted the coronavirus.

GSK is also working on another two separate vaccine projects, one with Canada's Medica-

go and another with Germany's CureVac.

SOURCE: AFP

■ ■ ■



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 31 August 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 1 September 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Magway Regions and Kachin, (Northern and Eastern)Shan, Kayah States and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Magway, Taninthayi Regions and Rakhine, Kayin, Mon States. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Seas will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of rain in Taninthayi Region and Kayin, Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 September 2021: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 September 2021: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 September 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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Border trade tops nearly \$8.8 bln this FY

TRADE between Myanmar and its four neighbouring countries has reached nearly US\$8.8 billion in the first ten months of this financial year to date, down over \$930 million compared with the same period last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

From 1 October to 20 August of the 2020-21FY, the total border trade value amounted to \$8.790 billion. This year border trade dropped by over \$ 930 million, compared to the same period of last FY when it amounted to \$ 9.713 billion, the ministry's figures said.

Myanmar shares borders with China, Thailand, India and Bangladesh. During the period, the country's export via land borders earned over \$5.81



The 105th-mile border trade zone.

billion, while its import shared over \$298 billion. Myanmar has opened 18 border trade camps. The country conducts border trade with neighbouring China through

Muse, Lwejel, Kampaiti, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung, with Thailand via Tachilek,

Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Meisei border checkpoints, with Bangladesh via Sittway and Maungdaw, and with India through Tamu and Reed border crossings, respectively.

Myanmar mainly exports agricultural products, animal products, marine products, minerals, forest products, manufactured goods and other commodities, while capital goods, intermediate goods and consumer goods are imported to the country.

During the over 10 months of this FY, the total external trade value was only \$25.7 billion, down 16 per cent from the same period last year, according to the Ministry of Commerce. — ACM/GNLM

Myanmar workers return from China due to factory closures



The re-acceptance committee in Muse is accepting and welcoming back Myanmar returnees.

MYANMAR migrant workers are returning from China as they have trouble with their living conditions due to factory and shop closures caused by the pandemic in Ruili and Kyalgaung.

More than 5,300 Myanmar migrant workers have returned from China via the Nandaw border checkpoint in the last 27 days after they faced employment difficulties during the lockdown period in Ruili.

The Myanmar migrant workers returned to their country as they faced difficulty staying in China while the factories and shops from Ruili and Kyalgaung were halted after the pandemic resurgence.

The authorities from both countries coordinated the return of Myanmar workers. Myanmar started accepting its workers back on 16 July. So far, the authorities have re-accepted a total of 7,526 Myanmar workers from 26 July to 26 August.

The re-acceptance committee in Muse is accepting and welcoming back Myanmar returnees.

Some of Myanmar-China border checkpoints have still halted amid a recent surge in case of COVID-19 infection, said an official from the Muse Rice Wholesale Centre.

Two remaining border checkpoints in Muse — Kyin-

sankyawt and Pangsai (Wamting), which is one of the main border trading posts for Myanmar-China border trade, were closed starting from 8 July at 1:30 pm.

The Muse border, which is the mainstay of Myanmar-China border trade, is connected with Nandawphyu, Hsinphyu, Man Wein, Kyinsankyawt-Wamting and Pangsai-Wamting checkpoints.

Out of those land borders, Nandaw and Hsinphyu crossings are closed starting from 1 April while the Man Wein checkpoint was halted on 30 March due to the outbreak of COVID-19. — Aye Maung/GNLM

Long bean growers earn daily income in Kyaukse

THE long bean growers are earning daily income in Kyaukse township, Mandalay region.

The growers from Kyaukse township are cultivating paddy, peanut, sesame, sunflower, black bean, onion, green gram, chilli, banana and cotton. They also grow various flowers and vegetables next to the river, creek and on farmlands.

Regarding the growth of long beans, it is a crop that does not require a great deal of manpower. But the growers need to take care of the long bean daily because it is a favourite plant of leaf beetles and pods. If it is necessary, the growers should spray the pesticide. The long bean cultivation also requires irrigation water.

"The long bean is a

vegetable that is harvested every other day and sold back in the market. The price of long beans varies every single day. Now, the bean fetches K800 per viss. The long bean traders are demanding daily the long beans from the growers. That is the reason why the farmers from Kyaukse township are growing the long bean on a manageable scale," said Daw Aye Yu San, a local long bean grower from Tada Lae village.

In the harvesting season, it can yield over 30 visses of long beans. The bamboo poles that are used in the growing of long beans can be used for up to four years once purchased. Now, the local growers are happy, making a profit by selling the long beans.

— ACM/GNLM



The price of long beans varies every single day. Now, the bean fetches K800 per viss.

Rice price rises by K2,800 per bag in maximum within one month



THE prices of rice have risen by K800 to K2,800 per bag within a month, along with the spike in other commodity prices, as per the domestic market's data.

On 1 August, the prices of rice moved in the range of K27,500-K42,100 per bag depending on the quality and varieties of the rice, whereas the prices surged to K29,100—44,900 per bag on 31 August.

The figures showed a gap of

The staple rice price has gradually increased from the previous months. The prices of rice have stayed in the upward trend since May.

K800 to K2,800 per bag depending on the varieties of the rice.

The staple rice price has gradually increased from the previous months. The prices of rice have stayed in the upward trend since May.

Furthermore, as per the 2020 rice price data, the price of staple rice usually increases in the rainy season. Consequently, the price gain is expected during the monsoon season of this year.

Additionally, the restriction measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 and natural disasters affected the prices. The price is expected to remain bullish in the coming months. – NN/GNLM

Sugar price spikes up on low stockpile

THE price of sugar has been in the bull market since April-end, on account of the low stockpile and Kyat weakening against the US dollar in the local forex market.

The sugar fetches K1,650-1,750 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kg or 3.6 pounds) at present, whereas it was priced only K1,200 at the end of April. After the sugar cane off-season, the price is gradually increasing in the domestic market, according to the Mandalay wholesale market.

Last year, the low demand forced some sugarcane growers to turn to other crops for cultivation.

The sugarcane growers are expecting a high of K50,000 per tonne next season.

The stock of sugar has become lesser. Additionally, sugar import is rarely found in the meantime. Sugar price has surprisingly risen this year in the international market. The domestic sugar market also sees the price rise accordingly, the

Sugar and Cane Related Products Association stated.

Sugarcane covered 438,420 acres in the country last year from 2019-2020. Myanmar's sugar production was reduced by about 100,000 tonnes this year, the Agriculture Department stated.

Myanmar produced about 450,000 tonnes of sugar from 440,000 acres of sugarcane plantations in the 2014-2015 financial year, over 390,000 tonnes from 390,000 acres in the 2015-2016FY, over 370,000 tonnes from 400,000 acres in the 2016-2017FY, over 500,000 tonnes from 400,000 acres in the 2017-2018FY, and 500,000 tonnes from 500,000 acres in the 2018-2019FY.

Sugar cane prices were pegged at over K50,000 per ton in the 2015-2016FY, K45,000 in the 2016-2017FY, K41,500 in the 2017-2018FY, K38,000-40,000 in the 2018-2019FY and K40,000 in the last FY2019-2020, according to the news released online by the Ministry of Commerce. – Ko Khant/GNLM



Sugarcane covered 438,420 acres in the country last year from 2019-2020. Myanmar's sugar production was reduced by about 100,000 tonnes this year, the Agriculture Department stated.

Exports to Japan top \$694 mln in nine months

THE value of export to Japan in the past nine months (October-June) of the current financial year 2020-2021 touched about US\$694.964 million while import was valued at only \$271.7 million, according to the data of the Ministry of Commerce.

The value of trade between Myanmar and its development partner Japan exceeded over \$966.66 million in the current FY. Japan is placed as the third-largest exporting country of Myanmar.

Myanmar's export items to Japan are garments, marine products, rice, black sesame, green grams, rubber and other products. In return, it imported machines and machine equipment, electronic equipment, fertilizers, chemical products, medicines, automobiles, and other products.

Bilateral trade values



The value of trade between Myanmar and its development partner Japan exceeded over \$966.66 million in the current FY. Japan is placed as the third-largest exporting country of Myanmar.

have registered \$1.92 billion in the last FY2019-2020, \$1.89 billion in the FY2018-2019, \$1 billion in the 2018 mini-budget period, \$1.92 billion in the 2017-2018FY, \$2 billion in the 2016-2017FY and \$1.84 billion in the 2015-16FY, respectively.

This FY, three enterprises from Japan were approved to make initial investments of \$518 million into the country, according to the data of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

Japan has made up over 34.7 per cent of total FDI in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) offers loans such as ODA loans and two-step loans intending to bring about socio-economic development in Myanmar. – KH/GNLM

Import value of consumer products drops by \$130 mln this FY

THE value of imported consumer products stood at nearly US\$ 3 billion between 1 October and 20 August in the current financial year 2020-21, a sharp drop of \$128 million, according to the statement released by the Ministry of Commerce.

In 10 months of this FY period, the import of consumer products reached \$2.922 billion. The import value of consumer products saw a significant decrease by over \$128.942 million, compared to the corresponding period of last FY 2019-2020 when

it was \$ 3.051 billion.

Myanmar primarily imports personal goods, luxury products, construction materials, agricultural machinery, raw materials, household goods and CMP raw materials from its neighbouring countries. The value of imported consumer products reached 2.92 billion, including \$23.013 million through the government sector and \$2.899 billion through the private sector.

The import value was \$1.245 billion in the 2011-12 FY, \$1.4 billion in the 2012-13 FY, \$2.3

billion in the 2013-14 FY, \$2.9 billion in the 2014-15 FY, \$3.5 billion in the 2015-16 FY, over \$4 billion in the 2016-17 FY, over \$4.42 billion in the 2017-18 FY, over \$2.65 billion in the 2018 mini budget FY, over \$4.85 billion in the 2018-19 FY and over \$4.86 billion in the 2019-20 FY.

For the financial year 2020-2021 (up to August), Myanmar's foreign trade exceeds \$15.7 billion, down 26 per cent from the same period last year, according to Ministry of Commerce.— MNA

**NEWS
IN BRIEF****Sri Lanka declares food emergency as forex crisis worsens**

Sri Lanka on Tuesday declared a state of emergency over food shortages as private banks ran out of foreign exchange to finance imports.

With the country suffering a hard-hitting economic crisis, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa said he ordered emergency regulations to counter the hoarding of sugar, rice and other essential foods.

Rajapaksa has named a top army officer as "Commissioner General of Essential Services to coordinate the supply of paddy, rice, sugar and other consumer goods".

The move followed sharp price rises for sugar, rice, onions and potatoes, while long queues have formed outside stores because of shortages of milk powder, kerosene oil and cooking gas.—AFP ■

Economist expects US job growth in August to slow down amid Delta surge

US job growth in August is expected to slow down amid a Delta variant-fuelled COVID-19 surge, Diane Swonk, chief economist at Grant Thornton, a major accounting firm, said Monday.

Payroll employment is expected to rise by 675,000 in August after reaching 943,000 in July, Swonk said in a blog, noting that new jobs in public education likely drove employment in August as schools and universities "scrambled to reopen shuttered facilities."

The economist, however, noted that some schools have been forced to quarantine or return to online after opening, and most of those closures occurred after the survey week for the August payroll data.

"A surge in infections triggered by the Delta variant is expected to slow the pace of hiring in leisure and hospitality," she said. Credit card data, for example, show that spending at restaurants stalled in late July and August when infections surged.—Xinhua ■

Thai ministers confident of economic recovery on easing COVID-19 rules

A boat sails on a canal in Bangkok, capital of Thailand, on 2 Sept 2020. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

THAILAND'S finance minister and industry minister on Monday expressed their confidence on the government's easing of

lockdown measures starting from Wednesday, noting that this will help the economy normalize gradually.

Finance Minister Arkhom Termpittayapaisith said the easing of restrictions on retail and dining are necessary to revive the economy.

"We are seeing a stabilizing trend of new COVID-19 cases. If the tight lockdown still continues, we expect the economy to shrink sharply. Easing restrictions for retail and restaurant businesses will help people to get back on their feet," Arkhom said in an interview with local media. He added that as the pandemic is still ongoing, the easing must be carried out gradually in a safe and careful manner.

Meanwhile, Industry Minister Suriya Jungrungreangkit also believed that the lockdown eas-

ing would be a positive factor for the manufacturing sector.

"The government is working closely with factory owners in order to control the infections through various measures. Positive trend of the country's vaccine roll-out and further easing of restrictions will support the overall recovery of manufacturing activities," Suriya said.

According to the Office of Industrial Economics (OIE), Thailand's manufacturing production index (MPI) in July increased by 5.12 per cent year-on-year for the fifth consecutive month. Automotive and electronics, including circuit boards, tire and rubber industries are the key growth drivers for export. —Xinhua ■

Japan's Asakawa re-elected ADB chief, vows to help pandemic recovery

THE Asian Development Bank said Tuesday its president, Masatsugu Asakawa, was re-elected for a second term.

"My vision for the upcoming term is for ADB to serve as the premier development institution for Asia and the Pacific as it supports its developing member countries in recovering from the coronavirus disease pandemic," Asakawa, 63, was quoted as saying in an ADB release.

Asakawa, who served as Japan's vice finance minister for international affairs until July 2019, will begin his new term running for five years on Nov. 24, the Manila-based institution said.

Asakawa assumed the post

of the bank's 10th president in January last year to serve the remaining term of his predecessor Takehiko Nakao, who stepped down that month after leading the ADB since April 2013.

In April, he announced his intention to run for re-election and Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso immediately expressed his support. "President Asakawa has shown excellent leadership since his inauguration in January 2020 and offered speedy and strong supports to counter the spread of the novel coronavirus infections," Aso said in a statement Tuesday. "His re-election resulted from the high evaluation of these previous accomplishments," Aso added.



The Asian Development Bank said Tuesday its president, Masatsugu Asakawa, was re-elected for a second term. **PHOTO: FLICKR/KYODO**

Asakawa was the sole candidate and elected unanimously by

the board of directors, the ADB said.—Kyodo ■

German inflation edges up to 3.9% in August

German consumer price inflation remained at euro-era high levels in August. **PHOTO: INA FASSBENDER / AFP**

GERMAN consumer price inflation remained at euro-era high levels in August, preliminary

data showed on Thursday, climbing slightly to 3.9 per cent on the back of one-off effects

related to the coronavirus pandemic.

The end of a VAT holiday introduced by the German government to mitigate the impact of pandemic lockdowns on the economy and the rise in the price of oil explained some of the increase, according to federal statistics agency Destatis.

The August 12-month inflation figure was 0.1 percentage point higher than in the previous month, and the highest value in Europe's top economy since December 1993, when it came in at 4.3 per cent.

"The current increase is likely to remain temporary," said Christine Volk, chief econ-

omist at public lender KfW. A return to inflation under the European Central Bank's (ECB) two per cent target was likely, she said, but warned that persistent shortages in key components, such as computer chips, could "impact on consumers' wallets, as companies are likely to pass on the higher costs at least partially".

The ECB recently raised its inflation target to two per cent, and said it would tolerate temporary over- or undershooting of the target before stepping in. Policymakers at the Frankfurt institution will meet next week to discuss their next moves. —AFP ■

Japan’s unemployment rate decreases to 2.8 pct in July, falling for 2nd consecutive month

JAPAN’S unemployment rate decreased to 2.8 per cent in July, down for the second consecutive month, despite a resurgence of COVID-19 infections caused many regions to enter or extend emergency measures that limited business activities, government data showed Tuesday.

The seasonally adjusted jobless rate fell 0.1 percentage point from 2.9 per cent in June, according to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) said. However, the level is still higher than the 2.4 per cent logged in February last year, when the Japanese economy had yet to experience major fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to separate data from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Wel-



Japan’s unemployment rate decreased to 2.8 per cent in July, down for the second consecutive month, despite a resurgence of COVID-19 infections caused many regions to enter or extend emergency measures that limited business activities, government data showed Tuesday. **PHOTO: KYODO**

fare, the job availability ratio in July increased to 1.15 from 1.13 in the previous month, up for the second month in a row, meaning that there were 115 job openings for every 100 job seekers. The ratio had risen 0.04 point in June.

Due to a surge of new infections driven by the

highly contagious Delta variant, the Japanese government declared the latest COVID-19 state of emergency for Tokyo in mid-July, only three weeks from the end of the third emergency for the capital.

Adding to the capital, Okinawa was also under a state of emergency during

July. The southern island prefecture’s virus emergency was declared in late May.

Under the emergency declaration, people are asked to stay home, while restaurants and bars are requested not to offer alcohol and close by 8:00 pm local time.—Xinhua ■

S. Korea set to ban app payment monopolies in world first

SOUTH Korean MPs were expected to ban Apple and Google from forcing app developers to use the tech giants’ payment systems on Tuesday, effectively declaring their lucrative App Store and Play Store monopolies illegal.

A bill set for a vote in the national assembly would make the South the first major economy to pass legislation on the issue, in a move that could set a precedent for other jurisdictions around the world.



The South Korean law comes as Apple and Google face global criticism for the commission they charge on app sales. **PHOTO: AFP**

In the United States three senators this month introduced a bill to loosen the tech firms’ grip

on their stores, while in Europe lawmakers are debating legislation that could force Apple to bring

in alternatives to the App Store. The South Korean measure comes as Apple and Google face global criticism for charging up to 30 per cent commission on app sales and requiring their own payment systems be used that collect a share of the transactions.

The Korean law — locally dubbed the “Anti-Google Law” — will offer users a choice of app payment providers, allowing them to bypass charges set by the store owner.—AFP ■

Eurozone inflation leaps to 3.0%, highest in decade



Europeans are paying more for everything as data shows inflation has hit its highest level in a decade. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

EUROZONE inflation surged to three per cent in August, according to official data released Tuesday, as widespread shortages, rising energy costs and one-off effects sent consumer prices in Europe sharply higher. The rise takes the rate a full percentage point higher than the ECB’s target of two per cent and to a level last reached in November 2011, though economists insist the hike is

linked to effects of the coronavirus pandemic and will be short-lived. The August inflation rate was mainly pushed higher by a 15.4 per cent rise in energy prices, which compared to a 14.3 per cent rise a month earlier. Jack Allen-Reynolds, senior economist at Capital Economics, said that inflation in the 19-member eurozone could rise “even further in the coming months.”—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

French consumer spending slumps, prices jump

Spending by French consumers is falling while inflation is accelerating, data showed Tuesday, adding to concerns about the strength of the economic recovery as the pandemic drags on. Household consumption fell by 2.2 per cent in July from the previous month after a modest monthly rise in June, the national statistics agency INSEE said in a regular report.

The data, which correct for inflation and seasonal variations, found a 2.9-per-cent drop in spending on food and a 2.7-per-cent drop on manufactured goods.

Decreased spending on clothing and durable goods wiped out gains registered the previous month.

Spending on energy, meanwhile, rose by 1.0 per cent.

A separate report by INSEE found that a surge in energy prices played a role in the acceleration of 12-month inflation to 1.9 per cent in August from 1.2 per cent in July.—AFP ■

Kuwait aims to transform ‘tyre graveyard’ into new city

KUWAIT on Sunday announced plans to transform what was once a mammoth “tyre graveyard” to a new residential city.

The 2-square-kilometre (0.7-square-mile) dump in the north of the oil-rich Gulf country was where tyres went to die — a total of more than 40 million at the end.

Seventeen years of tyre dumping and three massive fires between 2012 and 2020 sparked environmental concerns, prompting the authorities to shut it down for good.

“We have moved from a difficult stage that was characterized by great environmental risk,” Oil Minister Mohammed al-Fares said at the now empty landfill some five kilometres (three miles) from Al-Jahra province.—AFP ■

Myanma Port Authority “Notice of High Tide”

Exceptionally high spring from 20.05 feet to 20.13 feet high above the chart datum are expected to occur in Yangon River during the period of September 6th to September 12th, 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.

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After Afghanistan, Biden stakes presidency on domestic battles



A US Air Force aircraft takes off from the airport in Kabul. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

THIS has been a miserable summer for Joe Biden but with the last troops out of Afghanistan the Democrat will now hope to relaunch his struggling presidency back home.

From the initial chaos in which Afghans tried clinging to departing US planes, to last Thursday's deaths of 13 US service members in a suicide bombing, the evacuation from Taliban-controlled Kabul has been ugly and traumatic.

How much it has hurt Bid-

en politically is the question ricocheting around the White House, Congress and a divided nation.

A longtime former senator and two-term vice-president, Biden long boasted of his foreign policy expertise. With close allies like Britain upset over the abrupt Afghan pullout and China mocking US policy from the sidelines, those claims are now tarnished.

Some Republicans have demanded impeachment and

government resignations.

Right-wing media, such as the hugely popular Fox News, is pushing the image of 78-year-old Biden as incapable of coping in a crisis. Even usually more friendly outlets like CNN have turned hard on the president's performance in Afghanistan.

Many analysts, however, think that Americans' traditional disinterest in what happens beyond their borders will spare Biden longterm consequences.—AFP ■

Taliban takeover spurs old fears among ex-Soviet neighbours

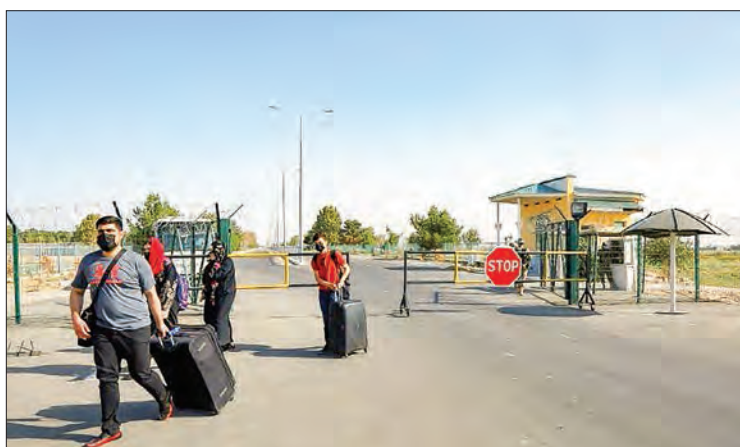
THE Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan has brought back bad memories to the country's ex-Soviet neighbours, who fear a jihadist threat and a refugee crisis. While the Islamist militants have never vied for territory beyond Afghanistan, their reign some two decades ago still wrought uncertainty in neighbouring Central Asia.

Now the region's governments are steeling themselves against instability spilling over into their territory once again while locals are preparing for new neighbours at home.

"If refugees come we will give them our home and our salt and bread," said Abdualziz Mukhamadjanov, a 26-year-old businessman in the city of Termez in southern Uzbekistan near the Afghan border.

"What else can you do?"

That sentiment is not shared by Russia, a longstanding force in the region, which has urged



Former Soviet Uzbekistan is one of three Central Asian countries that share a border with Afghanistan. **PHOTO: AFP**

Central Asia to refuse Western requests to shelter Afghans. Refugees have nonetheless arrived in Uzbekistan, though the government has said that it is only allowing them to pass through.

On 20 August it said it had assisted the westward evacuation of nearly 2,000 people — mostly European citizens working in the country and some Afghans — via the capital Tashkent's airport.

It also said it had returned 150 Afghans following talks with the Taliban to guarantee their security. Still, reports have circulated of large numbers of refugees crossing into Uzbekistan over the Amu Darya river using makeshift rafts, and an Afghan embassy staffer told AFP that a coronavirus centre in Termez was housing up to 1,500 people.—AFP ■

China tightens measures to prevent online gaming addiction among minors

CHINA'S National Press and Publication Administration (NPPA) has released a notice on preventing minors from becoming addicted to online games.

Online game providers can only offer one-hour services to minors from 8 pm to 9 pm on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, as well as on official holidays, according to the document made public on Monday.

It also urged the strict implementation of real-name registration and logins, saying that online game providers must not provide any form of game service to users who fail to reg-

ister and log in using their real identifications.

Press and publication administrations at all levels have been asked to supervise the implementation of related measures and deal with companies that fail to put measures in place.

Minors' addiction to online games has drawn much attention from the society, an official with the NPPA said, adding that the newly-released notice is meant for minors who are still in the developmental stage physically and mentally, and have poor self-control.—Xinhua ■



Animation game players will participate in the ChinaJoy 2021, 30 July 2021, in Shanghai, China. **PHOTO: BARCROFT MEDIA/XINHUA**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bank robbers strap hostages to cars during deadly raid

HEAVILY armed gangsters strapped hostages to their getaway cars after robbing two banks in Brazil, in a rampage that left three people dead, police and reports said Monday.

Using explosives, drones and heavy weapons, the assailants took over downtown streets in the southeastern city of Aracatuba, home to some 200,000 people.

After robbing two banks, they made their escape by strapping hostages to the roofs and hoods of moving cars, according to shocking images broadcast by local news channels.—AFP ■

US drone strike wiped out Kabul family, brother says

WHEN Ezmarai Ahmadi returned home from work on Sunday evening in Kabul, the usual gaggle of squealing children were waiting to greet him -- his sons and daughters, and a slew of nieces and nephews.

He pulled his white sedan into the driveway of a modest house in Kwaja Burga, a densely populated neighbourhood in the northwest of the Afghan capital, and handed the keys to his eldest son to park.

Youngsters piled into the vehicle -- pretending the parking routine was an adventure -- while Ezmarai watched from the side.

Then out of the blue Afghan sky, a missile came screeching down -- striking the car with a terrible force and obliterating the lives of 10 people in an instant.—AFP ■

Japan seeks record defence budget with spending for new technologies

JAPAN'S Defence Ministry on Tuesday requested a 5.4 trillion yen (\$49 billion) budget for fiscal 2022, aiming to accelerate enhancement of capabilities in new domains and promote the development of new technologies to deal with China's growing military presence.

The request would exceed a record 5.3 trillion yen allocated in the initial budget for fiscal 2021 started in April, rising for the tenth consecutive year. It does not include outlays linked to hosting U.S. military bases, which have been about 200 billion yen annually.

The ministry said it also left out the cost of upgrading 70

F-15 fighter jets. It aims to install Lockheed Martin's air-to-surface standoff missile and will continue negotiations with the United States to decrease the estimated total cost of 398.0 billion yen.

It ramped up research and development expenditures, up 114.1 billion yen to a record 325.7 billion yen, for potentially game-changing technologies, such as crewless aircraft using artificial intelligence, to support next-generation fighter jets, while continuing enhancement of capabilities in such new domains as outer space and cyberspace.

The request for such spending will include systems for the electromagnetic spectrum to



Photo taken on 19 Aug. 2021, shows Japan's Defence Ministry in Tokyo. **PHOTO: KYODO**

shoot down drones and other aerial threats with high-energy lasers or microwaves.

The ministry asked for 130.0 billion yen to acquire more F-35 advanced stealth fighter jets and 10.2 billion yen for small and mid-sized transport ships to support remote island defence operations in the country's southwest.

Such islands include the Japanese-controlled, Beijing-claimed Senkaku Islands, which China calls Diaoyu, in the East China Sea. Missile units will be placed on Ishigaki Island to strengthen defence capabilities around the country's southwest chain of islands, the ministry said.—Kyodo ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

UN Security Council adopts resolution on Afghanistan after Taliban takeover

THE Security Council on Monday adopted a resolution on Afghanistan after the Taliban's return to power, focusing on counter-terrorism and humanitarian assistance.

Resolution 2593 demands that Afghan territory not be used to threaten or attack any country, or to shelter or train terrorists, or to plan or finance terrorist acts.

It reiterates the importance of combatting terrorism in Afghanistan and notes the Taliban's relevant commitments.—Xinhua ■

U.S. completes troop withdrawal from Afghanistan to end 20-year war



Taliban 'Badri 313' special force fighters arrive at the main entrance gate of Kabul airport after the last US troops left. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE U.S. administration of President Joe Biden said Monday it has completed the withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan,

bringing an end to two decades of war triggered by the terror attacks of 11 Sept. 2001, on American soil.

While the troop removal itself has been widely supported by the public, the cost of the U.S. pullout has been high as the move made way for the Taliban's return to power for the first time in about 20 years and resulted in chaotic and deadly evacuation efforts for Americans and Afghans who worked alongside the United States. "Now, our 20-year military presence in Afghanistan has ended," Biden said in a statement, referring to the withdrawal that came just ahead of his self-imposed deadline on Tuesday.

The U.S. military said the last C-17 aircraft lifted off from the international airport in Kabul at 11:59 pm local time. A Taliban spokesman declared "complete independence," saying that the

last U.S. soldier has left Kabul airport, according to Al Jazeera TV.

Biden said he will address the nation on his decision to end the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan on Tuesday, while pledging that the United States will continue to lead coordination with other countries to ensure safe passage for any Americans, Afghans or foreign nationals who want to get out of the war-torn country. The U.S. retreat from Afghanistan, meanwhile, leaves concerns over the possibility of Afghanistan becoming once again a safe haven for terrorists as well as the potential for severe erosion of civil liberties under the rule of the Taliban, known for oppressing women during its former rule.—Kyodo ■

Stalin-era mass graves unearthed

THE remains of up to 20,000 people have been found in Ukraine's southern city of Odesa as excavations continue at a site believed to be a mass grave of victims of Stalin's Terror, historians said Monday.

According to various estimates, the bones of between 5,000 and 20,000 people lie in the ground, making it one of the largest mass graves unearthed in Ukraine so far.

They were discovered this month close to Odessa airport after exploratory works started as part of expansion plans.

As of today, 29 graves have been discovered. The bodies lie in several layers," local historian Oleksandr Babych told journalists at the site which until recently was a garbage dump.

"Already we can clearly see at least five layers", he said.

Historians believe that these people were executed in the 1930s, the time known as Stalin's Great Terror.

Archaeologist Tetyana Samoylova, a chief consultant at the site, highlighted the "cynicism" with which the sentences were carried out.

"They dug out pits in the garbage and threw these people in or shot them dead as they were standing there," Samoylova said. "And then they covered them with the same garbage," she added, standing next to the dozens of graves marked by red tape.—AFP ■

Taliban parade in Kabul airport after US leave



Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid (C, with shawl) led a group of officials onto the runway of Kabul airport after the US withdrawal. **PHOTO: AFP**

HOURS after the final foreign forces flew out of Afghanistan, Taliban leaders walked victorious through the airport, flanked by guards dressed in special forces combat kit inspecting destroyed US helicopters.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid led a group of officials onto the runway, his usual stoic expression replaced by broad grin.

The Taliban's so-called "Badri 313" special forces unit posed for pictures, brandishing US rifles and flying the group's white flag.

Once one of the most secure

sites in Afghanistan, the airport's passenger terminal was trashed.

Empty bullet casings littered floor near all the entrances.

After the Taliban entered the capital on August 15, the airport was surrounded by vast crowds trying to get their way onto an evacuation flight -- but many more were blocked by a ring of Taliban checkpoints.

On Tuesday, all checkpoints, bar one, had been removed from the road leading to the airport.

The mood had changed too. Taliban guards were in high spirits, shaking hands with drivers and passengers.—AFP ■

ONE Championship to hold first all-women's event on 3 September



PHOTO: ONE CHAMPIONSHIP

ONE Championship will host its first all-women's event named ONE: Empower in Singapore on 3 September, the ONE officials said.

"This Friday, 3 September, the world's best female martial artists will enter the Circle at ONE: EMPOWER, which features everything from a World Title main event to the biggest women's tournament in mixed martial arts history.

"The women of ONE Championship are ready to make history," the officials said.

In the main event, ONE Women's Strawweight World

Champion Xiong Jing Nan "The Panda" will defend her golden belt against second-ranked contender Michelle Nicolini.

In the Atomweight World Grand Prix Quarterfinal, Denice Zamboanga will take on Seo Hee Ham, and in the Atomweight Kickboxing fight, Anissa Meksen will face Cristina Morales.

Next, the debut of kickboxing great Anissa "C18" Meksen, the return of Muay Thai phenom Jackie Buntan, and the entire quarterfinal round of the ONE Women's Atomweight World Grand Prix are apples for everyone's eyes.

The ONE: EMPOWER event will be broadcast live to more than 150 countries, and fans can watch via television, tablet, computer, or mobile device, the ONE officials said.

The full event stream will be available free on ONE's YouTube channel and the ONE Super App beginning at 7:30 pm of Singapore Standard Time (SGT).

ONE Championship fans from Myanmar can also enjoy the ONE: EMPOWER the main card on Skynet Channel at 7 pm of Myanmar Standard Time on Friday, 3 September. —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.

Italy's Kean joins Juventus after Ronaldo exit

MOISE Kean will be the final piece of Juventus' post-Cristiano Ronaldo attack after the Italy forward completed his move from Everton on Tuesday.

Kean, 21, returns to the club where he began his professional career as an academy graduate on a two-year loan which will then turn into a permanent sale for a reported fee of 20 million euros (\$23.6 million), subject to certain conditions being met.

"Moise is back and he joins us on loan," Juventus said on its Twitter account.

Juventus announced the move while also officially confirming the departure of five-time Ballon d'Or winner Ronal-

do, who will join his former club Manchester United.

Juve sold Kean to Everton in the summer of 2019 after excelling in his breakthrough season in Serie A but he failed to impress in England and last season was loaned to Paris Saint-Germain.

He scored 17 times in 41 appearances for the star-studded French side, who lost their Ligue 1 title to Lille and were knocked out of the Champions League by Manchester City.

On Friday Kean was called up to the Italy squad after missing out on Euro 2020, won by Roberto Mancini's impressive Azzurri last month. —AFP ■

Evacuated Afghan athlete makes debut at Tokyo Paralympics

AFGHAN athlete Hossain Rasouli competed in a long jump event on Tuesday at the Tokyo Paralympics after recently being evacuated from his home country, now under the control of the Taliban. He became the first athlete representing Afghanistan to take part in the Tokyo Paralympics, a feat that looked impossible when it appeared the country's team would be unable to travel safely to Japan to be part of the world's largest sporting event for people with disabilities, which started a week ago. Rasouli, 26, who arrived in Tokyo three days ago, competed in the men's T47 long jump and finished last of the 13

jumpers who took part with a best leap of 4.46 metres.

He was originally scheduled to compete in the men's T47 100 metres but arrived too late. It was the first time he competed in long jump at a major meet, according to the International Paralympic Committee.

Rasouli lost his left forearm when a Taliban-laid landmine exploded when he was farming in 2013. When he was introduced on large screens at the National Stadium before the jump event, he raised his right arm and smiled at the camera, but he did not speak to the press after competing. —Kyodo News ■



Afghan athlete Hossain Rasouli competes in the men's T47 long jump at the Tokyo Paralympics on 31 Aug. 2021, at the National Stadium in Tokyo. He arrived in Tokyo on 28 Aug. after being evacuated from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan.

PHOTO: KYODO