NARROW DEVELOPMENT GAP BETWEEN URBAN, RURAL REGIONS PAGE-8 (OPINION)

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VIII, No. 148, 9th Waxing of Tawthalin 1383 ME www.gnlm.com.mm Tuesday, 14 September 2021

## Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted and its mandated tasks, including the scrutiny of voter lists, shall be implemented in accordance with the law.
2. Effective measures will be taken with added momentum to prevent and manage the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Actions will be taken to ensure the speedy recovery of businesses from the impact of COVID-19.
4. Emphasis will be placed on achieving enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.
5. Upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution, and further work will be undertaken to hand over State duties to the winning party in accordance with democratic standards.

# State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing chooses appropriate military arms for cadets of DSA

State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attends the Choice of Arms ceremony for the 64th Intake of the Defence Services Academy in PyinOoLwin on 13 September 2021.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attended the ceremony of choice of arms for 64th Intake of the Defence Services Academy at the DSA in PyinOoLwin yesterday.

Also present at the choice of arms ceremony together with the Senior General were Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Moe Aung, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Maung Maung Kyaw, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, Commander of Central Command Maj-Gen Ko Ko Oo, the commandant of DSA and officials.

They chose the appropriate military arms of the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) depending on the outstanding of cadets in literature and arts of military and their endeavours.

The Senior General and party had lunch together with cadets at the cadet mess hall and cordially encouraged the cadets.

The ceremony of choice of arms continued in the afternoon. —MNA

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# Public Notification on buildings where terrorists involved in terrorist attacks are permitted to stay temporarily or to take refuge

TERRORIST organizations such as CRPH, NUG, PDF, and their affiliates have been carrying out terrorist acts and arson attacks across the country to disrupt the cooperation of the people and the ethnic nationalities with the State Administration Council which has set future roadmaps for the development, stability and security of the State. In doing so, it is found that they have rented apartments and houses to hide while committing destructive acts in the country.

For example, on 8 June 2021, 25 assorted weapons, 72 hand grenades, 71 fuses, 14 assorted bullets, 156 TNT cartridges, 540 detonators, 4 boxes including 2 bullet belts, 27 12mm cartridges (without ammunition), 25 12mm cartridges (with ammunition), 3 bullet belts, 3,285 assorted bullets, were found and seized from a one storey house rented by terrorists in Ywaysu (west) Village, Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Region.

At around 8:15 am on 22 June, according to the report, security forces inspected the house rented by terrorists at No 116/Pha-19, 54th street and 111 (E) road, Htun-tone ward, Chanmyathazi Township, Mandalay. While inspecting, the security forces were attacked by home grenades and guns from the house, and some members of the security forces were killed/injured and 6 terrorists were killed. A total of 8 armed terrorists were arrested with a large number of weapons and ammunition.

Similarly, at around 4:15 pm on 14 August, members of security forces on the Insein circular train were attacked while the train arrived between Ahlon station and Pan Hlaing station. Due to the armed attack by the terrorists, 5 members of security forces were killed and one was injured. The terrorists who took 4 guns and some ammunition were arrested in houses and apartments temporarily rented by them in Yangon.

The above incidents were investigated and it was discovered that terrorists conspired to commit acts of violence by temporarily renting houses or apartments. Therefore, landlords are required to report the accurate information of the tenants with complete documents under Section 17 of the Ward/Village-Tract Administration Law, and to cooperate by notifying the relevant authorities in a timely manner if they find that their tenants are suspicious.

As landlords will be responsible if their tenants are found to have committed acts of violence, and no tenants list and information had been lodged with the relevant ward/village tract administration office while renting the apartment, please be informed that they will be taken action under the existing law. In addition, the rented house or apartment will be confiscated as evidence under the Counter-Terrorism Law and will be confiscated as State Treasury as a result of the investigation.

***Anti-Terrorism Central Committee***

# Construction of Bawdikan Bridge over Ngawun River completed

THE Bawdikan Bridge over Ngawun River in Taninthayi Township of Myeik District of Taninthayi Region is now complete, according to Bridge Task Force (4) of Bridge Department.

The government constructed the 787 feet long bridge located on Taninthayi-Thebyu road at a cost of K3.4 billion. It is 24 feet in of motorway and has a three feet wide pedestrian walkway on each side. The waterway clearance is 66 feet in width and seven feet in height. It can withstand up to AASHTO HS 25-44.

The Myeik District Department of Highways operated the construction of the approach roads in 2020-2021FY spending K1.6 billion, and the department carries out the operations for the well-graded and AC layer.

The approach road is 5,197 feet long—3,970 feet on the Taninthayi side and 1,227 feet on the Bawdi side. Currently, it completes 80 per cent of approach road construction.

The people had to ride the boat ferries between Taninthayi and Bawdikan in the past. If the approach road to Bawdikan bridge completes, the locals can easily reach the villages of Bawdikan, including Mawtaung from the Taninthayi side. — Kayan Soe Myint /GNLM

# IDPs, local people receive 1st dose of COVID vaccine in Yathedaung Tsp

A healthcare staff administers the first shot of Covid vaccine to a local in Yathedaung Township.

HEALTHCARE officials gave the first dose of Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine to internally displaced persons over the age of 45 and local people in Yathedaung Township, Rakhine State, yesterday.

Starting from 9 September, healthcare workers, members of the fire brigade, and volunteers are involving in the vaccination programme.

During the vaccination, healthcare workers and officials made records for the vaccinated people.

Keeping in line with the rules of COVID-19 issued by the Ministry of Health, volunteers and healthcare workers measured the body temperature, blood pressure and monitoring oxygen level before the vaccination.

Vaccines were given systematically to the local people, and only those with normal health conditions are vaccinated, officials said.

A total of 2,413 people including 2,199 internally displaced persons of aged 45 and over and 214 local people living in nearby villages were vaccinated for the first time in the relief camps in Yathedaung Township.

The rest of the population in the township will continue to be vaccinated, officials said. — Aung San Tun (IPRD)/GNLM

## 2,273 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 13 September, total figure rises to 434,106

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 434,106 after 2,273 new cases were reported on 13 September 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 383,440 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 16,617 after 87 died.

## Continuous learning will have an improvement in the education sector

SCHOOLS were closed for about two months. When the schools open, students will have learning opportunities. Continuous learning will have an improvement in the education sector, so emphasis must be placed on academic matters for the students. Management has been made not to delay the import of vaccines and medicines for COVID-19 and other necessary drugs.

*(Excerpt from the speech to the meeting 2/2021 of the Provisional Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar made by Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 7-2-2021)*

# Head of State assigns relevant ministries to manufacture Covid vaccines at home: Vice-Senior General

State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of Myanmar makes the speech at the 12th meeting on COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities in Nay Pyi Taw on 13 September 2021.

THE benevolence of the Head of State was to enable all the ethnic people from various parts of the nation to overcome the challenges of COVID-19 through vaccination and to soonest regain recovery with the best immunity against the disease, said Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Vice-Senior General Soe Win at the 12th meeting of COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities at Bayintnaung Villa in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Speaking at the meeting, the Vice-Senior General said he attended the meeting on behalf of the Head of State. It was found that there were 431,833 infected patients till 12 September and the infection rate declined to 10-8 per cent from 5 to 12 September. Thanks to the cooperation of the people, the infection rate was down to 8 per cent from 40 per cent this week. More than 400,000 of over 800,000 service personnel have been vaccinated, accounting for more than 50 per cent. The decline of infection rate was based on behaviours of the people under restrictions of COVID-19 during the period of over two months office holidays. Respective ministries resume operations with the strength of staff who will work in two-week duty and two-week off system under the restriction of COVID-19 as of 13 September.

Although the decrease of infection rate reaches 8 per cent, it is necessary to ensure safety for the people at less than five per cent based on the review of the Ministry of Health and international standards. Hence, all need to energetically strive for reduction of the infection rate to reach the safety level. If the people are careless in infection of the disease and officials are weak in enforcement for the COVID-19 restrictions, the infection rate will rise again.

Efforts are being made to reduce the infection of COVID-19 through the oxygen contribution of the people and assistance of the government, and construction of oxygen plants in regions and states. But, regrettably, some local and foreign organizations commit disturbance against the treatment of COVID-19 patients and the vaccination process.

They spread the misinformation about vaccination of the State and disturb the vaccination work process on the ground. They committed grenade attacks and threats on volunteers and people not to join the vaccination process. These were unacceptable Bio terrorist acts. On one hand, it violates individual rights. They are being exposed and taken severe action against them. Moreover, security will be tightened continuously. It is necessary to violently prevent and respond to those who undermine the prevention, control and treatment activities of COVID-19. As the government adopted the plans to take vaccines and medicines for the prevention of COVID-19, anyone should not disturb such a process. The Head of State gave guidance to vaccinate those from ethnic armed organizations for vaccination of COVID-19 with goodwill to enable the ethnic people across the nation to overcome the challenges of the pandemic.

The relevant ministry and the National Unity and Peacemaking Working Committee contacted the NCA signatories and non-signatories for vaccination. As the vaccination is implemented through the QR Code system, they were contacted to send the necessary member lists for receiving the vaccination. It was reported that some organizations misunderstood the demand of the member lists for vaccination and sparked doubts. The benevolence of the Head of State was to enable all the ethnic people from various parts of the nation to overcome the challenges of COVID-19 through vaccination and to soonest regain recovery with the best immunity against the disease.

Concerning the vaccination, although the organizations formed in regions and states cooperate in the vaccination, there remain many numbers of people to receive vaccines in some regions and states. Hence, it is necessary to systematically scrutinize the statistics from respective townships not to leave the target groups, not to complicate the statistics and try hard to finish the work process. Efforts must be made for systematically giving the allotted vaccines to the target groups. As COVID-19 will not disappear totally, the Head of State assigned the relevant ministries to manufacture the vaccines at home. The government is striving for the production of vaccines at home, and region and state chief ministers need to emphasize the soonest vaccination and sending of the correct statistics on vaccinated lists.

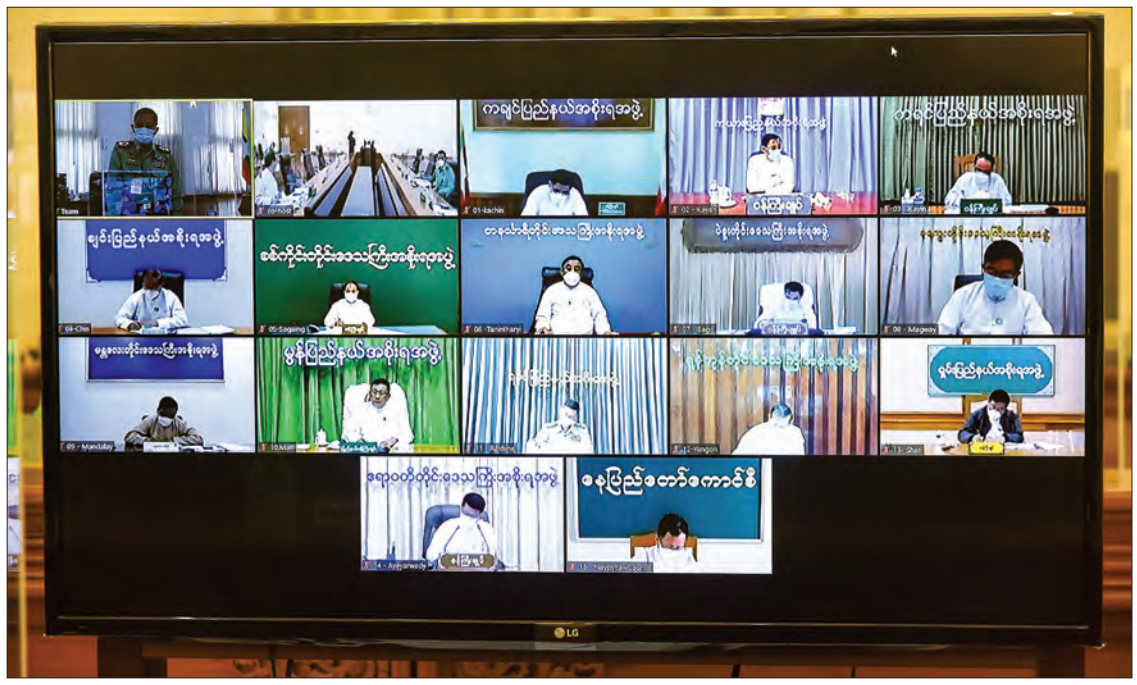
SEE PAGE-4

# Head of State assigns relevant ministries to manufacture ...

FROM PAGE-3

Next, meeting participants reported on infection of COVID-19 in regions and states, recoveries, treatment for patients at hospitals, conditions of hospitals and centres which have prepared to admit confirmed patients and suspects, vaccination to health staff and remaining numbers, arrivals of 4 million units of vaccine from China on 12 September, arrangements to send the vaccines to regions and states, progress of vaccination, remaining number of people, need of cooperation in systematic vaccination, progress of vaccinating the people of above 55 years old in the process including those with disability and members of EAOs, contacts for purchase of vaccines, potentials to arrive 10 million units of vaccines purchased from China in September, 10 more million units in October and four million units in November, donations of vaccines, medicines and humanitarian aids from ASEAN and dialogue partner countries, production of COVID-19 vaccines at home to distribute through ready to full system, further running of relief flights to call back Myanmar citizens abroad, destruction of communication towers by terrorists and progress of repairing, and treatment for infected people at military hospitals and military units.

In his concluding speech, the Vice-Senior General said as already arrived vaccines will further be distributed, a large volume of remaining vaccine stock may cause difficulty to new arrivals for storage in the cold chains. If the vaccines cannot be stored properly, they will be damaged. It is necessary to vaccine the people in respective target groups in townships. In the vaccination process, some people do not have IDs and lose IDs in some regions, chief ministers need to form vaccination teams with some officials from the Pan Khin Project to ensure the correctness of statistics on the vaccination process and contribute to the soonest completion of Pan Khinn Project. It is necessary to assign the health staff only to vaccinate the people despite the cooperation of private associations. Although the number of COVID-19 patients declines at hospitals, these hospitals need to prepare rooms for emergency treatment for other patients at any time. The current infection rate reaches just 8 per cent but preparations must be made for future processes, and reports must be sent to the emergency response committee and the central committee on the current situation of the disease. —MNA



The State and Region Chief Ministers attend the 12th meeting on COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities through video link.

# 133rd Shin Upagutta Lighting Festival to be held in Kyaukkyi Township with COVID rules

ACCORDING to the decision of the festival organizing committee, the 133rd Shin Upagutta Lighting Festival will be held in Kyaukkyi Township, Toungoo District, Bago Region in line with the COVID-19 disease preventive measures.

According to the advice of Sayadaw Bhaddanta Candima, Ovadacariya Sayadaw of the Shin Sivali Hill, Chairman and members of Kyaukkyi Township Administration Body and Festival Organizing Committee members will offer alms to Sangha (Buddhist monks) from monasteries in and around Kyaukkyi Township from 17 to 19 September.

On the morning of the full moon day, 1,330 traditional food packages will be distributed on the bridge in downtown Kyaukkyi.

In the evening, 1,330 lotus shaped lamps will be set adrift of the creek in Kyaukkyi town following the COVID-19 disease preventive measures.

The Shin Upagutta Lighting Festival is a traditional religious festival in Kyaukkyi Township and is of great interest to the local people, especially the ploughing festival of the farmers.

Until last year, Myanmar traditional rowing competitions were held with more than 100 boat teams in the downtown creek, including five men's and seven women's rowing competitions.

Men's greasing pole event were also held at the festival and football teams from village-tracts competed at the township stadium.

In the evening, lotus shaped lamps will be set adrift of the creek as paying homage to the image of Venerable Upagutta Arhat.

This year, at a time when the world is suffering from the COVID-19 epidemic, the festival has been postponed to prevent crowds, according to the festival's organizing committee.— Ko Thar Gyi (Kyaukkyi)/GNLM

The Shin Upagutta Lighting Festival is a traditional religious festival in Kyaukkyi Township and is of great interest to the local people, especially the ploughing festival of the farmers.

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Printed and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

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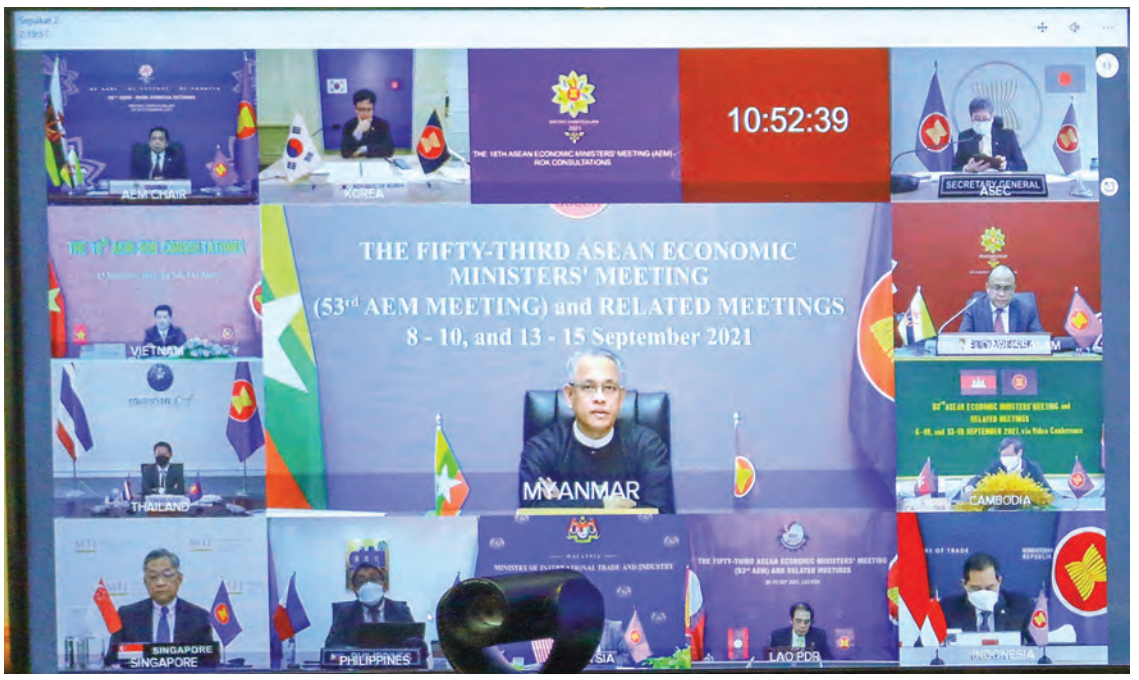
# ASEAN Economic Ministers' Meetings with China, Korea, Switzerland and Plus Three Economic Ministers and Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers' Meeting held




UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Aung Naing Oo participated in the 20th AEM-MOFCOM Consultations, 18th AEM-ROK Consultations, 13th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers' Meeting, AEM Troika Open-ended Dialogue with Switzerland Trade Minister and 24th AEM-Plus Three Consultations which were held via video conferencing started at 7:00 yesterday am from the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Nay Pyi Taw.

The Meetings were participated by Economic Ministers from ASEAN Member States, China, Japan, Korea, Switzerland and their representatives, ASEAN Secretary-General and officials from Mekong-Japan Secretariat.

The 20th AEM-MOFCOM Consultations were held at 7:00 am and co-chaired by Dato Dr Amin Liew Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II of Brunei Darussalam and Mr Wang Wentao, Minister of Commerce of the People's Republic of China. At the Consultations, the Ministers discussed and exchanged views on regional cooperation for mitigating the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) implementation, trade and economic cooperation between ASEAN and China, and preparations for the ASEAN-China Summit.

During the Consultations, the Union Minister expressed his appreciation to China for the donation of COVID-19 vaccines and medical equipment to support Myanmar's efforts on pandemic prevention, control and treatment. In addition, he requested China for consideration of reopening Myanmar-China border trade particularly resumption of the trade at Ruili (Shwe Li) and Muse border posts for strengthening supply chain connectivity. And, he supported conducting a Joint Feasible Study to identify the possible areas for further upgrading ACFAT in consideration of long-standing trade and economic relations between ASEAN and China.

The Ministers adopted Joint Statement on further Enhancing Trade and Economic Cooperation at the 30th anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations and a Joint Media Statement for 20th AEM-MOFCOM Consultations.

The 18th AEM-ROK Consultations was subsequently held and co-chaired by Dato Dr Amin Liew Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II of Brunei Darussalam and Yeo Han-koo, Minister for Trade, Industry and Energy of the Republic of Korea. At the Meeting, the Ministers exchanged views on their respective response to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and possible areas of cooperation, the implementation of the ASEAN-Korea Free Trade Agreement and the progress of the ASEAN-Korea economic cooperation projects.

At the Meeting, the Union Minister shared the activities of the COVID-19 responses, control and vaccination programme in Myanmar and he also expressed that the government is formulating Myanmar Economic Recovery Plan (MERP) in line with UN SDGs, ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF) and GMS Covid-19 Response and Recovery Plan for addressing the impact of COVID-19 on National Economy. TheUnion Minister also underscored to deepen regional economic integration by promoting the liberalization and facilitation of trade and investment and uphold the multilateral trading system in line with the WTO, to pursue inclusiveness to foster a sound environment to support sustainable economic and social development, and to grasp opportunities from digital and technological innovation.

At the Meeting, the Ministers adopted the Joint Media Statement of the 18th AEM-ROK Consultations.

The 13th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers' Meeting was held in the afternoon and co-chaired by Dr Khampheng Saysompheng, Minister of Industry and Commerce of Lao PDR and Hiroshi KAJIYAMA, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan. At the Meeting, the Ministers highlighted the outcomes of the 12th Mekong-Japan Economic Ministers Meeting and the 12th Mekong-Japan Summit which were held in 2020. The Ministers also exchanged views on the progress of implementation and new projects of the Work Programme under Mekong Industrial Development Vision 2.0 (MIDV 2.0).

At the Meeting, the Union Minister underscored the crucial role of MIDV 2.0 for balancing the development of the Mekong region and more resilient economy in the post-COVID-19 period and welcomed the progress of current projects under MIDV 2.0. In addition, Union Minister expressed thanks to the Japanese government and related agencies for supporting the economic development of Mekong Region. The Union Minister also welcomed the projects proposed by Japan in the areas of digital innovation and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and proposed to reconsider to support for the projects being implemented under East-West Economic Corridor Improvement in Myanmar and proposed to conduct the capacity building programme on Digital-based Investment Promotion Strategies for Mekong countries.

And then, the AEM-Swiss Troika Open-ended Dialogue with Switzerland Trade Minister was held and co-chaired by Dato Dr Amin Liew Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II of Brunei Darussalam and Guy Parmelin, President of the Swiss Confederation and Head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research of Switzerland. At the dialogue, the Ministers discussed the Joint Declaration of Cooperation between ASEAN and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and exchanged views on concrete economic cooperation activities under the Practical Cooperation Areas 2022-2026 between ASEAN and Switzerland and the Joint Media Statement.

In the evening, the 24th ASEAN Plus Three Economic Ministers' Meeting was also held. The Meeting was co-chaired by Dato Dr Amin Liew Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II of Brunei Darussalam, Wentao WANG, Minister of Commerce of China, Hiroshi KAJIYAMA, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, and Dr Yoonjong Chun, Deputy Minister of Ministry of Trade, Industry & Energy of Korea. At the Meeting, the Ministers exchanged views on global and regional developments and the progress of implementation of the ASEAN Plus Three Plan of Action (APT POA) on Mitigating the Economic Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ministers endorsed the ASEAN Plus Three Economic Cooperation Work Programme 2021-2022 and the Joint Media Statement of the 24th ASEAN Plus Three Economic Ministers' Meeting.

Together with the Union Minister, Deputy Minister and Senior Officials from the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations also attended the Meetings.—MNA

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*News and Periodicals Enterprise*

# Union Minister U Khin Maung Yi meets forestry, mining officials in Mandalay Region

The MoNREC Union Minister meets officials from the forestry and mining sectors in Mandalay Region in PyinOoLwin yesterday.

UNION Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi met with officials from the forestry and mining sectors in Mandalay Region yesterday morning in PyinOoLwin, Mandalay Region.

During the meeting, the Union Minister instructed officials to inspect the ground condition for low water inflow and depletion in Kandawgyi National Park, to grow cherry plants which are the landmark of PyinOoLwin, to focus on planning and implementation of forest reserves/protected areas and natural reserves in PyinOoLwin District, to do inspection of compliance with the rules and regulations on permitting coffee plantations and private plantations and plantations owned by local communities, to carry out conservation and establishment of forest plantations as a national duty, to focus on research activities which is an important factor in the success of forest plantations, the importance of establishing successful plantations by combining plantation experience and research results in the midst of drought and poor soil types in tropical climate, the importance of the conservation of forests and mineral resources and natural environmental conservation for the Ministry, to comply with the laws, rules and regulations in extracting the resources which are both on the surface of the ground or under the ground, and to be careful not to cause harm to the natural environment.

The Union Minister also coordinated the requirements presented by the officials and inspected the establishment of private coffee plantations, local community-owned forest plantations in May Myo Firewood Block (14, 23, 27, 37) in PyinOoLwin and whether compliance with the rules and regulations. — MNA

## Myanmar-India border trade up this FY

BORDER trade between Myanmar and India hit US$195 million as of 27 August in the current financial year 2020-2021 ending September, said a statistic report of Myanmar's Commerce Ministry. The border trade during the period increased by $106 million compared with the same period of the previous financial year.

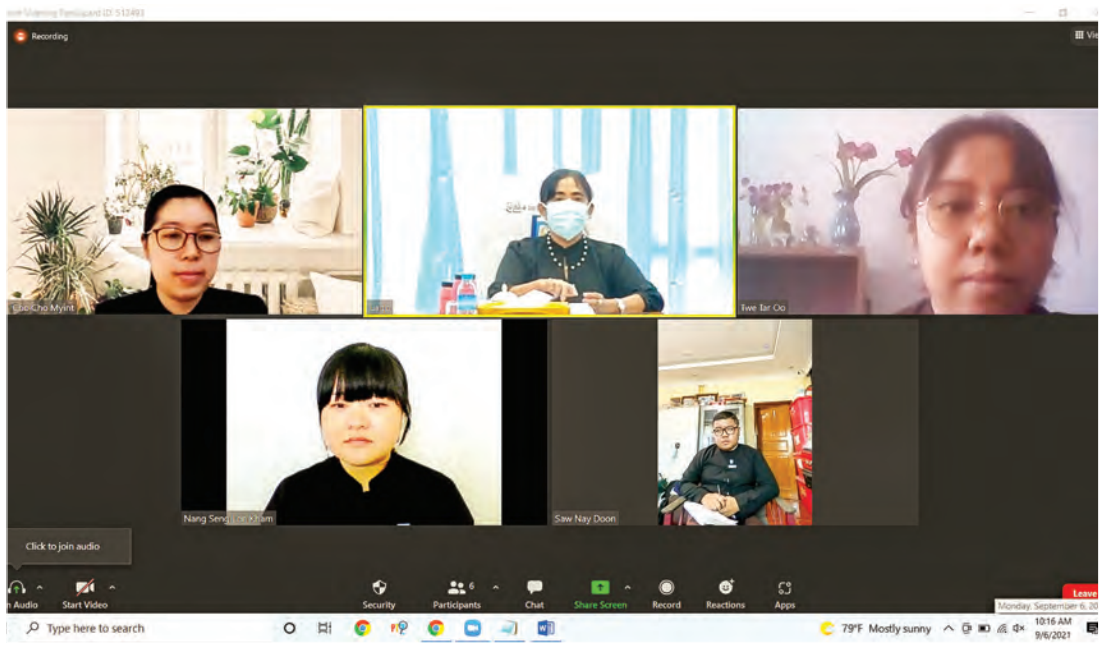
The Myanmar-India total border trade during the period was shared by Myanmar's export of 193.8 million and its import of $1.57 million. The two countries carry out border trade mainly through Tamu, Reed and Thantlang cross-border trade camps, while a major part of bilateral trade is delivered through ships.

Myanmar mainly exports Indian fruits and vegetables, fishery and forestry products, while importing from India medicines, electronic products, motorbikes, cotton yarn, non-alloy steel and other construction materials.

Meanwhile, Myanmar's border trade with four neighbouring countries – China, India, Thailand and Bangladesh—totalled $8.86 billion, shared by $5.83 billion in export and $3.03 billion in import. — ACM/GNLM

The border trade during the period increased by $106 million compared with the same period of the previous financial year.

## Guidance ceremony held for scholars going abroad




Union Legal Affairs Minister Dr Thida Oo gives guideline to law scholars going to study in Japan.

UNION Minister for Legal Affairs and Attorney-General of the Union Dr Thida Oo gave an online guide to law officers who will study at Kyushu University, Kobe University and Nagoya University in Japan.

Scholars have been awarded the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS) in Japan since 2019.

For the 2021-2022 academic year, one Staff Officer and three Deputy Staff Officers from the Ministry of Legal Affairs and the Union Attorney-General's Office will visit Japan to study and compile the research papers. —MNA

## Prices list of medicines commonly used against COVID-19 till 13-9-2021 September

| No | Product Name | Pack Size | Price in Kyats (Retail) | Company Name |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Antibiotics | | | | |
| 1 | P.O - Cefalexin 500 mg | Box of 10x10's | 6,100 | Aorta |
| 2 | P.O - Levofloxacin 500 mg | Box of 10x10's | 7,000 | Shwe Htay Min |
| 3 | P.O.Cefixime | Box of 3x10's | 3,600 | Aorta |
| 4 | P.O Amoxicillin+ Clavulanic Acid | Box of 1x6's | 1,800 | Aorta |
| 5 | Injection - Levofloxacin 500 mg | 1x1 | 3,000 | Yadanar |
| 6 | Injection - Ceftriazone 1G | 1's | 700 | KCL |
| 7 | Injection - Cefoperazone and Sulbactam 1G | Vial | 4,900 | Ready Medicine |
| 8 | Injection - Cefoperazone and Sulbactam 2G | Vial | 9,300 | Ready Medicine |
| 9 | Injection - Meropenam | 1g/Vial | 10,000 | AA Medical |
| Anti-inflammatory | | | | |
| 10 | P.O Dexamethasone | Box of 10x10's | 1,450 | JDS |

Please visit the Website (www.mccpmd.org) and Facebook Page https://www.facebook.com/ 32330252139 2189/posts/ 1720802588308835/ ?d=n to know the prices of other medicines.

# Imports plummet to $13.4 bln this FY: MoC reports

THE value of Myanmar's imports nearly the past eleven months of the current financial year 2020-2021 sank to US$13.4 billion from $17.55 billion recorded in the same corresponding period of last FY, the Ministry of Commerce's data indicated.

All the import groups including the consumer, capital, intermediate goods, and CMP businesses plunged in the current FY. The drop in foreign direct investment this year negatively affected the trade.

Between 1 October and 27 August this FY, capital goods, such as auto parts, vehicles, machines, steel, and aeroplane parts were brought into the country. Their import value was estimated at $4.33 billion. The figure was over $2.3 billion lower than those values registered in the same period of the previous FY.

Meanwhile, Myanmar imported consumer products worth over $3 billion, including pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and palm oil. The imports of consumer products showed a slight decrease of $82.7 million compared with the same period in the previous FY.

Intermediate goods make up the second-largest share of Myanmar's imports, with petroleum products and plastic raw materials being the main import items. This year, imports of raw materials plunged to $4.65 billion from $5.79 billion registered during the year-ago period.

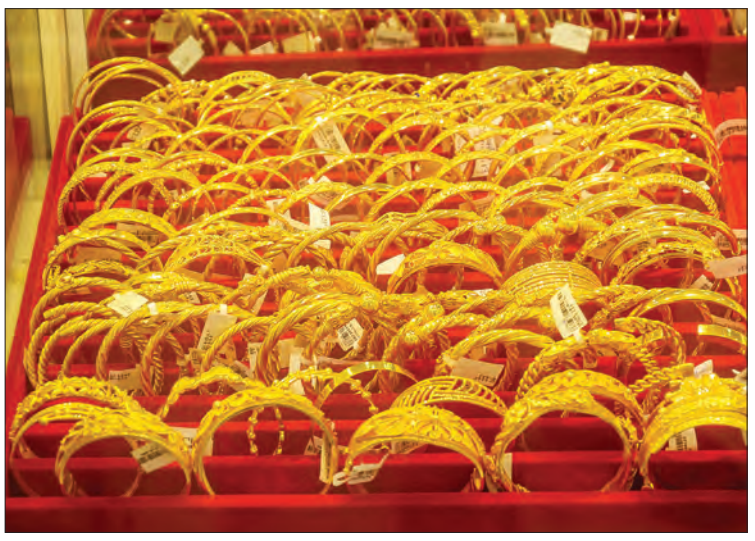
During the same period, raw materials worth over $1.4 billion were also imported for the Cut-Make-Pack (CMP) garment sector, showing a decrease of $584 million compared with the last budget year.

At present, the CMP garment sector which contributes to 30 per cent of Myanmar's export sector is struggling because of the cancellation of orders from the European countries and suspension of trading by western countries amid the COVID-19. Therefore, import values of raw materials by CMP businesses have been dropping.

At present, the traders have transaction problems triggered by the restriction of the private banks. Furthermore, the pandemic triggered the cargo shipping crisis, a market observer shared his opinion.

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

# Domestic gold price falls by K45,000 per tical in two days



On 11 September, the association made six decisions, including control of the market rally, permits for the members to secure transportation to and from gold refineries and for holding a large amount of cash.

THE price of precious yellow metal falls back on 13 September, with a drop of K45,000 in two days, domestic gold market's data showed.

The price of pure gold metal hit fresh new peaks in the recent days and it reached the highest of K1,900,000 per tical (0.578 ounce, or 0.016 kilogram) on 11 September tracking the dollar gains on Kyat in the forex market, whereas it dropped to K1,855,000 per tical on 13 September, according to Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA).

On 11 September, the association made six decisions, including control of the market rally, permits for the members to secure transportation to and from gold refineries and for holding a large amount of cash.

The spikes in the gold market were attributed to the political developments, high demand in the domestic gold market, shortage of raw gold metals, the price gain in the international market and the Kyat depreciation.

The global gold price stood at only US$1,789 per ounce on 13 September, while a US dollar exchange rate was set at K1,734.

As a result of this, YGEA urged its members to regulate trade in order to deal with market volatility.

To regulate unsustainable rally in the domestic gold market, the association called for the members to make the gold transaction with only immediate payment, avoid the verbal transactions over calls and halt trading outside the Yangon region, according to YGEA.

In January 2021, the gold price was ranged between the minimum of K1,316,000 per tical (28 January) and the maximum of K1,336,000 per tical (6 January). It reached an all-time high of K1,410,000 per tical on 3 February and hit the minimum of K1,340,000 per tical on 2 February. In March, the rate fluctuated between the highest of K1,391,000 (25 March) and the lowest of K1,302,000 (4 March). The price was registered the highest of K1,455,000 (30 April) and the lowest of K1,389,000 (1 April). The price reached an all-time highest of K1,709,000 (12 May) and the lowest of K1,447,000 in May. The price moved in the maximum of K1,575,500 (11 June) and the minimum of K1,543,000 (19 June). Last month, it fluctuated between K1,562,300 (26 Jul) and K1,587,000 (K1,587,000), the gold traders said.

According to gold traders, the local gold reached the lowest level of K1,310,500 (2 September) and the highest level of K1,314,000 (1 September). In October, the rate ranged between K1,307,800 (30 October) and K1,316,500 (21 October). The rate fluctuated between the highest of K1,317,000 (9 November) and the lowest of K1,270,000 (30 November). In December, the pure yellow metal priced moved in the range of 1,280,000 (1 December) and 1,332,000 (28 December).

With global gold prices on the uptick, the domestic price hit fresh highs in 2019, reaching K1,000,000 per tical between 17 January and 21 February, crossing K1,100,000 (22 June to 5 August), climbing to over 1,200,000 (7 August-4 September), and then reaching a record high of K1,300,000 on 5 September 2019. — GNLM

# Mandalay Agriculture Dept targets over 48,000 sunflower acres during rainy season

MANDALAY Region Agriculture Department is projected to cover over 48,000 acres of sunflower across 17 townships during the rainy season in order to help secure the edible oil.

The projected sowing acres commenced in May across 17 townships in seven districts of the Mandalay Region. More than 33,000 acres of rain-fed sunflower have been planted. The regional department is striving for the completion of the targeted acres in the region, said Daw Toe Toe Win, head of region department.

"The Agriculture Department is implementing oil crops cultivation to help ensure the edible oil sufficiency in the region. The department will carry out sunflower cultivation by September-end, depending on the rainfall. An acre produces 26 baskets of sunflower. Over 2 viss (a viss equals 1.6 kg) of Sunflower oil can be produced per sunflower basket. The sunflower oil brings health benefits to the persons with cardiovascular disease, neurological disorders and cancer," she elaborated.

The department has implemented 10 sunflower acres in Amarapura Township, 476 acres in Madaya, 33 acres in Singu, 271 acres in PyinOoLwin, 2,297 acres in Kyaukse, 2,257 acres in Singaing, 2,115 acres in TadaU, 570 acres in Meiktila, 32 acres in Mahlaing, 1,250 acres in Thazi, 26 acres in Myingyan, 323 acres in Taungtha, 611 acres in Natogyi, 81 acres in Ngazun, 6,934 acres in Kyaukpadaung, 9,833 acres in Yamethin and 6,236 acres in Pyawbwe, totalling 33,000 acres across 17 townships in Mandalay Region.

The sunflower matures in 85 days. The farmers also practice horticulture to increase their earnings, along with other oil crops such as peanut, sesame seeds and mustard oil crops. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)/ GNLM

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# Narrow development gap between urban, rural regions

THE land of Myanmar is formed with small urban regions and vast rural areas. The urban areas are facilitated with things essential for the society whereas the rural areas do not have similar facilities.

More than 70 per cent of the country's total population is residing in the rural areas engaging in agriculture and livestock breeding tasks. People from the rural areas invest their lives in farming works. In fact, they try hard to earn income for their families by carrying out hard works.

Meanwhile, some 30 per cent of the total population lives in urban areas where they can enjoy better personal goods and higher living standards than those from the rural areas. Urban people grasp a chance to have easy access to any goodies anytime. They have the opportunity to work in technical and mechanical industries in connection with the international community. Thanks to their society, they have a wider scope of knowledge to do something.

Peoples from the two communities are different in the nature of living standards. But they are Myanmar citizens living on the same land. As such, it is necessary to narrow the development gap between them as much as possible. At an opportune time, people from both communities would have to enjoy the fruits of equal facilities in the single society by sharing the future.

The development gap between the urban and the rural areas is based on the educational qualification of the people. Those from rural areas including border areas and far-flung areas miss the chance to learn education to the deserved level. Most of them dropped out from basic education learning in childhood with reasons for helping their families and farming works. Hence, their generations cannot struggle for the traditions. The generations of rural people have been bringing lesser development to the rural society for many decades.

At the same time, the people from urban areas can enjoy all the chances to choose the job professions, the learning systems, the health, social and economic facilities as heaven to march to the successful missions. They have the opportunities to improve their new generations to higher positions. As the people from the urban areas have a wide range of knowledge, they enable to learn modern technologies and have a chance to enjoy further studies abroad.

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# First Person: A refuge from COVID misinformation

The COVID-19 inoculation is "just like any other vaccine" a UN Women staff member is telling the Syrian refugee women she cares for in camps in Jordan, as she tries to combat misinformation and false rumours, and avoid spikes in infection.

HADEEL Al-Zoubi is a Senior Camp Assistant working in two camps (Za'atari and Azraq) that accommodate Syrians who have fled their war-torn country. She told UN News how she has fought COVID-19 misinformation which helped her to overcome her own and others' vaccine hesitancy.

"When the coronavirus first hit, everyone feared this unknown pandemic. We did not know what to expect, especially during the lockdown period when many people started working remotely. As a frontline worker in the refugee camps, I supported more than 300 vulnerable women on a weekly basis.

I could see the burden of confinement measures progressively increasing for them, particularly for the mothers. I was constantly worried that I might be the one to transmit the virus to the women or to get infected myself.

**Serving as an example**

It was only in 2021 that I felt a sense of relief, when the Government announced that vaccines would be available. However, at the beginning I was hesitant to take the vaccine. There was so much misinformation spreading at that time. I started to read more about it, to do some research. After one session organized by the office and WHO, where a doctor explained to us the key scientific facts, I decided to get the vaccine.

My mother did not want to take the vaccine as she heard it would have affected her DNA in some way. Misinformation had been circulating that suggested that it could change a person's skin colour or negatively impact on the DNA of children born to mothers who had been vaccinated.

However, when my mother saw me getting vaccinated, she asked me to register her in the platform as well. I encouraged both my family and our beneficiaries to take the vaccine, serving as an example for them and providing support to complete the online registration.

After completing the two-way communication training, I feel I now have access to the right tools and sources to tackle fake news during this critical period. I share via our WhatsApp groups verified information on COVID-19 and the vaccine with Syrian refugee women enrolled in UN Women's Oasis centres in refugee camps. They provide psychosocial support and livelihood opportunities to women for their economic empowerment, through a series of projects including tailoring and hairdressing training and other educational and child-care opportunities.

**A safe virtual space**

The women's centres were important as they also provided a safe virtual space to share correct information from trusted sources about the pandemic. They complemented a Ministry of Health campaign which aims to spread awareness about COVID-19, and our own awareness-raising material. The women I interact with responded positively and asked many questions about the various vaccines available, the possible side-effects, and what to expect after being vaccinated. I think they wanted to understand the facts and see how effective the vaccines are.

I usually tell the women I serve that the COVID-19 vaccine is like any other vaccine we take during our life. Vaccination is key to overcome the pandemic and we should be aware of fake news and disinformation spreading around us. While I'm less worried about the virus, I remain vigilant by respecting social distancing, wearing my mask, and sanitizing my hands".

*Source : UN*

Hadeel Al-Zoubi is a Senior Camp Assistant for UN Women working in Za'atari and Azraq camps for displaced people in Jordan. **PHOTO: UN WOMEN**

# Covid vaccines hold up against severe Delta: US data

Three U.S. studies suggest COVID-19 vaccines offer strong protection against hospitalization and death, even in the face of the highly transmissible Delta variant, but vaccine protection appears to be waning among older populations, especially among those 75 and older.

A woman (L) receives the Sinopharm COVID-19 coronavirus vaccine in Hanoi on 10 September 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

FULLY vaccinated people were 11 times less likely to die of Covid and 10 times less likely to be hospitalized compared to the unvaccinated since highly contagious Delta became the most common variant, US health authorities said Friday. The data came from one of three new papers published by the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, all of which underscored Covid vaccines' ongoing effectiveness against severe outcomes.

For reasons that are not yet well understood, data from one of the studies suggests Moderna's vaccine has offered a slightly higher level of protection in the Delta period.

It comes a day after President Joe Biden announced an aggressive new immunization plan that includes requiring companies employing more than 100 people to either vaccinate their workers or test them weekly. "As we have shown in study after study, vaccination works," said CDC director Rochelle Walenksy during a press briefing on Friday.

The first study examined hundreds of thousands of cases in 13 US jurisdictions from 4 April - 19 June, the period before Delta was dominant, and compared them to 20 June - 17 July.

Between these periods, a vaccinated person's risk of Covid infection rose slightly: from being 11 times less likely to be infected compared to an unvaccinated person, to five times less likely. Protection against hospitalization and death remained more stable, but fell more among people aged 65 and above than for younger age groups.

The CDC and the Food and Drug Administration are assessing the need for booster shots, and it is likely the elderly will be among the first to receive them when the Biden administration starts to roll them out later this month. One of the studies, which assessed vaccine effectiveness from June - August at more than 400 hospitals, emergency departments and urgent care clinics, stratified efficacy by brand.

Efficacy against hospitalization was highest for Moderna at 95 per cent; then Pfizer at 80 percent; and finally Johnson & Johnson at 60 per cent. Overall efficacy against hospitalization was 86 per cent for all age groups but this fell to 76 per cent for those over 75. The two mRNA vaccines, Pfizer and Moderna, have always performed slightly better than the J&J adenovirus vector vaccine — possibly because the latter is administered as one dose.

It isn't clear why Moderna's vaccine appears to have a slight edge on Pfizer in the Delta period.

It could be linked to its higher dosing level of 100 micrograms versus 30 micrograms, or possibly the greater interval between the first and second shots (four versus three weeks), which might be associated with a heightened immune response.

*Source : AFP*

## Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 13 September 2021)

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

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 14 September 2021:** Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in (Northern and Eastern)Shan State, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Mandalay, and Magway regions and Kachin and Southern Shan states, fairly widespread in Chin and Kayah states and widespread in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of regionally heavyfalls in Rakhine State and isolated heavyfalls in Ayeyawady Region. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Occasional squalls with rough seas will be experienced in Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coast. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) mph. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar Waters. Wave height will be about (9–12) feet in Deltaic, off and along Rakhine Coast and about (6-8) feet in Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of withdrawal of Southwest monsoon from Northern Myanmar areas.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 September 2021:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 September 2021:** One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 September 2021:** Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

## Flood Bulletin

(Issued at 09:00 hrs MST on 13-9-2021)

**Flood condition of Ngawun River**

According to the (08:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Thabaung at Ngawun River has exceeded by about (3) inches above its danger level. It may remain above its danger level during the next (2) days.

Advisory

It is advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas in Thabaung Township, to take precaution measure.

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# MRF, affiliated associations to sell rice at fairer price in Yangon Region

MYANMAR Rice Federation (MRF) and its affiliated associations are to sell the rice at a fairer price in Yangon Region.

This scheme is implemented by MRF, Myanmar Rice and Paddy Traders Association, rice wholesale centre (Wahdan), traders and brokers, with a view to offering the rice at a fairer price starting from 14 September 2021.

Ayeyawady Pawsan, Shwebo Pawsan, Pawkywel, short matured rice varieties (90 days) and sticky rice will be sold at a cheaper price between K23,500 and K54,000 per bag.

About one to five 108-pound bags can be individually purchased. Those who want to buy them can come and buy at the Wahdan rice wholesale centre located at No 100 between Lanthit and Wahdan Streets, Port Yard, lanmadaw Township, Yangon City through the contact numbers (09421167474 and 01218266-68) of the centre.

Ayeyawady Pawsan, Shwebo Pawsan, Pawkywel, short matured rice varieties (90 days) and sticky rice will be sold at a cheaper price between K23,500 and K54,000 per bag.

The prices of staple rice have stayed in the upward trend since May. 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.

The Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar Inspection and Test reserved rice at a fairer price than the prevailing price.

The state's emergency rice reserve is to ensure the food security, keep the price stable in the domestic market, protect the farmer's interest at harvest time, continue to export them regularly and lessen the worries of the consumers during the COVID-19. — NN/GNLM

# Wuntho grows 25 acres of cotton yarn

THE farmers started growing 25 acres of cotton yarn on 12 September on a trial basis in Wuntho township, Sagaing region to produce and use the high-quality cotton seeds, said U Tint Swe, the head of Wuntho township Agriculture Department.

On 12 September, U Kyaw Hla, a farmer from Kyine Phoo Gone village, Wuntho township demonstrated the cultivation of post-monsoon long-staple cotton on 2 acres of U Hla Kyaw's farmland in cooperation with the Wuntho township Agriculture Department.

"We have targeted to grow 25 acres of cotton yarn. We are planning to grow 10 acres of only cotton plantation and 15 acres of cotton under a mixed farming system together with green gram and sesame. Yesterday, we started cultivation of two acres of a cotton plantation," said U Tint Swe.

Wuntho Township started growing 25 acres of cotton yarn plantation from 12 September 2021 and the cultivation will complete in the third week of September.

"There are only small acres of a cotton plantation in our township. In the current winter sesame cultivating season, we are started cultivating of the post-monsoon long-staple cotton on a trial basis instead of cold season sesame. The aim is to increase the income of cotton farmers and they become acquainted with small-scale cotton cultivation techniques. By doing so, they can earn a small income from both crops," said the head of Wuntho township Agriculture Department.

The department has already provided training to 10 farmers to post-monsoon grow long-staple cotton in Wuntho township. The department also provided the fertilizers, pesticides and cotton seeds free of charge. — Lulay/GNLM

Wuntho Township started growing 25 acres of cotton yarn plantation from 12 September 2021 and the cultivation will complete in the third week of September.

# Dala begins COVID-19 jabs for factory workers

A local gets the first shot of Covid vaccine in Dala Township.

INTENDING to prevent the spreading of COVID-19, Dala township began the first dose of COVID-19 vaccination for factory workers on 13 September 2021 at Township Public Hospital.

Township Public Health Department staff provided the first jabs of COVID-19 vaccines to 352 workers from restaurants, grocery stores, ports, saving and loans enterprises, fuel oil stations, fisheries depots, rice mills, wages workers from electricity offices, trishaw stands and shipyard at 9 am to 3 pm.

The officials from the Township General Administration Department and members of the Township Red Cross Society are also cooperating with the vaccination programme.

The vaccines were administered in line with the COVID-19 guidelines set by the Ministry of Health, and health awareness talks were given to the vaccinated people.

Dala Township has given the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine to 5319 people including 880 people over 65 years of age, 39 government and private health workers, 386 volunteers from charity organizations, six people from home for the aged, 176 vulnerable monks and nuns, 488 civil staffs, 815 civil staffs' family members, 44 private bankers, 249 private factories workers, 25 hotel industries workers, 13 prisoners, 601 transportation staff and 1,603 supermarket staff.

Authorities are also carrying out to provide the second dose of COVID-19 vaccines to those who have had the first dose of the vaccine, according to the Township Committee on Control and Emergency Response to COVID-19. — Naing Lin Kyaw (IPRD)/GNLM

In this photo taken on 8 September 2021, teachers sort distance learning materials at a school in Quezon City, suburban Manila, ahead of another school year of remote lessons in the country due to the pandemic. Classrooms in the Philippines were silent on 13 September 2021 as millions of school children hunkered down at home for a second year of remote lessons that experts fear will worsen an educational "crisis". **PHOTO: AFP**

# Philippines 'learning crisis' as kids face second year of remote schooling

CLASSROOMS in the Philippines were silent Monday as millions of school children hunkered down at home for a second year of remote lessons that experts fear will worsen an educational "crisis".

While nearly every country in the world has partially or fully reopened schools to in-person classes, the Philippines has kept them closed since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, the UN says.

President Rodrigo Duterte has so far rejected proposals for a pilot reopening of primary and secondary schools for fear children could catch Covid-19 and infect elderly relatives. "I want to go to school," seven-year-old Kylie Larrobis told AFP, complaining she cannot read after a year of online kindergarten in the tiny slum apartment in Manila she shares with six people. "I don't know what a classroom looks like — I've never seen one."

Larrobis, who enters first grade this year, cries in frustration when she cannot understand her online lessons, which she follows on a smartphone, said her mother, Jessielyn Genel. Her misery is compounded by a ban on children playing outdoors. "What is happening is not good," said Genel, who opposed a return to in-person classes while the Delta variant ripped through the country. A "blended learning" programme involving online classes, printed materials and lessons broadcast on television and social media was launched last October.

It has been plagued with problems: most students in the Philippines don't have a computer or internet at home. — AFP ■

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Vietnamese fleeing virus found in refrigerated truck: media

FIFTEEN people including a seven-year-old boy have been found inside a refrigerated truck in Vietnam after they tried to escape areas of the south badly hit by Covid-19, state media said Monday. Vietnam has been battling a devastating fourth wave of the virus since April and tens of millions of people are under stay-at-home orders, with domestic travel largely forbidden.

On Sunday police in Binh Thuan province discovered the group of 15 inside a vehicle that had aroused suspicion as it tried to pass a virus checkpoint on its way north, Ho Chi Minh City's Phap Luat online newspaper said. "Police were so surprised to see 15 people at the back of the truck— Some of them were sweating and showed symptoms of breath shortness," the report said, adding the passengers were carrying negative Covid test certificates. — AFP ■

### Vaccinated Sydney residents picnic as lockdown rules relaxed

VIRUS lockdown rules were relaxed for fully vaccinated people in Sydney on Monday, with small groups allowed to meet for picnics for the first time in months. Families and friends gathered in parks and at beaches, reuniting 11 weeks after an outbreak of the Delta variant brought Australia's biggest city to a virtual standstill.

The rules remain strict, with just five fully vaccinated people allowed to gather outdoors for up to an hour, while tougher rules are in place for virus hotspots. Across Sydney, a five-kilometre (three-mile) travel limit remains in place. Though only a slight easing of restrictions, carer Lisa Doyle welcomed the change, saying it would make lockdown "a lot easier". — AFP ■

# UK cancels Covid vaccine contract with Franco-Austrian firm

FRENCH-AUSTRIAN biotech laboratory Valneva said Monday the British government has terminated a supply deal for its candidate vaccine against Covid-19.

Britain had ordered 100 million doses of the vaccine for 2021-2022 — the only order so far for Valvena, which has a production facility in Livingstone, Scotland. Britain "has alleged that the company is in breach of its obligations under the Supply Agreement, but the Company strenuously denies this," Valneva said in a statement.

The UK government has yet to comment on the decision.

Unlike most high-profile coronavirus shots, which use various methods to prime the immune system to fight the coronavirus, Valneva's VLA2001 is based on an "inactivated" version of the coronavirus itself.

The laboratory had indicated at the end of August that on the basis of the Phase 1 and 2 trials, it hoped to have a vaccine that is more than 80 per cent effective.

An illustration picture shows vials with Covid-19 Vaccine stickers attached and syringes with the logo of French-Austrian vaccine firm Valneva on 17 November 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

Valneva said Monday the contract provides the British government with the right to cancel the deal, and it had received "a termination notice from the UK Government".

"Valneva has worked tirelessly, and to its best efforts, on the collaboration with (the British government) including investing significant resources and effort to respond to (its) requests for variant-derived vaccines.

"Valneva continues to be committed to the development of VLA2001 and will increase its efforts with other potential customers to ensure that its inactivated vaccine can be used in the fight against the pandemic," it said. — AFP ■

# Testing times: Borneo orangutans get Covid swabs

DOZENS of critically endangered orangutans in Malaysia have been tested for the coronavirus, with vets in protective suits undertaking the tricky task of giving the apes nasal swabs.

The antigen tests on 30 of the red-haired creatures in Sabah state on Borneo island were conducted last Tuesday, and all came back negative, wildlife officials said.

They were the first virus tests on orangutans in the Southeast Asian country, and were ordered after staff at a rehabilitation centre and wildlife park became infected. "Testing for Covid-19 has been a vital tool in helping us get through this pandemic, and it is similarly important for this orangutan population," said Sen Nathan, assistant director of the Sabah Wildlife Department. "The disease could prove vastly detrimental to their health and set back their rehabilitation."

Vets will continue to closely monitor the apes and tests will be conducted regularly, officials said.

Animals have become infected with Covid-19 on occasion. At the weekend, a zoo in Atlanta announced that several of its gorillas had tested positive. Domestic cats, dogs and at least one ferret have also been infected.

Malaysia is fighting a serious Covid-19 outbreak driven by the highly contagious Delta variant, and has been recording thousands of cases and hundreds of deaths each day.

Sabah, on the northeastern tip of Borneo and home to vast tracts of jungle and a kaleidoscope of rare animals, has also faced a surge in cases.

Bornean orangutans are classified as "critically endangered" by protection group the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Their populations have declined by more than 50 per cent over the past 60 years, according to the WWF, as the animals' forest habitat has been progressively cut down to make way for agricultural plantations. — AFP ■

# SpaceX to launch private, all-civilian crew into Earth orbit

SPACEX is set to launch four people into space Wednesday on a three-day mission that is the first to orbit the Earth with exclusively private citizens on board, as Elon Musk's company enters the space tourism fray.

The "Inspiration4" mission caps a summer that saw billionaires Richard Branson and Jeff Bezos cross the final frontier, on Virgin Galactic and Blue Origin spaceships respectively, a few days apart in July.

The SpaceX flight has been chartered by American billionaire Jared Isaacman, the 38-year-old founder and CEO of payment processing company Shift4 Payment. He is also a seasoned pilot. The exact price he paid SpaceX hasn't been disclosed, but it runs into the tens of millions of dollars.

In this photo screengrab made from SpaceX's live webcast shows the Starship SN15 after landing in Boca Chica, Cameron County, Texas on 5 May 2021. SpaceX successfully landed its prototype Starship rocket on its fifth attempt, a livestream Wednesday showed. There was however a small fire at the base of the rocket, dubbed SN15, which announcers said was not unusual. **PHOTO : AFP / SPACEX**

The mission itself is far more ambitious in scope than the few weightless minutes Virgin Galactic and Blue Origin customers can buy.

The SpaceX Crew Dragon will be flying further than the orbit of the International Space Station.

"The risk is not zero," said Isaacman in an episode of a Netflix documentary about the mission. "You're riding a rocket at 17,500 miles (28,000 kilometers) per hour around the Earth. In that kind of environment there's risks."

SpaceX has already given no fewer than ten astronauts rides to the ISS on behalf of NASA — but this will be the first time taking non-professional astronauts.

Lift-off is scheduled for Wednesday from 8:00 pm Eastern Time (0000 GMT) from launch pad 39A, at NASA's Kennedy Center in Florida, from where the Apollo missions to the Moon took off.

In addition to Isaacman, who is the mission commander, three non-public figures were selected for the voyage via a process that was first advertised at the Super Bowl in February. — AFP ■

# Another deadly year for LatAm environment defenders

A record 227 people were killed worldwide in 2020 for their defence of nature — more than four a week on average, and almost three-quarters of them in Latin America, environmental rights organization Global Witness said Sunday. For the second year in a row, Colombia was the country with the highest number of killings — 65 — while Nicaragua had the highest per-capita rate, with 12 murders up from five in 2019, the group said in its annual report.

Seven of the 10 deadliest countries for land and environmental defenders were in Latin America, with 165 killings recorded, though Global Witness said the number was "almost certainly" an underestimate.

After Colombia, Mexico had the second highest number of deaths globally, with 30.

It was followed by the Philippines (29), Brazil (20), Honduras (17), the Democratic Republic of Congo (15), Guatemala (13), Nicaragua (12), Peru (six) and India (four). "This is a crisis against humanity," said the report.

"Land and environmental defenders that have stood up to powerful interests have paid a heavy price — with their freedom, livelihoods and even their lives." Repressive governments, added Global Witness, used the global coronavirus outbreak "as an opportunity to clamp down on civil society as companies pushed ahead with destructive projects." — AFP ■

Colombian indigenous environmentalist Celia Umenza, 48, poses during an interview with AFP in Tacueyo, department of Cauca, Colombia on 7 September 2021. Death breathes on the nape of indigenous people who defend nature in Colombia, the deadliest country for environmentalists. **PHOTO : AFP**

# Britain urges net zero shipping emissions by 2050

BRITAIN, host of this year's COP26 climate change summit, called Monday for net zero global shipping emissions by 2050 and the launch of non-polluting commercial vessels by 2025.

The UK government wants to "chart a course" for cleaner shipping, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said on the first day of London's international shipping week maritime event.

The zero target needs agreement from the International Maritime Organization, the Department for Transport added in a statement, noting that shipping currently accounts for three per cent of global emissions.

"As a maritime nation with a rich history, and host of COP26 this year, we are proud to be at the forefront of the greener era for maritime, charting an international course for the future of clean shipping," Shapps said in the statement.

"Taking action now allows us to lead the charge on this global shift, creating highly-skilled jobs for British workers and shaping the landscape for what clean shipping and trade will look like for future generations."

Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative administration, which also seeks to reduce Britain's carbon emissions to net zero by 2050, will in November host the COP26 United Nations climate summit in Glasgow. This week's international shipping week comes after sea freight prices have rocketed in recent months due to the global supply crunch and a shortage of vessels.

Shipping companies, buoyed by keen demand, are currently splashing out cash on expanding their fleets with newly-built ships. — AFP ■

# Greenpeace: An 'insane' vision that took flight 50 years ago

"INSANE" — that was teenager Barbara Stowe's reaction 50 years ago when her parents and the other founders of Greenpeace decided that they would send a boat to halt US nuclear tests. But their conviction won over Stowe and her brother Robert, who witnessed these pathbreaking meetings in the family home in Vancouver to send a ship to Amchitka in Alaska.

"I have to say that my dad, my parents, the Bohlens, Bob Hunter, Ben Metcalfe, they were visionaries, they were empowered with the idea which is somewhat crazy that a single individual or a small group of individuals can actually effect change that can change the world," said Robert Stowe, a 66-year-old neurologist. "For them it was partly an issue of the fact they felt they had to take a stand, regardless of whether or not it would be effective."

On 15 September 1971, a crew of 12 Canadians and Americans who had left their country after the Vietnam war, set out from Vancouver Island in an 80-foot boat called the Phyllis Cormack, which was renamed Greenpeace. Their mission was to steam to the Aleutian island of Amchitka and protest, or even prevent, the detonation of an underground nuclear test. The boat didn't make it to Amchitka. US president Richard Nixon delayed the test and the crew were arrested in the Aleutian port of Akutan by the US Coastguard on a technicality. At this time Greenpeace — now one of the best known names worldwide — was called Don't Make a Wave but a name change was decided at a meeting to flesh out the daring and unprecedented mission to Alaska. — AFP ■

# KDDI teams up with SpaceX to give better access in remote areas

MAJOR Japanese telecommunications service provider KDDI Corp said Monday it has joined hands with SpaceX to provide better access to users on remote islands and in mountainous regions in Japan via the US firm's satellites.

KDDI said it aims to deliver with Space Exploration Technologies Corp, founded by tech billionaire Elon Musk, high-speed, low-latency broadband internet via SpaceX's Starlink satellites to 1,200 remote mobile towers as soon as 2022 so its rural customers can experience urban-level mobile connectivity.

Starlink satellites are positioned in low Earth orbit at an altitude of 550 kilometres, over 65 times closer than traditional satellites, providing higher transmission speeds for end users, according to KDDI.

Starlink is currently offering initial beta service to more than 100,000 users around the world and is continuing expansion toward global coverage. Customers of KDDI's "au" mobile service will face no additional charges due to the new service, the company added.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications has issued an experimental licence to operate the ground station for Starlink service installed at KDDI's Yamaguchi Satellite Communication Centre in western Japan, according to KDDI.

KDDI also said Monday it will launch later this month a new low-priced mobile service plan amid intense price competition with rival wireless carriers under government pressure to drastically reduce fees.

The plan dubbed "povo 2.0," which has no basic fees, gives customers more flexibility in terms of data and voice call usage, instead of a fixed amount of data service per month.

For example, customers can choose a service for 1-gigabyte usage per seven days at 390 yen ($3.6) including tax, 20 gigabytes per 30 days for 2,700 yen and 60 gigabytes per 90 days at 6,490 yen, among other choices.

KDDI will finish accepting new customers for the current "povo" monthly plan, which offers 20-gigabyte services for 2,728 yen, in late September. To cut costs and lower fees, the company only takes applications for the "povo" discounted plans online. — Kyodo News ■

Screenshot image shows KDDI Corp President Makoto Takahashi giving an online press conference on 13 September 2021. **PHOTO : KYODO NEWS**

# Australian regulator denies Qantas-Japan Airlines deal

AUSTRALIA'S competition regulator on Monday denied approval for an agreement between Qantas Airways Ltd and Japan Airlines Co to coordinate flights between Australia and Japan, saying it would reduce competition when coronavirus travel restrictions are lifted and international travel resumes. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission said in a statement that the proposed agreement would not only remove competition between the two top competitors but also make it difficult for other airlines to operate on routes between Australia and Japan.

"Preserving competition between airlines is the key to the long-term recovery of the aviation and tourism sectors, once international travel restrictions are eased," said Rod Sims, chair of the ACCC.

Qantas and JAL together flew some 85 per cent of passengers traveling between Australia and Japan in 2019, the year before the novel coronavirus pandemic began, the ACCC said. In response to the decision, Qantas and JAL expressed their disappointment in a joint statement, saying the agreement would have boosted the recovery of the tourism sector once international borders reopened. "A closer partnership between Qantas and Japan Airlines would have meant more routes, better flight connections and more benefits to frequent flyers. None of these benefits will be realized following the ACCC's decision," said Andrew David, Qantas domestic and international CEO. The sentiment was echoed by Ross Leggett, JAL executive officer and senior vice president. "We especially believed that the joint business with Qantas would have accelerated the recovery of leisure and business traffic between Japan and Australia, with clear economic and social benefits to both countries in the extremely challenging environment precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic," said Leggett. — Kyodo News ■

# Asian markets mixed as record US inflation fans taper talk

ASIAN markets were mixed Monday following another retreat on Wall Street as record high US inflation ramped up concerns the Federal Reserve will have to tighten monetary policy sooner than later.

Reports that President Joe Biden was considering a fresh trade probe into China added to the downbeat mood and nullified the optimism sparked by news that he had held talks on Friday with Xi Jinping in a bid to smooth relations between the superpowers.

After driving a healthy run-up in Asia so far this month, investor sentiment was once again roiled by data on Friday showing US factory gate inflation had soared in August to an all-time high of 8.3 per cent owing to a jump in demand as well as supply and labour shortages. The data ramped up speculation about the Fed's plans for monetary policy.

Its boss Jerome Powell has already indicated that the central bank will likely start tapering its vast bond-buying programme — which has been a key driver of the economic and equity markets recovery — by the end of the year.

But the latest figures could cause officials to bring forward their timeline. The release Tuesday of consumer inflation has now taken on more significance.

"With the US Federal Reserve due to meet next week, and the narrative clearly moving towards a tapering of asset purchases sooner rather than later, there appears to be a build up in anxiety that the continued rise in inflationary pressure may well be much more persistent than central bankers would have us believe," said CMC Markets analyst Michael Hewson.

All three US indexes ended in the red on Friday, with reports of Biden's probe adding to the selling pressure.

The president was said to be looking at Beijing's subsidies and their effect on the US economy, the reports said, with discussions also being held on last year's trade deal agreed by Donald Trump.— AFP ■

## MYANMA Port Authority
## "NOTICE of High Tide"

EXCEPTIONALLY high spring from 20.08 feet to 20.41 feet high above the chart datum are expected to occur in Yangon River during the period of September 20th to September 24th, 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.

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
**M.V SPIRIT OF DUBAI VOY.NO. (18W/E)**

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SPIRIT OF DUBAI VOY.NO. (18W/E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **14-9-2021** 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 GOLD STAR LINES**

## CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
**M.V MCC KYOTO VOY.NO. (134S)**

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MCC KYOTO VOY.NO. (134S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **14-9-2021** 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**

# Israeli foreign minister proposes development plan for Gaza

Members of Israeli security forces stand guard following a reported stabbing attack at the junction of Gush Etzion, a block of Israeli settlements near the Palestinian city of Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank, on 13 September 2021. **PHOTO : AHMAD GHARABLI / AFP**

ISRAEL'S foreign minister has proposed improving living conditions in Gaza in exchange for calm from the enclave's Hamas Islamist leaders, aiming to solve "never-ending rounds of violence" as the two sides exchanged fresh fire over the weekend.

The plan, which includes infrastructure and employment benefits, aims to show Palestinians in the Israeli-blockaded enclave that Hamas's campaign of violence against Israel is "why they live in conditions of poverty, scarcity, violence and high unemployment, without hope", Yair Lapid said Sunday. He stressed that he was not calling for negotiations with Hamas, as "Israel doesn't speak to terror organizations who want to destroy us".

Lapid, due to take over as premier in two years as part of a rotation agreement, conceded that his plan does not yet amount to official policy in Israel's eight-party coalition government, but said it had support from Prime Minister Naftali Bennett.

In the first stage of the plan, the infrastructure in Gaza — an impoverished territory of two million people — would receive a sorely needed upgrade, Lapid said in a speech at the Reichman University in Herzliya.

"The electricity system will be repaired, gas will be connected, a water desalination plant will be built, significant improvements to the healthcare system and a rebuilding of housing and transport infrastructure will take place," he said.

"In exchange, Hamas will commit to long-term quiet," he added, noting the international community would play a role in the process, especially Egypt, to Gaza's south.

"It won't happen without the support and involvement of our Egyptian partners and without their ability to talk to everyone involved," Lapid said. "Any breach by Hamas will stop the process or set it back," he warned.

If the first stage were to go smoothly, Gaza would then see the construction of an artificial island off its coast that would allow the construction of a port, and a "transportation link" between Gaza and the West Bank would be created.

Lapid said he had presented the plan to "partners in the Arab world," as well as to the United States, Russia and the European Union.— AFP ■

# Germany's Laschet and Scholz trade blows in heated election debate

ARMIN LASCHET, the struggling chancellor candidate from Angela Merkel's conservative camp, went on the attack against his centre-left rival in a lively election debate Sunday, but failed to deliver a knock-out blow.

With just two weeks to go before a general election, the gaffe-prone Laschet put in a fiery performance in the second of three primetime debates, all but ignoring Annalena Baerbock, the Green party's chancellor hopeful, to focus his blows on Finance Minister Olaf Scholz from the Social Democrats (SPD).

Scholz, often described as wooden and uncharismatic, appeared mostly unfazed, briefly interrupting Laschet to accuse him of "twisting the facts" when he sought to highlight Scholz's perceived oversight failings in recent financial scandals. In a snap poll after the 90-minute debate, viewers declared Scholz the winner, while Baerbock scored highest on likeability.

Germany's topselling Bild daily said Laschet had needed to emerge as the clear victor to keep his chances of succeeding Merkel alive. "There was a fierce exchange of punches, but no one went down," it wrote.

The verdict is likely to add to growing nervousness in Merkel's CDU/CSU alliance, whose popularity has been falling steadily. Surveys put support for the CDU/CSU at a record-low of around 20 per cent, while Scholz's SPD has come from behind to take the lead at 26 per cent. — AFP ■

# Canada election up in air with one week to go

WILL Canada's Liberal leader Justin Trudeau win a third term as prime minister or will Conservative leader Erin O'Toole ruin his plans?

With a week to go before crucial snap legislative elections called by Trudeau himself, the two parties are virtually tied.

As the last week of campaigning kicks into high gear, the most recent polls show the Liberals and Conservatives each with 30-34 per cent of the vote, and the leftist New Democratic Party with about 20 per cent. Smaller parties account for the remainder.

By calling for elections well before the usual end of his term, the 49-year-old Trudeau is hoping to again secure a ruling majority in the House of Commons, which he lost when voters went to the polls in 2019.

But after a month of campaigning for the September 20 vote, that goal seems "unattainable," according to Andre Lamoureux, a professor of political science at the University of Quebec in Montreal.

"He could once again end up with a minority government, but he's playing with fire," Lamoureux told AFP. Trudeau, the son of former prime minister Pierre Trudeau, swept to power in 2015, unseating the Tories, who had been in office for nearly a decade.

If neither the Liberals nor the Tories —who have alternated as the ruling party since 1867 — are able to secure a majority of the 338 seats in the lower house of parliament, the winner will have to form a minority government.

Ultimately, the election will be a referendum on the

(FILES) In this file photo taken on 9 September 2021 Canadian Prime Minister and Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau speaks during the federal election English-language Leaders debate in Gatineau, Quebec, Canada.
**PHOTO : JUSTIN TANG / POOL / AFP**

policies of Trudeau because the Conservatives' ideas "are not more popular than they were before," says Genevieve Tellier, a professor of politics at the University of Ottawa. Voters have realized that "Justin Trudeau's decision to put himself back on the campaign trail was grounded in very strategic calculations," Tellier told AFP.

His rivals have repeatedly said in recent weeks that the campaign was a useless one as parliament is working fine — though Trudeau has called it dysfunctional — and the country should instead be focusing on the fourth wave of Covid-19 cases. — AFP ■

# Iran to continue allowing IAEA camera recording at nuclear facilities

IRAN and the International Atomic Energy Agency have agreed to continue IAEA recording with surveillance cameras installed at the country's nuclear facilities, the new head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran said Sunday.

However, the recorded video will not be provided to the IAEA and its inspections will be still be restricted, making it difficult for the UN nuclear watchdog to grasp the full picture of Iran's nuclear development, AEOI chief Mohammad Eslami said.

He made the remarks to reporters after talks with IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi, who was making his visit to Tehran since ultra-conservative President Ebrahim Raisi assumed office in August to urge an early normalization of inspections. A joint statement issued after the talks, which Eslami called "good and constructive," said IAEA inspectors are "permitted to service the identified equipment and replace their storage media," thus allowing recording to continue. But the surveillance camera memory cards "will be kept under the joint IAEA and AEOI seals in the Islamic Republic of Iran," it said

Grossi's visit to Iran comes just the day before the IAEA's regular board meeting begins in Vienna.

The Iranian nuclear issue is expected to be a major agenda item at the meeting and the board might adopt a resolution condemning Iran over its inspection restrictions.

There are concerns that could result in a stiffening of Iran's attitude, making progress in talks involving Iran, the United States and Europe on rebuilding the 2015 nuclear deal more elusive. The IAEA is tasked with verifying Iran's commitments under the nuclear deal with world powers. Besides restricting inspections, Iran has been enriching uranium to 60 per cent purity, which is close to nuclear weapons-grade. — Kyodo news ■

# N Korea test-fires new cruise missile with range to reach Japan

NORTH KOREA successfully carried out tests of a new long-range cruise missile over the weekend, the state-run Korean Central News Agency said Monday, in what appears to be the country's first missile test since late March.

By launching a cruise missile capable of reaching Japan, a close US ally, North Korea may be watching how President Joe Biden will react, as Washington has been concentrating on dealing with the chaos in Afghanistan triggered by the Taliban takeover, a diplomatic source said.

A number of missiles newly developed by the Academy of Defence Science flew for just over two hours above the territorial land and waters of North Korea before hitting targets 1,500 kilometres, according to KCNA.

The tests, which came days after North Korea staged a military parade in Pyongyang last week on the 73rd anniversary of the nation's founding, are believed to have been aimed at generating national unity, some foreign affairs experts say.

Unlike ballistic missiles, cruise missile launches are not targeted by UN Security Council resolutions. Still, Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato said at a press conference in Tokyo on Monday that North Korea's move "would jeopardize regional peace and security".

Over the North Korean issue, senior diplomats from Japan, the United States and South Korea are scheduled to meet in Tokyo on Tuesday to discuss ways to resume denuclearization negotiations between Washington and Pyongyang.

Pak Jong Chon, a close aide to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, observed the missile test, the news agency said. He was reportedly promoted to the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea earlier this month.

Combined photo delivered 13 September 2021 by the Korean Central News Agency shows what are described as new long-range cruise missiles being test-fired on 11 and 12 September 2021. **PHOTO : KCNA/ KYODO NEWS**

"The efficiency and practicality of the weapon system operation was confirmed to be excellent," KCNA said, adding that development has been pushed forward for the past two years. — Kyodo news ■

# 1st batch of Afghan evacuees arrive in Japan, more expected to come

FOUR Afghan evacuees have arrived in Japan from Afghanistan to take refuge following the Taliban's return to power, with the Japanese government arranging for more evacuees to enter the country, the Foreign Ministry said Monday.

The evacuees — a local worker for the Japan International Cooperation Agency in Afghanistan and the worker's family members — arrived at Narita airport near Tokyo on Sunday evening, becoming the first Afghans to take refuge in Japan after the Taliban's takeover.

The ministry said they left Afghanistan by land in late August on their own without Japan's assistance after the Taliban returned to power in mid-August and have no health problems. They are currently staying on a short-term visa and quarantined as part of Japan's measures against the novel coronavirus. The ministry said that once they decide whether they wish to continue staying in Japan or leave for another country, it will respond accordingly.

Japan will continue to seek the safe evacuation of Afghan staff of Japanese organizations and others from the country qualifying for refuge by air and other means through negotiations with the Taliban while sheltering those who have evacuated on their own, the ministry said.

Former Afghan students who studied in Japan are also subject to Japan's assistance if they have a guarantor in Japan, the ministry said. "We have offered necessary assistance such as issuing a visa and arranging airline tickets," Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato told a press conference in Tokyo, adding that the government will continue to provide support for other evacuees.

The four Afghans arrived in Japan via Doha in the Gulf state of Qatar and arrangements are being made for further Afghan evacuees to arrive in Japan soon — on Monday or later — with the Japanese government and JICA shouldering travel and accommodation expenses, ministry officials said. — Kyodo news ■

# First foreign commercial flight since Taliban takeover lands in Kabul

A Pakistan International Airlines plane carrying a handful of passengers, which is the first international commercial flight to land since the Taliban retook power in Afghanistan on 15 August, is seen after landing at the airport in Kabul, on 13 September 2021. **PHOTO : AFP**

A Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) plane carrying a handful of passengers touched down at Kabul airport Monday, the first international commercial flight to land since the Taliban retook power in Afghanistan on 15 August.

"There was hardly anyone on the plane, around 10 people... maybe more staff than passengers," said an AFP journalist aboard the flight from Islamabad.

A PIA spokesman said at the weekend that the airline was keen to resume regular commercial services, but it was too soon to say how frequently flights between the two capitals would operate.

Kabul airport was severely damaged during a chaotic evacuation of more than 120,000 people that ended with the withdrawal of US forces on 30 August.

The Taliban have been scrambling to get it operating again with technical assistance from Qatar and other nations.

Qatar Airways operated several charter flights out of Kabul last week, carrying mostly foreigners and Afghans who missed out on the evacuation.

An Afghan airline resumed domestic services on 3 September. — AFP ■

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### China delivers more COVID-19 vaccines to Philippines

CHINA delivered an additional batch of Sinovac CoronaVac vaccines to the Philippines on Monday to support the Southeast Asian country's COVID-19 vaccination campaign.

"We thank China and Sinovac for the steady delivery of vaccines," Carlito Galvez, an official in charge of the country's vaccine procurement, told reporters at the airport.

Galvez said the Philippines expects more vaccine deliveries from Sinovac in the coming months. "The newly delivered vaccines will be distributed to areas with surging cases," he added.

China has been delivering COVID-19 vaccines to the Philippines since 28 February. It was the first to provide coronavirus vaccines to the Southeast Asian country, allowing it to kick off its vaccination drive on 1 March. — Xinhua ■

### New Zealand extends lockdown in virus-hit Auckland

NEW Zealand's largest city of Auckland will remain in strict Covid-19 lockdown for at least another week as a Delta variant outbreak "rumbles along", Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said Monday.

Ardern said the city's two million residents needed to abide by stay-at-home orders because of the emergence of several "mystery cases" which had not yet been linked to existing clusters.

"These mystery cases are still coming through and the fact we're finding them through surveillance and community testing, rather than contact tracing, is what we're concerned about," she said. New Zealand imposed a national lockdown on 17 August when the first case of the highly transmissible Delta variant was found in the community.

But stay-at-home orders were lifted outside Auckland last week as it became apparent that all new cases were emerging in the city. — AFP ■

# ASEAN Suzuki Cup drawing of lots ceremony to be held on 21 September

THE drawing of lots ceremony for the ASEAN Suzuki Cup,which has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has been set on 21 September in Singapore.

The tournament, which was not held in 2020, will be held again this year and will be called the 2020 ASEAN Suzuki Cup.

The tourney's casting lots ceremony is originally scheduled for 10 August but has been postponed to this month due to the epidemic.

The competition will last from 5 December 2021 to 1 January 2022, and the host country will be selected according to the pandemic situation.

The final round of the tournament will be held with a total of 10 teams and will be divided into two groups of five teams each.

The ASEAN Suzuki Cup is the highest-profile event for the Southeast Asian national football teams and the tourney will give the highest cash award of the ASEAN to the winners.

The ASEAN Suzuki Cup has been held regularly every two years since 1996 and was postponed for a year in 2020 due to the global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Myanmar team has competed in all the previous tourneys. The team has never reached the final of the tournament and only reached the semi-finals. — Ko Nyi Lay/ GNLM

# Djokovic's Grand Slam bid foiled as Medvedev wins US Open

Winner Russia's Daniil Medvedev (R) and Serbia's Novak Djokovic hold their trophies after the 2021 US Open Tennis tournament men's final match against at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Centre in New York, on 12 September 2021. **PHOTO : KENA BETANCUR / AFP**

DANIIL MEDVEDEV shattered Novak Djokovic's Grand Slam dream with a straight sets victory in the US Open final here Sunday, denying the world number one a record-breaking 21st major men's singles title. Russia's second-ranked Medvedev dominated Djokovic 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 to prevent the first calendar-year Grand Slam since 1969 and keep Djokovic level with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal atop the career Slam title list. "Sorry for you fans and Novak because we all know what he was going for," Medvedev said.

"What you have accomplished in your career... for me, you are the greatest tennis player in the history."

Medvedev, the 2019 US Open runner-up, captured his first Grand Slam title in his third Slam final, a rematch of February's Australian Open final, won in straight sets by the 34-year-old Serbian to launch his Slam quest. "Congratulations to Daniil. Amazing match," Djokovic said. "If there's anyone that deserves a Grand Slam title right now, it's you." Djokovic's bid to sweep the US, French and Australian Opens and Wimbledon in the same year for the first time since Rod Laver did it 52 years ago collapsed at the last hurdle, with 83-year-old Aussie legend Laver among 23,700 watching at Arthur Ashe Stadium. — AFP ■

# Liverpool's Elliott 'overwhelmed' by support after horror injury

LIVERPOOL'S teenage midfielder Harvey Elliott said he had been overwhelmed by the "love and support" he has received since dislocating his ankle in Sunday's 3-0 win at Leeds.

Elliott sustained the gruesome injury after a challenge by Leeds defender Pascal Struijk, who was sent off after a VAR review. The 18-year-old received lengthy treatment on the Elland Road pitch before being stretchered off, leaving players from both teams looking distraught.

Elliott was later discharged from a hospital in Leeds and while the full severity of the damage has yet to be confirmed, he will undergo surgery.

"I'm of course absolutely devastated with what happened yesterday at Leeds, but have been totally overwhelmed by the love and support shown to me by the entire football world following the injury," Elliott wrote on Instagram on Monday.

"Thank you so much to everyone who has reached out or sent messages to me and my family, it means so much to us.

"Also a massive thanks to everyone inside Elland Road for the reception you gave me immediately after it happened."

Elliott had emerged as a surprise first-choice for Liverpool in the early weeks of this season after spending last term on loan at second-tier Blackburn. — AFP ■

## Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

**1. Political affairs**

(a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.

(b) To emphasize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).

(c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy.

**2. Economic affairs**

(a) To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern techniques and strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.

(b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.

(c) To promote and support local businesses to create employment opportunities and increase domestic production.

**3. Social affairs**

(a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.

(b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National peoples and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national characteristics.

(c) To enhance the health, fitness and education quality of the entire nation.

# 'Competitive' Bayern head into Europe boosted by Leipzig reinforcements

BAYERN MUNICH start their Champions League campaign Tuesday with a mouth-watering clash at Barcelona as the Bavarian giants confidently head into Europe having plundered reinforcements from Bundesliga rivals RB Leipzig.

While Paris Saint-Germain snapped up stars like Lionel Messi and Sergio Ramos and Manchester United finally signed Jadon Sancho, Bundesliga champions Bayern raided last season's German runners-up RB Leipzig for talent. Bayern head into Europe buoyed by results, with 10 points from their first four league games, and confident in their current squad despite no big-name signing this summer. "We are very, very well positioned - we have possibilities and options. We are definitely competitive," Bayern CEO Oliver Kahn insisted last week.

France defender Dayot Upamecano was signed for 42.5 million ($50 million) from RB Leipzig, as was versatile Austria midfielder Marcel Sabitzer, at a bargain price of around 16 million euros, as Bayern's main recruits for this season.

**'We don't force anyone'**

Ironically, Sabitzer made his Bayern debut off the bench in Saturday's 4-1 win at Leipzig, where he began the season as club captain. Bayern also reportedly paid Leipzig around 20 million euros to bring the 34-year-old Julian Nagelsmann to Munich as head coach on a five-year contract after two successful years in Saxony. Kahn rejects the notion that Bayern deliberately set out to weaken Leipzig, who have lost three of their first four league games. — AFP ■