THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

All need to continuously preserve these fine traditions of the Tatmadaw which has been serving the State defence duty and the public interests

Chairman of State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets officers, other ranks and families of Lashio Station.

THE Tatmadaw has been serving the State defence duty and the public interests since the successive eras till today, and it will continuously serving it in the future. As Shan State (North) is a primary home to many ethnic people, officers, other ranks and families need to solve the difficulties of the region together with local ethnic people, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with officers, other ranks and families of Lashio Station at the hall of the military command headquarters yesterday morning.

In his address, the Senior General said all officers, other ranks and families have known that the Tatmadaw born together with the independence has been serving the duty of State peace and stability and solving the internal conflicts in successive eras while steadfastly safeguarding the life and property of the people. In shaping the nation to be peaceful and stable and developed, the history proves the efforts of the Tatmadaw in directly and indirectly fulfilling the requirements of the State and the people. Hence, all need to continuously preserve these fine traditions of the Tatmadaw. SEE PAGE-2

> The national cause is to focus on prosperity of the nation and food sufficiency. Two points for political trend to ensure firm genuine, discipline-flourishing multiparty democracy and build the Union based on democracy and federalism.

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All need to continuously preserve these fine traditions of the Tatmadaw which has been serving the State defence duty and the public interests

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Since outbreak of COVID-19 in the country, the Tatmadaw has made preparations and fulfills the needs of health staff, machinery and medical supplies as well as donated supplement nutritious foods to patients and companions as well as health staff at the hospitals and attended to the general needs till today.

A lot of needs can be seen in all sectors such as management and economy during the five-year term of new democratic government after the 2015 election. Although the Tatmadaw suggested some points in the State defence, security and other sectors, military-civilian cooperation was weak.

Chairman of State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presents foodstuffs to Commander Maj-Gen Naing Naing Oo.

All need to follow the provisions from the Constitution 2008 the entire people approved. Although there may be some weakness and needs in the Constitution, it features a large number of points to protect the State and the people.

It is necessary to carry out one point for national cause and two more points for political trend. The national cause is to focus on prosperity of the nation and food sufficiency. Two points for political trend to ensure firm genuine, discipline-flourishing multiparty democracy and build the Union based on democracy and federalism. The Tatmadaw accepts these points as the Our Three Main National Causes. The governing the country should not be princess or lords ruling. Only when the firm organizations and parties are to cooperate with each other will the nation enjoy peace and tranquility and development.

The Tatmadaw's main duty is national defence, so it must try to become a capable Tatmadaw. As Shan State (North) is mainly inhabited by ethnic groups, Tatmadaw officers and other ranks and their families work together with those ethnic nationals to resolve the regional difficulties. No matter what duty they serve, hard and cooperative work with goodwill and correct attitude will pay off for regional progress.

> Every Tatmadaw member voluntarily joined the Tatmadaw without anyone's urging but with a sense of duty to protect the State and the people. So, they must serve their duty with strong conviction and commitment and try to become real Tatmadawmen.

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As the reading power of an individual contributes much towards socio-economy, they need to read and train their children in order that they will not deviate from the path to education.

When the outbreak declines significantly and can be put under well control, education promotion measures will resume. Energetic efforts are being made for vaccinations, and it has been targeted to vaccinate up to 50 per cent of the population by this year end, said the Senior General.

Later, the Senior General and wife and party proceeded to the local military hospital in Lashio where he greeted the officers and other ranks receiving treatment, comforted them and presented foodstuffs.—MNA

Chairman of State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing comforts a patient serviceman at military hospital.

Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, presents gifts to a patient at local military hospital.

1,702 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 19 September, total figure rises to 446,573

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 446,573 after 1,702 new cases were reported on 19 September 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 398,220 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 17,073 after 57 died.

It is necessary to ensure edible oil sufficiency

IT is necessary to ensure edible oil sufficiency. Oil palm plants are grown in Taninthayi Region whereas edible crops are grown in Mandalay, Sagaing, Magway and Ayeyawady regions and Shan State. Efforts must be made for increasing the per-acre yield of cotton to be able to cut the import volume of cotton.

(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 7-9-2021)

A plan will be adopted to open an agriculture and veterinary institute or college in Lashio of Shan State (North): Senior General

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing yesterday afternoon met with members of Shan State cabinet, officials from self-administered division and zones and officials at the hall of Shan State government branch in Lashio.

The Chief Minister of Shan State and officials reported on progress of regional development, control of COVID-19, arrangements for industrial zones and hotel zones in respective areas, enhancement of agriculture and livestock sector and health sector, and development of Lashio District.

Member of the State Administration Council Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun, Union Ministers U Tin Htut Oo, U Hla Moe, U Khin Maung Yi, Dr Thet Khiang Win and U Min Thein Zan discussed opening of trade camps for resumption of border trade, smooth transportation, production of agriculture and livestock sectors, establishment of agricultural institute, distribution of pedigree animals, water and power supply, assistance for providing capitals to businesses, issuance of technologies and capital, formation of cooperative societies, controlling the illegal production of natural resources, fulfillment of health staff and medical aid, extension of work establishment at hospitals, uplift of health standard and upgrade of sport ground in Shan State.

In his speech, the Senior General pledged to fulfill the needs of agriculture and livestock sector, sports sector and boosting per-acre yield of tea and distribution of technique and quality strains reported in the meeting. As there are some 60,000 acres of tea plantations in Shan State, production of value-added tea products will create job opportunities for the local people and improve regional economy.

Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets Shan State cabinet members, officials of self -administered division and zones and officials.

Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing accepts domestic products from an officials.

It is necessary to systematically use the inputs in the farms as agricultural measures need good quality stain, fertile soil, supply of water and good cultivation methods. High yield of crops will improve the socio-economic life of the local farmers. The Senior General urged all to modernize the agriculture and livestock farms without setting aside the traditional cultivation methods.

Well-versed intellectuals and intelligentsia are of great importance in highly qualified and successful agriculture and livestock farms. Arrangements are being made to establish agriculture and veterinary institutes, colleges and universities. In this regard, a plan will be adopted to open an agriculture and veterinary institute or college in Lashio of Shan State (North). The country imports cooking oil and fuel worth billions of kyats on a yearly basis. To save the oil and fuel consumption, it is necessary to consider operation of electric train and buses and subways.

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The Senior General stressed the need to consider production of finished works made of bamboo and wood. He noted that it is necessary increase the per-acre yield of paddy. He would not encourage export of paddy to foreign market. Paddy should be milled at home to produce bran and broken rice from rice as the feedstuffs as well as create job opportunities.

Electricity is playing a crucial role in the efforts to increase the domestic products and develop the industries. So, emphasis should be placed on generating electricity from the natural resources. The region with good income from firm businesses can undertake prosperous tasks and focus on tourism industry called non-smoke industry. If larger number of international travellers comes to the region, domestic products will face high demand and the region will have the improved interests. Then, the Senior General discussed situation of political changes.

The Senior General inspected Lashio District Sports Ground and left instructions on upgrade of the sport ground.

The Senior General, wife and party paid homage to State Ovadacariya of Lashio Abbot of Maha Bawdayon Monastery Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita Bhaddanta Narada, asked after the health of the abbot and supplicated religious affairs.—MNA

Regional development projects implemented in Kachin, Shan (North) States

UNION Minister for Cooperatives and Rural Development U Hla Moe met the officials of Cooperative Department, Rural Development Department and Small Scale Industries Department in Kachin State on 18 September and in Shan State (North) yesterday.

During the visits, the Union Minister said the comprehensive rural development programmes are being implemented through cooperation with SMEs to promote the socio-economic status of rural people including infrastructure and cooperative sectors. It needs to work together with the affiliated departments under the same ministry in carrying out the regional development projects. The Rural Development Department should maintain the current momentum in implementing the projects.

The cooperative societies also need to conduct fundraising programmes in line with the law and desire of the members, and the development programmes should be for the grassroots. It needs to report the real situation in a timely manner.

Moreover, it should open the vocational trainings to provide the job opportunities to raise the incomes.

Then, the respective department heads reported on the regional development programmes.—MNA

Union Minister U Hla Moe discusses development tasks and vocational training in meeting with department officials.

Information Deputy Minister meets with IPRD department officials in Mandalay, Sagaing regions

Deputy Information Minister U Ye Tint meets IPRD officials to provide staff with upgraded capacity building.

DEPUTY Minister for Information U Ye Tint met with employees of the Ministry of Information in Sagaing and Mandalay Regions yesterday at the Department of Information and Public Relations in Mandalay.

At the meeting, the Deputy Minister discussed the current developments of the country and asked the staffs to perform their duties faithfully, and to enhance the information sector through appropriate reforms. He added necessary preparation should be made to improve the information and public relations activities and bring them back to normal as numbers of COVID-19 cases have declined and the stability and security of the country improved.

Today, some of young people in the country are involved in destructive activities with little knowledge and thinking due to the mobilization of destroyers, therefore, it is necessary to increase the education of young people. The Prime Minister has allowed the Information and Public Relations Department to be expanded to make it more extensive under the amended constitution. Plans are underway to provide the staff with upgraded capacity building as soon as possible.

In the afternoon, the Deputy Minister met with the staff of the PyinOoLwin District and Township Information and Public Relations Departments and the retransmission station in PyinOoLwin.—Region IPRD/ GNLM

Public request by Ministry of Health

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

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

Ministry of Health (2-8-2021)

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Union Industry Minister inspects New Locomotive Assembling Factory (Nay Pyi Taw)

THE Ministry of Industry organized the 3rd coordination meeting of Machine Supervisory Committee on 17 September.

Union Minister Dr Charlie Than stressed the necessary things regarding with the proposals to the committee.

Concerning the permission for procurement of materials to build five 1200 hp locomotives raised by Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Department of Myanma Railways under the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Union Minister inspected the New Locomotive Assembling Factory (Nay Pyi Taw) yesterday.

During the tour, the incharge of the plant explained facts related to the factory, manufacturing and assembling processes of new locomotives.

Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than veiws round New Locomotive Assembling factory (Nay Pyi Taw)

The Union Minister then said he made an inspection tour to the plant for the motion to buy the needed equipment to build five 1500 hp Caterpillar locomotives tabled during the coordination meeting held on Friday.

The State Administration Council also instructed that the expired fuel tanker, carriage and vehicles of the Union organization and ministries should be repaired to use and it needs to systematically arrange in accordance with the procedures as quickly as possible if they cannot be repaired. The Machine Supervisory Committee sets the policy and directives to effectively use the machines including vehicles, trains, vessels and aircraft of the Union level organizations and ministries concerned.

It also needs to arrange to apply the machines produced by the factories and implement human resources development programmes. It should conduct trainings to maintain the techniques and make arrangements to add the train related subjects at the technological colleges and universities.

Then, the Union Minister inspected the new locomotives production processes. —MNA

Daily imports of anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products continue

Cargo trucks are carrying medical equipment from Chinshwehaw.

THE Ministry of Commerce is striving for enabling the people to have access to the essential medical supplies that are critical to the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities, including liquid oxygen and oxygen cylinders, by arranging continuous importation through trading posts, international airport and seaports with standard operation procedures.

On 19 September (Yesterday), anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products including oxygen plants and concentrators were transported by 12 vehicles of 10 companies.

A total of 800 empty oxygen cylinders, four oxygen plants, 412 oxygen concentrators for home use, 2,800 PPE suits, and 17 tonnes of masks were imported via Myawady, Muse, Chinshwehaw and Kanpitee trading camps, seaports and the Yangon International Airport.

Four oxygen plants were transported to Mandalay, Amarapura, PyinOoLwin and Momeik respectively.

Officials from the relevant departments are cooperating to facilitate and expedite the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for better importation.

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

A cargo truck is filled with medical equipment.

A cargo truck is loaded with medicines and medical equipment.

A cargo truck is loaded with hospital equipment to fight COVID-19.

State Administration Council
Press Release
Re-invitation to Myanmar citizens who reside in various regions for many reasons

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

Information Team
State Administration Council

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COVID-19 vaccination continues for IDPs in MraukU, Rakhine State

A health staff vaccinates a displaced person of IDP camp in MraukU Township.

OFFICIALS from the Township Public Health Department have been administering the Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines to the displaced persons from five IDP Camps in MraukU Township, Rakhine State.

A total of 234 IDPs from Ngaswekan Village IDP camp, Pyahla Village IDP camp, Kalachaung Village IDP camp, Dainggyi Village IDP camp and Ywahaung IDP camp were vaccinated yesterday morning at designated vaccination sites in respective villages.

Ward/Village Administrators and IDP camp officials collaborated to assist the officials from the Public Health Department during the vaccination process. People were screened before getting the vaccination under the COVID-19 rules and regulations set by the Ministry of Health, as well as monitored for about 30 minutes before the departure.—Khin Maung Tun (IPRD)/GNLM

200 companies struck off register due to absence of AR in Sept: DICA

A total of 200 companies was struck off the register this month as they fail to submit annual return (AR) on the online registry system, MyCO, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The DICA has notified any registered company which fails to submit its AR on MyCO are to be suspended.

The DICA found that 200 companies failed to restore their statuses within six months of suspension under Section 430 (f) of Myanmar Companies Law in September.

The companies were struck off the registration during the period from 6 to 13 September respectively. Also, 500 companies were also struck off in July and August, according to the DICA's notifications.

All registered companies need to file AR on the MyCO registry system within two months of incorporation, and at least once every year (not later than one month after the anniversary of the incorporation), according to the Section 97 of the law.

According to the Section 266 (a) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public companies must submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5) simultaneously.

All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within 28 days of the financial year ending, as per Section 53 (a-1) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

As per DICA's report, more than 16,000 companies were suspended for failure to submit AR forms within the due date. Newly established companies are required to submit ARs within two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns.

The DICA has notified that any company which fails to submit its AR within 13 months will be notified of its suspension (I-9A).

If it fails to submit the AR within 28 days of receiving the notice, the system will show the company's status as suspended. Companies can restore their statuses only after shelling out a fine of K50,000 for AR fee, K100,000 for restoration of the company on the register, and K100,000 for late filing of documents, totalling K250,000.

If a company fails to restore its status within six months of suspension, the registrar will strike its name off the registration, according to the DICA notice.

The registration and re-registration of companies on the MyCO website commenced on 1 August 2018, in keeping with the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

The number of companies registered on the online registry system, MyCO, topped more than 2,000 in the first half of this year.

Earlier, MyCO received more than 1,000 applications from new companies every month.

At present, 100 per cent of the applicants are using the online registration platform, according to data provided by the DICA.—GNLM

Sagaing Region Agriculture Dept completes 11,427 acres of tea plants

SAGAING Region Agriculture Department was engaged in cultivation of tea cultivation in June 2021 and has finished 11,427 acres of tea plants in the current financial year 2020-2021, said U Win Hlaing Oo, head of region department.

"Tea plantation is commonly found in Homalin Township of Hkamti District. The local residents practise organic farming only and produce quality tea leaf. The tea leaf is mostly sent to Mandalay market. The region department and the growers are making concerted efforts to boost the yield of leaves, penetrate more markets and optimize packaging," U Win Hlaing Oo elaborated.

The department has released the data on cultivation of tea plants—290 acres of tea plants in Mawlaik District, 9,175 acres in Hkamti District, 911 acres in Naga Self-Administered Zone, 487 acres in Katha District and 564 acre in Kawlin District in Sagaing Region.

The personnel from the respective township departments are providing technical assistance to increase the yield virtually and physically.—Lu Lay/GNLM

Staff of Agriculture department pick out tea leaves at the plantation.

Myanmar ships over 44,000 tonnes of butter bean as of 10 September

Merchants check sample butter bean at broketage.

THE exports of Myanmar's butter bean to the international market exceeded 44,109 tonnes between 1 October 2020 and 10 September 2021 in the current financial year 2020-2021, generating revenue of US$25 million, as per the Ministry of Commerce's data.

A basket of butter bean is valued at K1,735-K1,775 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kg), according to the Bayintnaung wholesale market's data.

The price slightly rose in the recent days following Kyat weakening in the local forex market, although the foreign demand is extremely weak amid the COVID-19 pandemic and the political changes, the traders said.

At present, the price of butter bean is valued at over K75,000 per bag depending on the size in Mandalay market.

Butter bean export to Chinese, Japanese and European markets has been falling. Now, it is relying only on the domestic market, said a trader from Mandalay market.

Normally, Myanmar exports about 75 per cent of butter bean production to foreign markets—Japan, China, Denmark, Singapore, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan (China Taipei) and Viet Nam—with export volume of 15,000-30,000 tonnes per year.

There are over 160,000 acres of butter bean plantation. The butter bean is grown in June and July and harvested in October and November. The cold season for further growing the bean is in October/November and harvest time from January to March.

The butter bean is primarily cultivated in Sagaing, Bago, Magway, Mandalay and Ayeyawady regions and Mon and northern Shan states. Magway Region produces good-quality butter bean and Japan buyers prefer to purchase it.—KK/GNLM

Myanmar imports surpass exports in trade with Singapore this FY

THE value of Myanmar's imports exceeded exports in bilateral trade with Singapore in the past ten months (Oct-July) of the current fiscal year 2020-2021, with exports reaching over $181.4 million and imports valued at over $2.34 billion, according to the data from the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar trade deficit in goods with Singapore was estimated at US$2.158 billion in the past ten months (Oct-July) of the current financial year 2020-2021, the ministry's statistics indicated.

Singapore is Myanmar's second largest trading partner in the region, after Thailand. In the current FY, the value of Myanmar's bilateral trade with Singapore in normal trade and border trade topped $2.5 billion.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, footwear, textiles and clothing, minerals, and animal products to Singapore, while it imports plastic, fuel oil, capital goods, para-finished goods, consumer products, metals, and chemicals.

Myanmar's bilateral trade with Singapore was registered at $3.5 billion in the last fiscal year 2018-2019, $1.99 billion in the 2018 mini-budget period, $3.83 billion in the 2017-2018 FY, $2.96 billion in the 2016-2017 FY, and $3.69 billion in the 2015-2016 FY.—KK/GNLM

Freight handling process is seen at the port to load commodities onto vessel.

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Preserve traditional culture of ethnic people for perpetual existence

THE Republic of the Union of Myanmar is home to more than 130 ethnic national people who have been preserving their traditional culture and customs since yore. Although they preserve their traditions and cultural heritage as much as they can, some of these items have faded out due to changes of lifestyle and lesser knowledge triggered by the generation gap.

Those ethnic national people are residing in various parts of the nation regardless of regions and states. They settle the appropriate areas to do business such as agriculture and livestock farming for their livelihoods. For a long time, the traditions and culture of those ethnic national people faded out as well as mixed with that of different ethnicities.

> All traditions and culture which reflect the lives and characters of various ethnic national people are in the same value. So, they all should serve each other to preserve the valuable traditions and culture for perpetual existence in the land of Myanmar.

That is why the authorities as well as all the ethnic nationals are responsible for preventing the disappearance of traditions and cultural heritages in addition to identifying the original traditions and cultural items. It is necessary to educate the ethnic people to value their traditions and cultural heritages for long term existence.

The societies of those ethnicities possess more and more modernity and change day by day. They all have to accept new items of culture without alien ones but they have to taste traditions and culture of other ethnicities if they can accept them. They have to see the modernity for respective ethnic people but should not forget the traditions because culture and traditions are based on concepts, lifestyle and nature of their forefathers. So, new generation youths need to preserve their culture and traditions even if they want to taste modernity.

Traditions and culture cannot be bought. These cannot emerge immediately. As characteristics of respective ethnic national people are based on their culture and traditions, if they discard these items, it is sure that characteristics of such ethnicities would disappear in a short period. As such, all ethnic national people need to preserve their own culture and traditions as an inborn duty.

It is no need to compete for the traditions and culture among the ethnic people. All traditions and culture which reflect the lives and characters of various ethnic national people are in the same value. So, they all should serve each other to preserve the valuable traditions and culture for perpetual existence in the land of Myanmar.

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Antibodies from original strain COVID-19 infection don't bind to variants: study

However, those antibodies don't bind well to newer variants, finds a new study, published in the journal Nature Communications.

A lab technician sorts blood samples for a COVID-19 vaccination study. **PHOTO: AFP**

PEOPLE infected with the original strain of the virus that causes COVID-19 early in the pandemic produced a consistent antibody response, making two main groups of antibodies to bind to the spike protein on the virus's outer surface. However, those antibodies don't bind well to newer variants, a study of the University of Illinois (UI) found.

The researchers studied published papers about COVID-19 patients for data about the sequence of the antibodies they produced. They focused on antibodies against the spike protein, the part of the virus that binds to receptors on human cells to infect them. The spike protein is the target of most vaccines.

They found that many antibody sequences converged into two main groups, indicating a consistent human immune response to the virus.

The researchers studied the convergent antibodies' ability to bind to several variants and found that they no longer bound to some. The finding has implications for the ability of new variants to reinfect people who contracted earlier versions of the virus, as well as for the continuing efficacy of vaccines and the design of possible vaccine boosters, said study leader Nicholas Wu, a UI professor of biochemistry.

"Even though this antibody response is very common with the original strain, it doesn't really interact with variants," said Wu. "That, of course, raises the concern of the virus evolving to escape the body's main antibody response. Some antibodies should still be effective -- the body makes antibodies to many parts of the virus, not only the spike protein -- but the particular groups of antibodies that we saw in this study will not be as effective."

The researchers said they would like to conduct similar studies characterizing antibody responses to Delta and other variants, to see whether they also produce a convergent response and how it differs from the original strain.

The findings, posted on UI's website on Friday, have been published in the journal Nature Communications.

SOURCE: Xinhua

■ ■ ■

'Ghost kitchens' boom in Asia as pandemic sparks huge demand

Research group Euromonitor estimates there are some 7,500 cloud kitchens now operating in China and 3,500 in India -- compared to 1,500 for the United States and 750 for Britain.

IN an industrial unit on the outskirts of Taipei chefs are plating meals that will never be served in a restaurant: welcome to the world of "ghost kitchens".

Even before the pandemic sent an earthquake through the global restaurant trade, the "Amazonification" of commercial kitchens was well underway, but coronavirus lockdowns and restrictions have fuelled explosive growth in Asia.

The recent boom in food delivery apps meant customers were already used to having restaurant quality meals quickly delivered to their homes.

To meet that demand a growing number of restaurants set up delivery only kitchens -- also known as "cloud kitchens" -- or rented space in ones.

Then the pandemic struck, ending dining out for billions.

"It really drove the whole industry into sort of hyper growth, so that really helped us," Jason Chen, the chief executive officer of JustKitchen, told AFP.

JustKitchen started operating Chinese Taipei 's first ghost kitchen early last year -- now it runs 17 across the island, as well as one in Hong Kong and is aiming to expand into the Philippines and Singapore by the end of this year, he said. Regional delivery giants like Singapore-based Grab and Indonesia's GoJek have also jumped on the trend. Grab opened 20 new cloud kitchens in Southeast Asia last year, up from 42 before the pandemic.

The global ghost kitchen industry is expected to grow more than 12 percent each year to be worth some $139.37 billion by 2028, according to a report by Researchandmarkets.com.

Asia Pacific, home to 4.3 billion people, already accounts for some 60 percent of the international market.

For many in the region's densely populated cities, where living space is at a premium, eating daily from cheap restaurants or food stalls is more affordable and viable than cooking at home.

Culinary gold rush

Research group Euromonitor estimates there are some 7,500 cloud kitchens now operating in China and 3,500 in India -- compared to 1,500 for the United States and 750 for Britain.

Third generation Thai restaurateur Natalie Phanphensophon had to pivot her family's 45-strong restaurant empire into takeaway only for much of the last year because of the pandemic.

Her family own the popular Mango Tree and Coca chains, many located in now empty shopping malls where rents are high.

Earlier this year they opened their first cloud kitchen on the outskirts of Bangkok, with plans for two more. "Our goal is to ensure everyone on our boat can sail through this together," the 35-year-old explained.

Cloud kitchens, she said, are less lucrative than restaurants because people don't order as many dishes compared to dining out. But their operating costs are far lower.

iBerry Group, which operates restaurants and ice cream shops mostly in shopping malls in Thailand, also set up a delivery only hub.

"Having a cloud kitchen is basically an oxygen mask for us during Covid-19," said brand manager Thitanun Taveebhol.

While conglomerates and chains have moved into delivery only operations, mom-and-pop cloud kitchens are also opening.

After recently retiring from Air India, Nirjash Roy Chowdhury, sunk his savings into setting up a cloud kitchen in Mumbai.

His six employees were from the hotel trade which has been ravaged by the pandemic.

"They didn't have anything to eat. If I can give somebody bread and butter by doing this, then there's nothing like it," the 61-year-old added.

'Food speaks for itself'

Chowdhury estimates it will take six months to break even but is confident there is long term potential.

SOURCE: AFP

The global ghost kitchen industry is expected to grow more than 12 percent each year to be worth some $139.37 billion by 2028, according to a report by Researchandmarkets.com. **PHOTO: AFP**

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 19 September 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 20 September, 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Upper Sagaing Region and Chin State, fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Lower Sagaing, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Northern Shan, Rakhine, Kayin, Mon States and scattered in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of isolated heavyfalls in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway Regions and Chin State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar Waters. Wave height will be about (4– 6) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

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

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20 September, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20 September, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20 September, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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SpaceX all-civilian orbital crew completes historic mission

FOUR SpaceX tourists returned to Earth safely on Saturday after spending three days in space, successfully concluding the first orbital mission in history with no professional astronauts on board.

Four SpaceX tourists returned to Earth safely on Saturday after spending three days in space, successfully concluding the first orbital mission in history with no professional astronauts on board.

The SpaceX Dragon capsule, whose heat shield allowed it to withstand descent, was slowed down by four large parachutes before splashing into the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Florida at 7:06 pm (2306 GMT), according to a video feed by the company.

From left, Hayley Arceneaux, Chris Sembroski, Jared Isaacman and Sian Proctor, during a zero gravity flight to train for the Inspiration4 mission in July. **PHOTO: AFP**

"That was a heck of a ride for us, and we're just getting started," billionaire captain Jared Isaacman, who financed the trip with a goal of making space a bit more accessible, said shortly after landing.

A SpaceX boat immediately retrieved the capsule, before its hatch was opened and the space tourists, smiling broadly and waving their arms in the air, exited one by one.

They were next headed for the Kennedy Space Center, where their mission had begun on Wednesday.

The stated goal of the mission, called Inspiration4, was to encourage the democratization of space by proving that the cosmos are accessible to crews that have neither been handpicked nor in training for years.

"Congratulations @Inspiration4x !!!" SpaceX founder Elon Musk tweeted after the landing.

The four space novices -- Isaacman and three other Americans -- spent three days orbiting Earth, traveling farther than the International Space Station (ISS), at an orbit of about 575 kilometers (357 miles) high, and circling the globe more than 15 times each day. Isaacman, who paid SpaceX tens of millions of dollars, offered the other three seats to strangers: Hayley Arceneaux, a 29-year-old nurse; Sian Proctor, a 51-year-old professor; and Chris Sembroski, 42, a US Air Force veteran. — AFP ■

Iceland's volcanic eruption the longest in half a century

IT will be six months on Sunday that the volcanic eruption currently mesmerising spectators near Reykjavik first began, making it the longest Iceland has witnessed in more than 50 years.

The first lava began spewing out of a fissure close to Mount Fagradalsfjall on the evening of March 19 on the Reykjanes peninsula to the southwest of Reykjavik.

And the ensuing spectacle -- ranging from just a slow trickle of lava at times to more dramatic geyser-like spurts of rocks and stones at others -- has become a major tourist attraction, drawing 300,000 visitors so far, according to the Iceland Tourist Board.

Iceland's sixth volcanic eruption in 20 years is already longer than the preceding one in Holuhraun, in the centre-east of the island, which lasted from the end of August 2014 until the end of February 2015.

"Six months is a reasonably long eruption," volcanologist Thorvaldur Thordarson told AFP.

The lava field that has formed this time has been christened "Fagradalshraun" -- which can be translated as "beautiful valley of lava" -- and takes its name from nearby Mount Fagradalsfjall.

Almost 143 million cubic metres of lava have been spewed out so far. — AFP ■

Thousands march in France against traditional hunting ban

Protesters, pictured here in Redon, are up-in-arms against a ban on traditional techniques such as hunting with nets or bird cages. **PHOTO: AFP**

THOUSANDS of hunters marched in France on Saturday to defend "rural values" and traditional bird hunting which the country's top administrative court has banned.

In the medieval town of Mont-de-Marsan in southwest France, authorities said at least 13,000 people protested to the sound of hunting horns and firecrackers.

Wearing bright orange -- the colour of hunters' jackets -- the demonstrators marched under driving rain. Further up in Brittany, a protest also took place in Redon, and others were planned elsewhere.

"I'm sick of seeing my culture fall to pieces. They've already eradicated my language, Gascon, now it's the traditional hunts," said Eric, a 47-year-old who likes hunting and fishing, in Mont-de-Marsan. He said he was fed up with "the Taliban of Paristan", referring to decision-makers in the capital.

The State Council in August banned traditional hunting techniques popular in the southwest of France and other parts of the country, such as hunting with nets or bird cages, in line with a 2009 EU directive. That followed the banning of glue hunting in June.

Activists say that 150,000 birds die annually in France from non-selective hunting techniques such as glue traps and nets at a time when Europe's bird population is in free-fall.

But Myriam, the wife of a hunter and a fan of bullfighting, said she wanted to "pass on these traditions" to the younger generations. — AFP ■

Kuwait marks World Cleanup Day

People participate in a beach cleanup campaign at a beach in Jahra Governorate, Kuwait, on 18 September 2021. Kuwait marks World Cleanup Day on Saturday by organizing a coastal cleanup campaign to raise environmental awareness and shed light on threats to the environment. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

KUWAIT marks World Cleanup Day on Saturday by organizing a coastal cleanup campaign to raise environmental awareness and shed light on threats to the environment.

The campaign was organized by "Trash Tag," a non-profit organization dedicated to environmental efforts, in cooperation with the UN office in Kuwait and several organizations at a historical landmark in Shumaymah beach in Jahra Governorate.

Carina Maceira, director and one of the founders of "Trash Tag," told Xinhua that dozens of people showed up on Saturday to participate in the cleanup event celebrating World Cleanup Day.

"Six embassies participated along with the UN office and different organizations and sponsors who decided to distribute food, drinks, and tools," she said.

"We help people to be aware of environmental issues, where every week we organize a cleanup campaign to clean different areas, beaches, deserts, and islands," she said.

"We are here with the UN team to raise awareness, collect trash, and show our solidarity as a commitment to environmental protection," the UN Acting Resident Coordinator Hideko Hadzialic said.

"I hope that in the future we will have a proper facility to sort out and dispose recyclable and non-recyclable trash, so that Kuwait can enjoy a cleaner environment," she told Xinhua. — Xinhua ■

'Burnt out': Philippine nurses battle Covid, resignations

EXHAUSTED nurses in the Philippines are struggling to care for patients as colleagues contract Covid-19 or quit a profession that was dangerously understaffed even before the pandemic.

The country is enduring a record rise in infections, fuelled by the Delta variant, with the health department reporting a nursing shortfall of more than 100,000 -- forcing those left to work long hours for little pay on often precarious short-term contracts.

"They are tired and burned out," nursing director Lourdes Banaga, at a private hospital south of Manila, told AFP. "At the start of the pandemic we had almost 200 nurses," said Banaga, director for nursing services at the Lipa Medix Medical Center in Batangas province. "By September that will reduce to 63." Official figures show 75,000 nurses are working in public and private Philippine hospitals but roughly 109,000 more are needed.

The pandemic has exacerbated a pre-existing lack of nurses in the Philippines. **PHOTO: AFP**

The pandemic has exacerbated a pre-existing lack of nurses, said Maristela Abenojar, president of Filipino Nurses United -- a situation she describes as "ironic" in one of the world's biggest exporters of healthcare workers. The "chronic understaffing" is down to inadequate salaries, she said. An entry-level nurse in a public hospital can earn 33,575 pesos ($670) per month, official data show.

But Abenojar said most were on short-term contracts, earning 22,000 pesos with no benefits such as hazard pay. Meanwhile, those in the private sector were making as little as 8,000 pesos. `And many have had enough: About 40 percent of private hospital nurses have resigned since the start of the pandemic, according to the Private Hospitals Association of the Philippines. — AFP ■

New York Philharmonic marks 'homecoming' after pandemic cancellations

Friday's concert by the New York Philharmonic was a 'homecoming' for musicians limited to live streams, one-off and outdoor shows for more than a year. **PHOTO: AFP**

FOLLOWING 556 days of pandemic-inflicted cancellations and unconventional concerts, the New York Philharmonic opened its new season Friday, a "homecoming" for musicians limited to live streams, one-off and outdoor shows for more than a year.

After enduring months of crisis, the Phil, one of America's oldest musical institutions, reopened its subscription season with a program featuring Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4, Anna Clyne's "Within Her Arms," Aaron Copland's "Quiet City" and George Walker's "Antifonys."

The pandemic forced the famed symphony orchestra to cancel its 2020-21 season, resulting in more than $21 million in lost ticket revenues.

Hundreds of people queued outside Alice Tully Hall in Manhattan's Upper Westside in evening wear, showing mandatory proof of vaccination in order to gain entry for the night of orchestral music.

Catherine Colson arrived with friends ahead of what she anticipated would be "a memorable night of phenomenal music."

"It was a really long year. I feel rejuvenated," she told AFP. "It's like a rebirth in a way."

Adam Baltin said he wanted to attend opening night to "celebrate the city and the arts."

"It's been so long."

'Feels like a homecoming'

On top of the challenges presented by Covid, the Phil is homeless: the orchestra's longtime base, David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center, is in the middle of a major $550-million renovation. — AFP ■

Coughs and lethargy: Lions, tigers at Washington zoo catch Covid

SIX lions and three tigers at the National Zoo in Washington have tested positive for Covid-19 and are undergoing treatment after falling unwell, the zoo said Friday.

"Last weekend, animal keepers observed decreased appetites, coughing, sneezing and lethargy" in six African lions, a Sumatran tiger and two tigers from Siberia, who all tested positive for Covid in preliminary tests, the zoo said in a statement.

Results of tests to confirm the diagnosis are expected in a few days.

The sick cats are being treated with anti-inflammatories and anti-nausea medication, as well as antibiotics to ward off pneumonia.

People who visit the zoo are not at risk because of the distance between them and the felines, and no other animals have shown signs of infection, the zoo said.

The bout of sickness comes as several US zoos including the one in Washington announced Tuesday the launch of a vaccination campaign for animals susceptible to Covid-19.

Two lions at the Washington zoo on 24 July 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

Primates in several zoos have become infected. Several gorillas at the zoo in Atlanta tested positive last week. — AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Chaos and arrests in Melbourne anti-lockdown protest

SEVERAL police officers were wounded and hundreds of protesters were arrested in Australia's second-most-populous city Saturday in violent clashes at an anti-lockdown march.

Officers used pepper spray and made over 200 arrests in Melbourne as several hundred attendees flouted stay-at-home orders and marched through an inner-city suburb.

The illegal gathering comes as the city goes through its sixth lockdown since the pandemic started, with the wider state of Victoria reporting over 500 cases of Covid-19 on Saturday.

Police said six officers were taken to hospital after they were pelted with projectiles and trampled in clashes with the crowd of around 700 people. — AFP ■

UK scraps traffic light system to overhaul international travel

BRITISH Transport Secretary Grant Shapps announced Friday that the current traffic light system of red, amber and green countries will be scrapped to simplify international travel amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Under the government's plans for overhauling international travel, there will simply be a red list from Oct. 4 and all other countries will be considered "clear" for travel.

"Today's changes mean a simpler, more straightforward system. One with less testing and lower costs, allowing more people to travel, see loved ones or conduct business around the world while providing a boost for the travel industry," said the transport secretary.

"Public health has always been at the heart of our international travel policy and with over 44 million people fully vaccinated in the UK, we are now able to introduce a proportionate updated structure that reflects the new landscape." — Xinhua ■

TRADEMARK CAUTION

GENERAL MOTORS LLC, a company incorporated and existing under the laws of United States of America, and having its registered office at 300 Renaissance Center, Detroit, MICHIGAN 48265-3000, United States of America, hereby declares that the Company is the Owner and Sole proprietor of the following Trademark:

The above Trademark is used in respect of "Chemicals for automotive care and maintenance; industrial adhesives; adhesive cement; refrigerant gases; antifreeze; coolants for vehicle engines; stain repellants for fabrics; hydraulic fluids including brake fluid, transmission fluids, power steering fluids, clutch fluids; chemical additives for motor fuels; chemical additives for motor oils; detergent additives to gasoline; anti-knocking substances for internal combustion engines; engine decarburizing chemicals; fuel saving preparations; anti-boil preparations for engine coolants; windshield washer solvent; automotive tire inflator sealers; automotive cooling system rust inhibitors; automobile cooling system leak sealants; automobile gasket cement; chemical engine treatment preparations and additives for gasoline and diesel fuels; chemical automotive fuel system cleaners; chemical automotive engine cleaners; rubber cement for repairing pneumatic tires, tire sealing compounds; tire puncture sealant; brake lubricants" in **Class 1**; "Anti-rust grease for motor vehicles; paints, undercoatings for vehicle chassis; anti-corrosive preparations, anti-tarnishing preparations for metals, vehicle exterior and interior protective preparations and other protective coatings, corrosion-inhibiting coating sold as a component ingredient of brake rotors for land vehicles, tire dressing; automotive enamels; automotive paints; automotive undercoat compounds" in **Class 2**; "Cleaning, polishing, scouring, abrasive and protective preparations all for vehicle care, men's and women's fragrances for personal use; eau de toilette; eau de perfume; eau de cologne; perfume; automotive cleaning products including vehicle body cleaning detergents, engine cleaners, and chassis cleaners; automotive polishes; glass cleaners; vinyl and leather cleaners and protective coatings; carpet cleaners; automotive wheel cleaners; bug, tar and glue removing preparations; brake cleaners; carburetor cleaners; degreasers; hand cleaners; barrier creams and moisturizers" in **Class 3;** "Non-slipping preparations for belts; gear oil; non-chemical additives to motor fuel; automotive care and maintenance products consisting of oils, lubricants or greases; oils and oil based fluids for engines and transmission; motor oil; gasoline and diesel fuel" in **Class 4;** "Metal key chains, metal key fobs, metal key rings, metal keys, metal license plate frames, decorative metal boxes, metal money boxes, metal banks, metal money clips, alloys of common metal, steel pipes, metal locks for vehicles, metal springs, metal containers, metal tensioners for motor vehicle frames; metal signs, metal parking signs, metal street signs, metal containers, ornamental statues and sculptures of metal, metal bells, metal chains, metal door knockers, metal locks, metal trophies, metal nameplates, metal safes, metal hardware, metal pipes, metal piping, and metal tubing all for motor vehicle use, metal screws, metal nuts, metal bolts, metal washers and metal fasteners" in **Class 6;** "Machines and machine tools, motors (not for land vehicles), machine coupling and belting (except for land vehicles), agricultural implements, incubators for eggs, turbines, bearings, pumps, valves, oil seals, filters, atomizers, driving belts, dynamo brushes, carburetors, cooling radiators for internal combustion engines, cooling fans, electric generators, cylinder heads, drive wheels, drive chains, dynamo belts, dynamos, ignition devices, ignition timers, injectors, silencers, fan belts, engine pistons, engine speed governors, compressors, taps being parts of motors, apparatus and instruments for controlling motors and engines, engines (not for land vehicles), ignition apparatus of internal combustion engines; ignition apparatus of motor vehicle engines, sparks plugs of motor vehicles engines, glow plugs, plug caps, plug cables; pumps (machines), air compressors, compressors for refrigerators, bearings, valves, grease rings, engine pistons, motor oil filters (for motor vehicles), air filters (for motor vehicles), motor oil pump (for motor vehicles), turbines, atomizers (parts of motors and engines) drive wheels (parts of motors and engines); drive chains (parts of motors and engines); automobile oil pans; engine cylinders for automobiles; windshield wiper motors for land vehicles; fan belts for motors and engines, alternators, igniting magnetos for engines, starters for motors and engines; anti-pollution devices for motors and engines, automotive engine muffler, automotive engine cooling radiator exhausts for motors and engines, sealing joints, belts for motors and engines; vehicle water pump, hydraulic controls for machines, motors and engines; pneumatic controls for machines, motors and engines; air condensers; universal joints, automobile engine crankshaft, automobile engine camshaft, automobile engine flywheel, shock absorber, connecting rods for machines, motors and engines, speed governors for machines, engines and motors, machinery sealing member, lubrication equipment; ignition coils for internal combustion engines" in **Class 7;** "Hammers; screwdrivers; pliers; ratchet and socket sets; adjustable and fixed wrenches; wood and metal files; saws; chisels; nail, pin and tape punches; stud finders; staple guns; wire strippers, cutters, and crimpers; nut drivers; bit drivers and bits; levels; clamps, vises; tool belts and tool pouches; multi-function utility tools, pliers, wire cutters, foldable socket drive, spring loaded scissors, screwdrivers, file, bottle/can opener, wood saw, lanyard ring" in **Class 8;** " Scientific, nautical, surveying, electric, photographic, cinematographic, optical, weighing, measuring, signaling, checking (supervision) lifesaving and teaching apparatus and instruments for use in the automotive field; apparatus for recording, recording discs; electric batteries and accumulators, radio and television apparatus, sound disc players, ammeters, anti-theft warning appliances, junction boxes for lighting, electric cables and wires, circuit breakers, speedometers, electric door openers, electric coils, electric terminals and switches, water, fluid and fuel gauges, gradient indicators and meters, microchips, thermostats, ignition systems and parts, speed checking apparatus for vehicles; telecommunication apparatus and instruments, telephones including mobile and cellular telephones, transmitters, receivers, microprocessors, computers for use in the automotive field, computer software for use in the automotive field; motor vehicle navigation system; global positioning system including computers,; transmitters, receivers, and network interface drives; motor vehicle location system, apparatus for providing automatic remote notification of airbag deployment, microchips, controllers; apparatus for producing, reproducing, transmitting and recording sound and video and parts thereof in the field of vehicles, including radios, television, entertainment systems and information systems; loudspeakers, amplifiers, modems; video monitors, LCD displays; electronic game equipment; apparatus for alarming, warning, signaling and informing concerning vehicle operations and dangers; alkaline and lithium batteries, inverters; accumulators, electric, for vehicles, accumulator jars; computer monitors for use in the automotive field; compasses; navigation apparatus for vehicles; global positioning system; monitoring apparatus for vehicles,; measuring instruments for use in the automotive field; inclinometers, directional compasses; kilometer recorders for vehicles, automatic indicators of low-pressure in vehicle tires, steering apparatus, automatic, for vehicles; pressure gauges, temperature indicators, tachometers, diagnostic apparatus, not for medical purposes; optical glass; semiconductors; solenoid valves, sensors, not for medical use; eyewear, namely, sun glasses, eyeglasses, ophthalmic frames and cases therefor; eye glass chains, cords, cases and other eye glass accessories; electronic devices, namely, downloaded music players, electronic organizers, electronic locating devices, tire pressure gauges, blank USB flash drives, computer laptop cases; motion pictures, photographic slides, anti-glare glasses, protective and safety glasses and lenses; radios, televisions, transceivers, signal and warning lights and devices; reflecting discs and strips for wear, warning triangle and other vehicle breakdown signs; life jackets, protective helmets and clothing, water diving apparatus, snorkel tubes, swim masks, swim goggles; ignition systems and parts; alarms, signaling and warning apparatus; loudspeakers; vehicle race simulators; magnets; telecommunication apparatus and instruments; mobile telephones; parts of and accessories for mobile telephones in this class; mobile telephone covers; motor vehicle navigation systems;; systems and apparatus to automatically notify the deployment of vehicle airbags; computer software for use in motor vehicles; computer software for use in the motor vehicle trade and industry; containers and carriers for compact discs and/or tapes; electronic display units for vehicles; cameras and radios; downloadable software via the Internet and wireless devices for use in the automotive field; downloadable software in the nature of a mobile application for use in the automotive field; electrical power supplies for vehicles; battery charging devices for electric vehicles; electronic cruise control apparatus and vehicle steering systems; electric safety monitoring apparatus for use in the automotive field; electric locking and safety devices; electric power control apparatus; motor vehicle cameras and sensors; motor vehicle lighting systems; magnetic data carriers; audio, video, computer and laser tapes, discs, compact discs, cassettes and cartridges; sound recordings, video recordings; video game and computer games; downloadable electronic publications; downloadable music recordings; mobile phone cases; mobile phone covers; holders adapted for mobile phones; motor vehicle diagnostic apparatus and parts thereof, including memory cards; plug in electronic tools for vehicle diagnostic testing; electronic recorders for use with motor vehicle computer systems; computer programs for reading, diagnosing and analyzing vehicle parts and vehicle system operations; vehicle based electronic modules for transmitting diagnostic information and vehicle operational status; electronic device to read engine emissions; software for motor vehicle diagnostic apparatus; application software for connecting vehicle drivers and passengers and for coordinating transportation services; software for use in planning, monitoring and controlling urban transportation;computer software that enables communication between vehicles and connected devices; personal digital assistants (PDAs); recorded computer software used to process voice commands and to create audio responses to voice commands; recorded computer software for enabling hands-free use of a mobile phone through voice commands and voice recognition; recorded computer software that enables communication between vehicles and connected devices; electronic controls for facilitating the semi-autonomous driving of a motor land vehicle, sold as an integral part thereof; batteries, electric batteries, fuel cells, battery chargers, batteries for vehicles, electric batteries for vehicles, fuel cells for vehicles; modular battery system for powering electric vehicles comprising configurable, rechargeable battery stacks; rechargeable batteries for powering electric vehicles" in **Class 9;** "Apparatus for lighting, heating, air conditioning, air cooling devices, anti-dazzle devices for automobiles (lamp fittings), lamps, bulbs, reflectors; apparatus for demisting and defrosting windows, heat exchangers, radiators (heating), air heating apparatus, apparatus and installations for lighting, ventilation apparatus, apparatus for demisting and defrosting windows; heat exchangers, radiators; Heat accumulators, coils; air filtering installations, air conditioners for vehicles, gas condensers, air driers, defrosters for vehicles, flashlights, air conditioners, lamps and light bulbs; heaters, radiators, electric fans, dehumidifiers, lighting appliances; electrically, battery or gas-powered lamps; lanterns; lighters for lighting campfires, grills, barbecues, fireplaces tent lights; lamp casings and glasses; electrically or gas-powered heating, steam generating and cooking apparatus namely, cooking rings, cookers, barbecues, reheaters, electrically or gas-heated stoves for cooking purposes, plate warmers, pocket warmers; ice boxes; drying apparatus; hair dryers; portable showers, portable toilets; electrical devices having a heating element and sound wave emitting component for insect attraction and elimination, reflectors for vehicles; automotive headlamps" in **Class 11;** "Motor land vehicles, namely, automobiles, sport utility vehicles, trucks, vans, engines therefor and structural parts thereof; aircraft; boats; caravans and trailers; cycles and bicycles; electric bicycles; engines for motor vehicles; motorcycles; motorboats, helicopters, electric trains for railway vehicles, tires for vehicles, bicycle trailers; hydrogen powered vehicles; fuel cell powered vehicles; electric motors for land vehicles; electric vehicles; transmissions for land vehicles; power drive units for land vehicles; interchangeable drive units for land vehicles" in **Class 12;** "Watches, lapel pins, cuff links, clocks, wall clocks, timepieces, stopwatches, alarm clocks, jewelry, pendants, rings; diamonds, precious stones; precious metals and their alloys and goods in precious metals or coated therewith; jewelry boxes; watch straps, containers, utensils and other goods made of precious metals; trophies and plaques" in **Class 14;** "Pens, pencils, notepads, notebooks; posters; calendars; decals; printed materials; manuals, brochures, and catalogues pertaining to the features and controls, operation, maintenance, service and repair, and technical facts and specifications of motor vehicles; stationery, folders, files, packaging materials, namely containers; advertising materials, signs and figures, photographs, printed reproductions, namely, lithograph prints, pictures, display albums, diaries, maps, writing and drawing instruments, markers, erasers, drafting rulers, drafting compasses; stencils, instructional and teaching materials; gift tags; gift wrap, ribbons, bows, labels, and stickers, clipboards, memo or note pads, postcards, greeting cards, paint sets, coloring books; paper napkins, paper table covers, invitations, stickers, place mats, flags and banners made of paper, coasters made of paper, postage stamps (collectibles), magazines" in **Class 16;** "Tinted, laminated, or heat reflective plastic films for use on vehicle windows, anti-dazzle films for vehicle windows, plastic film not for wrapping; rings of rubber, weather stripping compositions, shock absorbing buffers of rubber, joint packing for pipes, chemical compositions for repairing leaks, gasket, seals, joint packings, brake lining materials partially processed, sealant compound for joints; junctions not of metal for pipes, plastic tubes, plastic boards, plastic poles, plastic strips; flexible pipe; non-conducting materials for retaining heat, compositions to prevent the radiation of heat, soundproofing materials, boards and tubes for thermal insulation; insulating materials; expansion joint fillers, packing materials made of rubber or plastic" in **Class 17;** "Backpacks, billfolds, briefcases, business card cases, carry-on bags, messenger bags, duffel bags, garment bags, luggage, overnight bags, tote bags, umbrellas, wallets, trunks, suitcases and traveling bags; goods made from leather and imitations of leather, including athletic bags, sports bags, slings for carrying babies, beach bags, book bags, diaper bags, bags for campers, gym bags, tote bags, school bags, fanny packs, knapsacks, waist packs, shopping bags, pocketbooks, handbags, shoulder bags, cosmetic bags, attaché cases, credit card cases, passport cases, key cases, coin cases; vanity cases; sun parasols; walking sticks, carry bags; luggage tags; key pouches and business card holders, belts, leather tool bags" in **Class 18;** "Non-metal key chains, non-metal key fobs, non-metal key holders, non-metal key rings, non-metal key tags, non-metal license plates, plastic name badges, picture frames, plastic flags, seat cushions,

stools, chairs, pillows, chair pads; tables; sign boards; toy boxes; coat hangers, clothes hooks; snow globes; plastic hardware, namely, sealing rings, rivets, plugs, screws, screw nuts and fittings therefor, spring washers, springs, clamping sleeves, cotters, nuts, toothed disks, non-metallic cable sleeves, reels, holders, tubes and clips; dash boards, seats and seat-belts; umbrella stands, sleeping bags for camping; air mattresses, camping chairs, folding chairs; pillows and cushions; non-metal tent stakes, racks for holding pots and pans; furniture, mirrors, goods (not included in other classes) of wood, cork, reed, cane, wicker, shell, amber, mother-of-pearl, sleeping bags, barrels, not of metal, work benches, number plates, not of metal, plastic decoration for foodstuff, identification bracelets, not of metal, non-metal furniture fittings, door fittings, not of metal; porcelain knobs; draw pulls, furniture, cots; cradles; bassinettes; change tables; high chairs; rocking chairs; baby carriers; baby change tables; bedding; bins; display boards and stands; garment storage covers; deck chairs; drinking straws; fans for personal use; hampers; headrests; keyboards for hanging keys; lockers; locks; placards of wood or plastics; decorative wall plaques; statues and statuettes of wood, wax, plaster or plastic; free standing barriers; non-metal bottle carriers" in **Class 20;** "Glassware, mugs, travel insulated beverage containers, flasks; household or kitchen utensils and containers (not of precious metal or coated therewith); combs and sponges; brushes (except paint brushes); unworked or semi-worked glass (except glass used in building); boxes made of crystal, glassware for beverages, household containers of crystal, household containers of porcelain, household containers of pottery, beverage cups made of porcelain, beverage cups made of pottery, beverage cups made of glass, perfume sprayers, powder compacts not of precious metal, model motor vehicles made of crystal being decorative items, toothpicks, glass for vehicle windows, beverage glassware, bottles of plastic or glass, jugs, bowls, plates, coasters, coffee cups; sugar and creamer sets; infant drinking cups; cookie jars; ceramic, glass and china figurines; non-electric coffee pots; wastepaper baskets; plastic buckets; shower caddies; tea caddies; cake molds; cake servers; canteens; cocktail shakers; thermal insulated containers for food or beverages; cookie cutters, cork screws; plastic water bottles sold empty; decanters, drinking flasks; dinnerware; kitchen utensils, including rolling pins, spatulas, turners, whisks, soap containers, food containers and lunch boxes; cookware, including pots, frying pans, coffee pots, cups, cooking utensils, grills, clothes pins, barbecue mitts; oven mitts, portable containers and boxes, for money and food, drink, jewelry, personal care products, cleaning products, household and kitchen goods; articles for cleaning purposes, brooms, dusting brushes, dust pans, dust cloths, cleaning cloths, portable baby baths, wash basins, cages for household pets; wind chimes; vases; watering cans; flower pots; shoe horns; bottle openers; salt and pepper shakers, candy and cookie jars, spoon rests, trivets, trays, napkin holders, serving spoons, beverage coolers, water and beverage containers, portable ice chests, ice buckets, ice trays, bottle holders, paper and plastic cups, plates, decorative articles and works of art made of glass, porcelain or earthenware, handles, hooks; decorative stained glass, baskets; trash cans; signs, badges and emblems of glass or porcelain; portable coolers, cocktail stirrers; thermally insulated containers for food and beverages" in **Class 21;** "Tents, ropes not of metal; bags for transport and storage of materials in bulk" in **Class 22;** "Golf towel, blankets, cloth flags; textiles and textile goods; bedding, linen, towels, bath linen, namely face washers; cloth badges, flags and banners; loose covers for furniture; cushion covers; covers to be filled with polystyrene pellets to form seats and cushions; furniture coverings of textile; curtains of textile and fabric, handkerchiefs, household linen, bed sheets, bed quilts, pillow cases, wall hangings of textile, blinds of textile, curtains, table cloths, shower curtains; plastic pennants, tea towels; bar towels and mats including rubber backed bar mats" in **Class 24;** "Clothing, including, aprons, caps, coats, dress shirts, gloves, golf shirts, hats, jackets, neckties, polo shirts, rainwear, raincoats, robes, scarves, sleep wear, slippers, sun visors, sweatpants, sweatshirts, sweaters, t-shirts; headgear, footwear, shirts, jumpers, wind breakers, socks, underwear, driving suits, overalls, suits, stockings, hosiery, shorts, blouses, tops, slacks, trousers, skirts, dresses, capes, slickers, waistcoats, knitted articles of clothing, mufflers, dressing gowns, bathrobes, children's and infants' clothing, bibs, formal wear, articles of sports clothing, activewear, leisurewear, sleeping garments, cardigans, vests, handkerchiefs, belts, gloves, mittens, tights, jeans, neckwear, ties, swimwear, wristbands, and footwear including shoes, sandals, boots, sneakers" in **Class 25;** "Belt buckles not of precious metal for clothing, badges to be worn, not of precious metal" in **Class 26;** "Floor mats, carpeting for vehicles, floor coverings including mats and rugs" in **Class 27;** "Games, toys, playthings, and sporting equipment, toy vehicles, toy bicycles, toy electric bicycles; golf clubs, golf balls, golf bags, golf club bags, golf gloves, golf tees, divot repair tool, games, toys, playthings and sporting equipment in this class; sports gloves, exercise and physical training apparatus and articles; play development toys in this class; play mats; rocking horses; toy cars, model cars and slot cars and parts thereof; jigsaw puzzles; bags adapted for sporting equipment, battery operated remote controlled toy vehicles, friction powered toy vehicles and toy model hobby craft kits; board games, handheld computer games; balloons, dolls, plush toys, spinning tops, toy masks, board games, toy building blocks, dollhouses, roller skates and skateboards, ice skates, surfboards, swimming flippers, swings; strings and nets for sporting goods, games and rackets; rackets for playing tennis, squash, paddleball; archery equipment, track and field equipment; balls, gloves, pads, bats, sticks, clubs, markers and tees, all used for games of sport; body guards, knee pads, and wrist guards, all for every kind of play; apparatus for mountain climbing, archery, fencing, gymnastics and for boxing; bars and mechanically operated exercise equipment; rods, lines, hooks, baits and lures, floats, sinkers and reels, all for fishing, skis, poles; playing cards, electronic games" in **Class 28;** "Smokers' articles, lighters for cigars and cigarettes (not for land vehicles), cigar holders, , tobacco pouches, cigarette cases, tobacco holders, ashtrays, tobacco pipes, tobacco pipe cleaners, match holders, lighter flints, liquified gas cylinders for smokers' lighters, safety matches" in **Class 34;** "Advertising, promotion and public relations relating to motor vehicles, sports involving motor vehicles and the motor vehicle industry; wholesaling and retailing services in this class relating to the sale of motor vehicles and parts and accessories for motor vehicles; advertising, promotion and public relations relating to entertainment, cultural and sporting events; online retail services featuring computer software platform to manage connectivity of downloaded software applications with motor land vehicle electric, information and entertainment systems; business management and consulting services; business management and organization and consultancy; business information; providing business information via web site; import-export agencies; sales promotion for others; marketing; operating on-line marketplace for buyers and sellers of goods and services; dissemination of advertising and publicity material; radio advertising; television advertising; online advertising on computer network; business services relating to transportation of goods and services; administration of customer loyalty program; auction services; retail services for vehicles, vehicle parts and accessories, and retailing of vehicle services; online retail services for vehicles, vehicle parts and accessories, and retailing of vehicle services" in **Class 35;** "Insurance and financial services; lease financing services; sponsorship of entertainment, cultural and sporting events and their participants; clearing and reconciling financial transactions via a global computer network; financial advice and consultancy services; financial affairs and monetary affairs, namely financial information, management and analysis services; financial information; financial information provided by electronic means in the field of motor vehicles; financial loan consultation; financial services, namely vehicle title loans; financial advice on financing and guarantee contracts for motor vehicles, real estate, real estate, homes, apartments, commercial buildings and properties, household appliances, office equipment, furniture and other goods; insurance and financing services in the field of property insurance, real estate, private property, accident insurance and life insurance, as well as construction, renovation, remodeling of buildings; credit card services; real estate mortgage services; motor vehicle leasing; real estate agency services; real estate appraisal and inspection services; real estate rental and leasing services; financing of motor vehicle purchases and loans;; financial appraisal of vehicles" in **Class 36;** "Maintenance, repair and servicing of motor vehicles and engines; diagnostic repair and maintenance services for motor vehicles; engineering brake systems, steering systems and other parts (components); maintenance, servicing and repair of parts and accessories for motor vehicles; roadside emergency repair services for motor vehicles; installation, maintenance, repair and servicing of vehicle theft detection, notification and tracking systems and apparatus" in **Class 37;** "Telecommunication services, including electronic transmission of voice, messages and data; telecommunication services relating to the detection, notification and tracking of motor vehicles; wireless mobile phone services; providing telecommunications connections to a global computer network; transmission of sound, images and text data over the Internet; electronic bulletin board services over the Internet; telegraph services; communications by telephone using Internet lines; computer aided transmission of messages; providing information relating to data communications (including provision of information via wireless or cable communication networks); communications via satellite; electronic mail; providing telecommunications connections via computer terminals; value-added network communications; broadcasting; television broadcasting; cable television broadcasting; radio broadcasting; providing access to a website on the Internet for the purpose of social networking; chatroom services; web casting services; communication by computer and mobile electronic devices; providing access to computer, electronic and online databases; electronic transmission of data, messages and information; providing online forums for communication on topics of general interest; providing online communications links which transfer web site users to other local and global web pages; facilitating access to third party web sites via a universal login; providing online chat rooms and electronic bulletin boards; audio, text and video broadcasting services over computer or other communication networks namely, uploading, posting, displaying, tagging, and electronically transmitting data, information, audio and video images; providing internet communications services; providing telecommunications link from motor vehicles to a central station; communications by computer terminals; communications by fiber optic networks; communications by cellular phones; providing information in the field of telecommunications; providing telecommunications connections to a global computer network; providing access to databases; providing user access to global computer networks; satellite transmission; computer aided transmission of messages and images; streaming of data; transmission of digital files; transmission of electronic mail; video-on-demand transmission; message sending" in **Class 38;** "Information services regarding road and traffic situations and regarding the operational status of vehicles and vehicle warning services; vehicle location and direction information, including such services provided with the assistance of navigation systems via satellite; providing road and traffic information; vehicle routing by computer; renting, hiring and leasing of motor vehicles and their parts, fittings and accessories; provision of vehicle location and direction information; transport and storage services; pickup and delivery of motor vehicles; motor vehicle rental; transport, packaging, storage, collection, delivery of motor vehicles, household appliances, furniture, office equipment and other goods; removal services for employees; rental of land motor vehicles, bicycles and motorized bicycles, scooters and cycles; land vehicle sharing services, transportation services for passengers and freight" in **Class 39;** "Manufacture of fuel cells; manufacture of motor vehicles and motor vehicle parts" in **Class 40;** "Education and training services including education and training services relating to motor vehicles, motor vehicle sports and the motor vehicle industry; educational services related to the manufacture, distribution, transportation, use, repair and maintenance of motor vehicles and parts of motor vehicles; driver education and training; entertainment and amusement reservations; planning, organizing and conducting entertainment, sporting and cultural events including organizing and conducting entertainment, sporting and cultural events relating to motor vehicles, motor vehicle sports and the motor vehicle industry; organization of tournaments and competitions; organization and production of shows and live performances; organization of social events; recording, production and distribution of films, video and audio recordings, radio and television programs; providing on-line images, videos, music and games, not downloadable, from a computer network; live entertainment; event management services; production of television, mobile phone television and radio programs; production of radio and television programs for the Internet and other media; provision of multimedia entertainment programs by television, broadband, wireless and on-line services; providing electronic publications from a global computer network on the Internet, not downloadable; organizing and hosting entertainment events for the purpose of fundraising; organizing charitable fundraising events being the provision of entertainment, sporting and cultural services; charitable services, namely education and training; education information; information of sport games; instructional services; arranging and conducting of seminars; lending libraries; providing on-line electronic publications; translation services; club services for entertainment and education; arranging motor vehicle and racing car competitions; providing entertainment information to vehicle drivers and passengers; providing education information to vehicle drivers and passengers providing entertainment to vehicle drivers and passengers; providing sports facilities; toy rental; games equipment rental; zoological garden services; providing models for artists; operating lotteries" in **Class 41;** "Provision of weather and road hazard information; software as a service (SaaS) for use in the automobile industry; online provision of web-based computer software in relation to the automobile industry; online provision of web-based applications for use in the automobile industry; providing use of on-line downloadable software in relation to the automobile industry; hosting of software and databases for use in the automobile industry; hosting of software as a service (SaaS) in relation to the automobile industry; platform as a service (PaaS) featuring computer software platform used to regulate users providing temporary use of online non-downloadable software in relation to the automobile industry; providing online computer databases and online searchable databases in relation to the automobile industry; design and development of computer software for motor vehicles; provision of all of the foregoing information to motor vehicle drivers and passengers via global positioning systems and satellite technology; research and development in the field of automobiles; vehicle roadworthiness testing; remote monitoring services rendered in the repair and maintenance of motor vehicles" in **Class 42;** and "Vehicle theft detection and tracking by means of electronic systems; concierge services, making personal arrangements and reservations for others, stolen vehicle tracking services; security services; emergency roadside assistance services including opening of locks, stolen vehicle recovery and tracking services; security services for motor land vehicle theft recovery, including providing remote vehicle deceleration by signalling an electronic device in the motor vehicle" in **Class 45**.

Any fraudulent imitation or unauthorized use of the above Trademark or other infringements whatsoever thereto will be dealt with according to law.

Daw Yee Mon Aung, *(Advocate)*
For **GENERAL MOTORS LLC**
c/o **Baker & McKenzie Limited**
Suite 28, Level 14, Junction City Tower, No. 3/A Bogyoke Aung San Road, Pabedan Township, Yangon, The Republic of the Union of Myanmar.
Dated: **20 September 2021**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Notre-Dame de Paris finally ready for restoration

FRANCE'S Notre-Dame cathedral is finally ready to undergo restoration work more than two years after a blaze ravaged the heritage landmark, and remains on course to reopen in 2024, authorities said Saturday, following months of painstaking work to secure the building.

THE great mediaeval edifice survived the inferno on April 15, 2019, but the spire collapsed and much of the roof was destroyed.

THE focus until now had been on making the cathedral safe before restoration work could begin, which included the strenuous task of removing 40,000 pieces of scaffolding that were damaged in the blaze. — AFP ■

At least two dead in blasts in Afghanistan's Jalalabad: Taliban

AT least two people were killed and up to 20 more wounded in three explosions in the eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad on Saturday, a Taliban official said.

"SO far we have reports of two killed and up to 20 wounded," said the Taliban official, who asked not to be named, and said that a patrol vehicle was targeted.

"WOMEN and children were among the injured," he said.

AN investigation was under way to establish the extent of the damage and the cause of the explosions, he added.

THE attacks are the first deadly blasts since the American withdrawal from Afghanistan.

AN official from the health department of Nangarhar Province told AFP that three people were killed and 18 were wounded. — AFP ■

Greece inaugurates its first 'closed' camp for asylum seekers

GREECE on Saturday inaugurates the first of five new "closed" migrant camps, opposed by rights groups who say the strict access measures are too restrictive.

Barbed wire fencing surrounds the new camp on the island of Samos which is also installed with surveillance cameras, x-ray scanners and magnetic doors.

The EU has committed 276 million euros ($326 million) for the new camps on Greece's five Aegean islands -- Leros, Lesbos, Kos, Chios as well Samos -- that receive most of the migrant arrivals by sea from neighbouring Turkey.

The Samos camp, which will serve as a pilot for the other so-called closed and controlled-access facilities, has a detention centre and will only be accessible via electronic chip.

Gates will remain closed at night. — AFP ■

Double barbed wire surrounds the 12,000 square metre camp on the island of Samos. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

HK voters turn out for first elections under revamped electoral system

Election Committee candidates arrive at the polling station in Wan Chai. **PHOTO: FELIX WONG/SCMP/XINHUA**

VOTERS began to arrive early Sunday morning at the polling stations across Hong Kong to cast their ballots for the 2021 Election Committee Subsector Ordinary Elections, the first polls under the city's new electoral system.

The voting hours at five ordinary polling stations and one dedicated station run from 9 am to 6 pm.

Shortly after 9 am, the polling station at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wan Chai was already packed with the first batch of voters.

The other polling stations at venues including the Kowloon Park Sports Center, Sha Tin Town Hall, Tuen Mun Town Hall and Tsuen Wan Princess Alexandra Community Center also saw a steady arrival of voters who lined up outside the stations in an orderly manner.

Before entering the polling stations, many people took photos with the banners at the entrance to memorize this special occasion.

Meeting the media after inspecting the polling station in Wan Chai, Chief Executive Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor said that today's elections, the first under the revamped electoral system, are of great importance and will lay a good foundation for the upcoming elections for the Legislative Council and the Chief Executive.

Noting that the expanded Election Committee will reflect broader representation of different sectors in society, Lam said she is confident that the committee will represent the city's overall interest and help the city to better integrate into the nation's overall development. — Xinhua ■

Merkel party learns to campaign again as election looms

Christian Democratic Union party leader and candidate for Chancellor Armin Laschet speaks on stage during a rally in Bremen, northern Germany on 16 September 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

WITH Germany's Christian Democrats (CDU) trailing in the polls ahead of an election next week, grassroots party members are resorting to an activity that had almost become redundant under Angela Merkel: campaigning.

On a medieval square in the northern city of Bremen, CDU leader and conservative chancellor candidate Armin Laschet takes the stage at a campaign rally to the rousing sounds of "Eye of the Tiger" from Rocky III.

With the CDU and the CSU, its Bavarian sister party, staring down the barrel of possibly their worst election result in post-war Germany on September 26, Laschet needs all the pumped-up motivation he can get.

The centre-left Social Democrats (SPD) are currently leading in the polls, with the conservatives in a position they have become unaccustomed to after 16 years of Merkel: second place.

"I didn't expect it to be so close," says Hans-Georg Friedrichs, a longtime CDU activist in Bremen. "Laschet doesn't have the advantage of already being well-known. He's had to make himself known."

'Starting from scratch'

"Coming after Merkel is the problem," agrees Kerstin Eckardt, head of a local CDU group. "We are starting from scratch. We have to convince people."

"This time it's a real campaign. It's not taken for granted like it used to be," adds a fellow party member. — AFP ■

Faction politics wane in LDP leadership race as nat'l vote looms

The four candidates running in the presidential election of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party attend a Japan National Press Club-sponsored debate in Tokyo on 18 September 2021. The four -- (from L) vaccination minister Taro Kono, former Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, former communications minister Sanae Takaichi and Seiko Noda, executive acting secretary general of the LDP -- are vying for the post currently held by Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga. **PHOTO: POOL /KYODO**

THE outcome of Japan's ruling party leadership race to choose the successor to Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga has become increasingly unclear as four senior lawmakers have joined the race, raising the possibility of a runoff.

But one thing is certain. Liberal Democratic Party lawmakers are under greater pressure to heed public opinion on who should succeed Suga than play by faction rules.

The House of Representatives members' term expires on Oct. 21, meaning whoever among the four contenders wins majority votes will become the new LDP president -- and hence prime minister -- to lead the party and its coalition partner Komeito into a general election in the fall.

That aspect has made many LDP lawmakers -- particularly younger ones who have yet to build strong bases in their constituencies -- seek to install a popular leader especially at a time of the COVID-19 pandemic, and break from control of intra-party factions.

Suga, for example, was elected LDP president last year after major factions, such as the 96-member group led by former Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda, the largest of the seven factions, threw support behind him even though he does not belong to a faction himself.

"The LDP must consider how the public would see the party," said Etsushi Tanifuji, a professor emeritus of political science at Waseda University, alluding to traditional LDP politics in which faction leaders effectively have determined who becomes the party president. — Kyodo ■

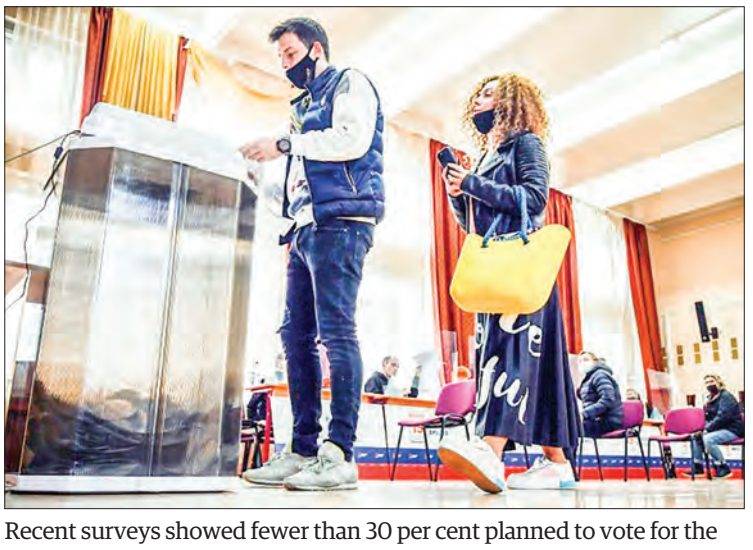
Putin's party set to retain parliament majority after polls

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin's party was set Sunday to retain a majority in parliament on the last day of three-day elections in which most Kremlin critics were barred from the ballot.

The vote comes in the wake of an unprecedented crackdown on the opposition this year, with Russian authorities jailing Putin's best-known domestic foe Alexei Navalny and banning his organisations as "extremist".

In the lead-up to this weekend's vote, all of his top allies were arrested or had fled the country, with anyone associated with his groups kept from running in the parliamentary and local polls scheduled to close at 8:00 pm Sunday.

"These essentially aren't elections. People in effect have no choice," 43-year-old businessman Vladimir Zakharov told AFP in Russia's second city Saint Petersburg. The elections were also marred by claims of censorship and rampant ballot stuffing.



Recent surveys showed fewer than 30 per cent planned to vote for the ruling United Russia Party. **PHOTO: AFP**

As voting kicked off Friday, Apple and Google caused an uproar among Russia's opposition after they removed Navalny's "Smart Voting" app, which showed supporters which candidate they should back to unseat Kremlin-aligned politicians. — AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sparse attendance at rally in support of US Capitol rioters

A few hundred protesters turned up Saturday in Washington to rally in support of the pro-Trump rioters who ransacked the US Capitol on January 6, but they were outnumbered by a robust security presence and journalists.

POLICE who were caught on the back foot by the deadly riot on Capitol Hill took no chances this time: they used a security fence around the Capitol complex, police in riot gear and rows of armored trucks to keep the peace.

ORGANIZERS of the "Justice for J6" rally -- who said they wanted to draw attention to those held over the riot who did not commit violent offenses -- had received a permit for 700 people to gather near the Capitol's reflecting pool, but far fewer showed up. — AFP ■

Israel recaptures last two prison-break fugitives

ALL six Palestinian fugitives who escaped a high-security Israeli jail through a tunnel dug under a sink are back in custody, after the Israeli army said Sunday it had recaptured the last two.

THE inmates, who were being held for attacks against the Jewish state, became heroes among many Palestinians when reports emerged they had burrowed out using tools as basic as a spoon.

THE full weight of Israel's security arsenal was deployed to catch them, including aerial drones, checkpoints on roads and an army mission to Jenin where many of the men grew up.

THE massive manhunt lasted almost a fortnight, with four of the six recaptured last week.

IN a tweet on Sunday, the Israel Defence Forces said the last two had surrendered "after being surrounded by security forces that acted precisely based on accurate intelligence". — AFP ■

Iran looks east after China-led bloc OKs entry

An Iranian man reads a copy of the daily newspaper "Etalaat" headlined, "Iran is a new member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation", at a kiosk in Tehran on 18 September 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

IRAN on Saturday hailed its acceptance into a China and Russia-led bloc, an eastward turn it sees as opening access to major world markets and a counter to crippling Western sanctions.

Conservative and reformist newspapers showed rare unity in welcoming the outcome of a conference in Dushanbe on Friday at which members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation endorsed Iran's future membership in the bloc.

"It is a strategic and diplomatic success," said ultraconservative President Ebrahim Raisi following his return home on Saturday.

The eight-member SCO group, created two decades ago and which also includes India, promotes itself as an antidote to Western dominance.

The bloc's decision on Iran comes with negotiations at a standstill on bringing Washington back into a 2015 nuclear accord. Then president Donald Trump withdrew from the deal in 2018 and reimposed sweeping sanctions. — AFP ■

Busy footballers from Malaysia (white) and Myanmar (red) including goal keeper Kyaw Zin Htet (green) seen at 2018 tourney of the AFF Suzuki Cup at Bukit Jalil Stadium in Malaysia on 24 November, 2018. **PHOTO: AFF SUZUKI CUP**

Fixtures for Suzuki Cup featuring Myanmar team confirmed

THE ASEAN Football Federation has confirmed the fixtures for the 2020 ASEAN Suzuki Cup, which has been postponed due to the COVID-19 epidemic. The tournament is normally scheduled for the end of 2020, but has been postponed to this year due to the pandemic.

However, the 2020 ASEAN Suzuki Cup will be held from 5 December 2021 to 1 January 2022.

The competition will be divided into two groups of five teams, while the semi-finals and finals will be held in two rounds. Host country for the tourney will then be selected according to the pandemic situation and nine teams, including Myanmar, will be able to compete directly from the final stage. According to the ASEAN Football Federation, group matches will be held from 5 to 19 December, first leg of the semi-final on 22 and 23 December, second round on 25 and 26 December, first round of the finals on 29 December and the final second round on 1 January 2022 respectively.

Defending champion Vietnam including Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, Cambodia and Laos will compete in the group stage.

Timor-Leste and Brunei, who have the lowest rankings, will play for the qualifier to join the group stage. The group stage draw ceremony be held online on 21 September (Tuesday) and further details will be announced at the same time.

Led by head coach Antoine Hey, Myanmar team will take time to prepare for the tournament, which will take between one and two months.—Ko Nyi Lay/ GNLM

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

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

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

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

2. Economic affairs

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

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

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

3. Social affairs

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

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

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

McNealy rallies late to grab share of the lead at Fortinet Championship

JIM Knous and Maverick McNealy both birdied their final holes of the round to top a crowded leaderboard at The Fortinet Championship, the first PGA Tour event of the new season.

McNealy caught fire on the back nine, closing his round of 70 with three consecutive birdies to get to -14 under 202 total and maintain a share of the lead on the Silverado Resort and Spa course.

Neither McNealy nor Knous can sleep easy heading into Sunday's final round, as there are 18 players within four shots of the lead, including six-time major winner Phil Mickelson and 2012 US Open champion Webb Simpson.—AFP ■

Mane scores 100th Liverpool goal in Palace stroll

SADIO Mane scored his 100th Liverpool goal as the Senegal star inspired a 3-0 win against Crystal Palace that sent his side top of the Premier League on Saturday.

Mane's milestone strike came in his 224th appearance for the Reds, breaking Palace's rearguard action late in the first half at Anfield. Egypt forward Mohamed Salah and Guinea midfielder Naby Keita netted in the second half to move Jurgen Klopp's team three points clear of second-placed Manchester City.

Liverpool forward Sadio Mane. **PHOTO: AFP**

It was fitting that Mane should make it to his century against Palace as he set a new Premier League record for the most consecutive games a player has scored against one opponent. It was the ninth successive match that Mane had netted against Palace. More importantly for Klopp, Mane already has four goals this term, suggesting he is ready to put last season's disappointing personal campaign behind him. After Liverpool's lacklustre, injury-hit defence of the Premier League title, they are back in the groove in the chase to regain the trophy from Manchester City.—AFP ■

Inter Milan ran riot against Bologna to move top of Serie A. **PHOTO: AFP**

Inter crash six past Bologna to move top of Serie A

INTER Milan bounced back from midweek Champions League disappointment on Saturday with a 6-1 hammering of Bologna which moved the reigning champions top of Serie A.

Simone Inzaghi's side were sucker-punched in the last minute by Real Madrid in Wednesday's single-goal defeat but made no mistake this time at the San Siro.

They are a point ahead of Roma, AC Milan, Napoli and Fiorentina following a thumping win which came thanks to goals from Lautaro Martinez, Milan Skriniar, Nicolo Barella, and Matias Vecino and a brace from Edin Dzeko.

Bologna sit eighth on seven points after their first defeat of the season, made no better by Arthur Theate's late consolation goal.— AFP ■