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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.

Government wishes to urge the people to have practices of democracy: Senior General



Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivers the address at the meeting 1/2021 of the Union Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in Nay Pyi Taw on 27 September 2021.

THE government will not totally derail from the way of democracy and will protect it, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting 1/2021 of the Union Government of the Republic of the Union of

Myanmar at the Office of the State Administration Council Chairman, yesterday afternoon.

First, the Senior General delivered an address, saying that the government has been taking State responsibilities for about eight months with regard to the political changes. After taking the

responsibilities, various kinds of changes happened. This situation was triggered by forcefully unlawful acts to continuously seize the State power without legally solving the voting frauds in the 2020 multiparty democracy general election which caused the crisis in the country. After

declaring the State of Emergency, the situations have emerged for solving the problems under the law. Officials and participants in the voting frauds can face action under the law but the elected representatives can face the cancellation of representatives. The general election is a very

important process for a democratic nation, and those persons attempted to secure the victory in the election by turning a blind eye to the election process.

The Tatmadaw emphasizes the desire of the people. But, they need to follow the disciplines.

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services
Statement on Ceasefire and Perpetual Peace

7th Waning of Tawthalin 1383 ME
27 September 2021

1. The Panglong Agreement was signed on 12 February 1947 with the vow to regain independence with the concerted efforts of the people from hilly and plain regions as part of the unity based on the Union spirit. As a fruit of the Panglong Agreement, those from hilly and plain regions together with the Tatmadaw unitedly regained the independence of Myanmar on 4 January 1948.
2. The 12th February showing the Union Spirit of the ethnic nationals who initiated the regaining of independence through the unity of the people from the whole nation was honoured as the Union Day. On 12 February 2022, the anniversary of Union Day would fall on the 75th Diamond Jubilee.
3. As a gesture of hailing the Diamond Jubilee Union Day, the work process must be beefed up for strengthening the Union Spirit across the Union, ensuring the prosperity of the country and restoring the perpetual peace so as to further cement the national unity. Only when our country inhabited by many ethnic nationals forges the unity among them, will the Union not disintegrate and will the sovereignty strengthen. Hence, further efforts must be made for building the compact and united strength among national brethren in the future.
4. The Tatmadaw has been taking responsibility for safeguarding the sovereignty of the State and life and property of the people in successive eras. The armed insurgency against successive governments based on diversity in political, national race, ethnic affairs and dogmatism in the parliamentary democracy era from 1948 to 1958 triggered the current armed conflicts due to subsequences of the divide-and-rule policy of the colonialists.
5. Any ethnic groups do not isolate in any regions and states of the country. It is a Union inhabited by various ethnic nationals together. In arranging the negotiation to seek the best way of addressing the armed conflicts in successive eras, it is not necessary to prioritize own ethnic, state, region and organization. Only when the dialogues must be held with the unity as We are Myanmar, can the perpetual peace the entire ethnic national people aspire be restored.
6. The State Administration Council of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has been implementing the five-point road map and nine objectives since its assumption of the State responsibilities and implementing the point of road-map which clearly declared as **“Emphasis will be placed on achieving enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.”**
7. The Tatmadaw announced the statements on ceasefire and perpetual peace 20 times from 21 December 2018 to date. During the period of more than two years and nine months, the Tatmadaw built a ceasefire and perpetual peace.
8. In its statements, the Tatmadaw has clearly declared, **“The Tatmadaw will suspend its military operations except the period of security for life and property of the people, secure and smooth transportation in addition to the State defence and administrative measures across Myanmar in addition to undermining the security and administrative machinery of the government.”**
9. Secretary-General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres on 23 March 2021 called for stopping the current armed conflicts as people from all parts of the world are suffering from impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and released an Appeal for Global Ceasefire of the UNSG. As part of supporting the Appeal for Global Ceasefire of the UNSG, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution on 1 July 2021 including the suspension of the 90-day ceasefire and assistance for response to the COVID-19. As Myanmar being a member State of the UN accepts the concept to abide by the resolution of the UN in line with the international ethics, the Myanmar Tatmadaw issued a statement on ceasefire and perpetual peace on 24 August 2020 to suspend the ceasefire from 1 to 30 September 2020.
10. At present, the globe has been suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic till today since early 2020. During the period, the State Administration Council holding a policy that **“no one is important rather than the life of the people”** is striving for carrying out prevention, control and treatment activities of COVID-19 for the whole nation and the entire people with might and main. In Myanmar, 41 per cent of the people were found the virus in the diagnosis in the third wave of COVID-19 in the third week of July. As the government made utmost efforts for prevention, control and treatment activities of the pandemic, nine per cent of the people were found virus at the end of September, reducing more than 30 per cent of infection.
11. COVID-19 based on high changeable gene is a communicable disease and it was found that the pandemic cannot disappear at all. It is a disease to be prevented and controlled by the whole world including Myanmar to some degree.
12. Not only the meeting between the Union Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the ASEAN Special Envoy on Myanmar affairs but also some EAOs welcomed the further urging of the ceasefire. The government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has ceased the firing. Vaccination for prevention of COVID-19 is being undertaken for the people residing in the EAOs areas, people from internally displaced person camps and Bengalis in Rakhine State.
13. Meanwhile, it was regrettable that NLD extremist members and terrorist groups called NUG, CRPH and PDF committed bomb attacks on and firing at the prevention, control and treatment activities of COVID-19. Moreover, terrorist groups such as NUG and CRPH on 7 September 2021 issued an announcement inciting the terror acts to deteriorate the peace and stability of the State. They are boosting murdering innocent people, blowing up mines in public places and attacking the security forces on the ground. All the international organizations need to know about these murders and atrocities over innocent people by the terrorists.
14. As a gesture of hailing the Diamond Jubilee Union Day which will fall soon, the government issued a statement to further extend the five-month suspension of military operations of the Tatmadaw from 1 October 2021 to 28 February 2022 with the aim of effectively carrying out prevention, control and treatment activities of COVID-19 across Myanmar, restoring the perpetual peace in the entire nation and boosting the peace process, except for the period of security for life and property of the people, secure and smooth transportation in addition to the State defence and administrative measures across Myanmar in addition to undermining the security and administrative machinery of the government throughout the nation.
15. The entire people are hereby requested to participate in the work processes to practically implement this statement, beef up the peace process before the Diamond Jubilee Union Day and secure achievement for the prevention, control and treatment activities of COVID-19 as much as they can.

Office of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services

State Administration Council's Information
Team to hold press conference 9/2021

THE Information Team of the State Administration Council will hold a press conference 9/2021 at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw at 1:00 pm on 30 September. Local and foreign media personnel are invited to the press conference. — MNA

1,282 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 27
September, total figure rises to 459,436

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 459,436 after 1,282 new cases were reported on 27 September 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 413,821 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 17,583 after 56 died.

Continuous learning will have an improvement in the education sector

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

(Excerpt from the speech to the meeting 2/2021 of the 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)

Government wishes to urge the people to have practices ...

FROM PAGE-1

Although they can do anything in unison if their acts are not in line with the law, such acts cannot be done. All things must be done under the law.

The government wishes to do anything under the law and discipline. The government wishes to urge the people to have the practices of democracy. The wish of the majority cannot be implemented against the law. It is necessary to hand over the malpractice to themselves and new generations.

At present, speeches and acts of CRPH and NUG are leading to terrorism. Likewise, EAOs related to them, directly and indirectly, participate in the terror acts. NUG and related organizations do not totally perform development tasks of the State and good things under the democracy but they urge all to commit the terror acts such as murdering and mine explosion for destroying the country. The

nel take salaries of the State and they must be loyal to the State. Every democratic country allows public service personnel to cast votes under political freedom. It is necessary to complicate the politics and duty of service personnel.

Myanmar is facing the infection pandemic in the third wave which reached the highest rate in July but the infection rate is declining now. As the genetic change of COVID-19 is very rapid, it is necessary to continue preparations with farsightedness for the worst without carelessness. The government is making efforts for declining the infection rate to less than five per cent. Preparations must be made for the forthcoming fourth wave.

Relevant ministries should emphasize the production of an adequate volume of vaccines and medicines at home instead of importing them abroad. Those from the traditional medicine

Priority must be given to the development of states with an enhancement of health and education sectors as well as job opportunities for the ethnic people. Only when the areas of ethnic people develop will the government win their trust. If so, the country can march into a stable, peaceful and prosperous situation for the country.

Myanmar has K11.892 billion worth of export and K12.260 billion worth of imports within 10 months budget period from October 2020 to July 2021, totalling K21.153 billion with some K368 million in the trade deficit. In comparison with the trade volume in 2019-2020 financial, trade volume declined 22.38 per cent.

More than 768,000 tonnes of palm oil was imported in the 2017-2018 financial year, over 370,000 tonnes in the 2018 mini-budget period, over 855,000 tonnes in the 2018-2019 financial year, over 888,000 tonnes in the 2019-2020 financial year and some 790,000 tonnes till 17 September this year. Hence, it is necessary to systematically consume palm oil. Likewise, efforts must be made for reducing the import of cement while cement production must be operated at home at full capacity.

At present, the country imports a large volume of fuel from foreign countries. People need to individually participate in the reduction of fuel consumption while relevant government organizations must seek ways to reduce fuel consumption. Aims must be set for driving buses and private cars with the use of electricity.

Generating electricity must use renewable energy such as

hydropower, solar power and wind power. So also, it is necessary to reduce fuel consumption as well as a foreign exchange by applying renewable energy. Efforts are being made for the production of fertilizers from domestic plants. It is necessary to produce natural fertilizers through the wastes of animal breeding farms.

The Senior General stressed that the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Tatmadaw need to effectively expose and seize the narcotic drugs production and trafficking. Seizure of the drugs shows the areas of Myanmar where ethnic armed organizations control.

The income of the nation comes from taxes. The people need to have the conscience to pay necessary taxes to the State. Only when the government obtains taxes will it undertake the development of the nation and the socio-economic development of the people. Consequently, the country will be stable and peaceful.

The Union ministers reported on their respective sectors.

In his concluding remarks, the Senior General pointed out that individual consumption of oil needs to be reduced and they have to consume oil for their health as an adult consumes

more than 10 visses of oil per year. Sufficient production of oil at home can reduce spending on foreign exchange.

Cultivable lands are used in other ways without permission. Those who took the permits for land plots do not actually implement the allotted land plots. They have to abide by the policies of the land law. The motor road areas have been set in the country exactly. All need to effectively use the land plots. Officials systematically tackle the expansion of land plots into the road areas.

Priority must be given to the development of states with an enhancement of health and education sectors as well as job opportunities for the ethnic people. Only when the areas of ethnic people develop will the government win their trust. If so, the country can march into a stable, peaceful and prosperous situation for the country.

As the government is a shade for the people, the government will create pleasant and tranquillity for the people. Moreover, the government must implement the projects involved in the national planning law for the development of the states and the socio-economic improvement of the entire people.—MNA

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government will not totally derail from the way of democracy and will protect it.

The public service person-

arena need to produce vaccines and medicines for COVID-19 based on herbal plants.

In the economic sector,

From now on, Myanmar needs to prepare resumption of destinations for homegrown tourists depending on control of COVID-19 infection: Vice-Senior General

MYANMAR should strive for resumption of the tourism industry with double and triple efforts more than other countries, said Chairman of the Central Committee on Development of National Tourism Industry Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win at the ceremony to mark World Tourism Day-2021 held at the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism in Nay Pyi Taw through videoconferencing yesterday morning.

First, the video clip on the message sent by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing was presented.

(The address delivered by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing is reported separately. See on page-5.)

Speaking on the occasion, the Vice-Senior General said only when the country controls the infection of COVID-19, will it implement all businesses including the tourism industry as quickly as possible. Global countries are striving for the resumption of tourism services at a time when the pandemic can be placed under control.



SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win addresses the ceremony to mark World Tourism Day-2021 through videoconferencing yesterday.

Myanmar should strive for resumption of the tourism industry with double and triple efforts more than other countries. In so doing, the government, private entrepreneurs and local people should harmoniously participate in the operation of all sectors for the soonest resumption of the tourism machinery. As the World Tourism Organization gave guidelines for initiating domestic tourism in order to attract foreign tourists, from now on, Myanmar needs to prepare resumption of destinations for homegrown tourists depending on control of COVID-19 infection.

It is necessary to negotiate the resumption of inbound tourism among the neighbouring countries, ASEAN countries and the countries interested in Myanmar's tourism industry for taking measures on entry visa, vaccinated evidence and international standards depending on the operation of international flights and opening of international gates.

The Vice-Senior General stressed the need for widely operating the marketing, promotion and public relations for international tourists to know that Myanmar's destinations would be COVID safe destinations. The Vice-Senior General noted that the short, medium and long term strategies and procedures involved in the Myanmar Tourism Strategic Recovery Roadmap-MTSRR 2021-2025 drawn by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism must be implemented as much as possible depending on current situations.

Then, a video clip on the message of Secretary-General Mr Zurab Pololikashvili of the UN World Tourism Organization was presented. Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Htay Aung and President of the Myanmar Tourism Federation U Yan Win made speeches. Next, significant sites in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, regions and states were introduced through a 360-degree virtual reality tour. Later, the meeting staged the roundtable discussion on tourism for inclusive growth: rebuilding resilient tourism in Myanmar.—MNA

Union Minister for Industry addresses ASEAN-China vocational education exhibition and forum

THE opening ceremony of the ASEAN-China Vocational Education Exhibition and Forum was held yesterday in Nanning, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, People's Republic of China. Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than addressed the ceremony online.

At the opening ceremony, the Union Minister said the Ministry of Industry is one of the ministries that has continuously

cooperated with the People's Republic of China for mutual economic and social interests. No.2 Industrial Training School (Mandalay) was established in 2005 with the assistance of the People's Republic of China, and more than 1,600 skilled workers have been trained. According to the Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation for the development of Myanmar signed between two govern-

ments on December 30, 2015, 85 million Chinese Yuan was provided to upgrade the training school. Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is one of the six priority areas of the Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR) in Myanmar.

The Union Minister added the implementation of the Ministry of Industry for the human resource development in Myanmar with goals and objectives to produce qualified skilled workers. Eight technical training schools have been established with the support of international partners and more than 1,000 trainees are being trained annually.

He called on all parties to work together for the development of technology and vocational training, as innovative TVET education will address

the prosperity and continuous improvement of the region.

The exhibition and forum were held to enhance the cooperation between the People's Republic of China and ASEAN nations in the field of vocational education, to provide opportunities for mutual learning and exchange of knowledge, as well as to enhance friendship and partnership between member countries. — MNA

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The speech delivered by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the ceremony to mark World Tourism Day-2021

FIRST and foremost, I'd like to extend greetings to all the guests attending the ceremony to mark the World Tourism Day-2021 to enjoy the physical and mental wellbeing and all kinds of auspiciousness.

The ceremonies to mark the World Tourism Day are held in the member countries of the UN World Tourism Organization across the world on 27 September. It aims to enable the people to widely understand the economic benefit, creation of job opportunities for the local people, preservation of the natural resources and historical heritages, development of infrastructures, enhancement of amicability among the people and building of mutual understanding which are crucial in the tourism industry.

It is noticeable that the tourism sector directly benefits the other services such as construction, engineering, manufacturing, agricultural and food and fruit cultivation work in addition to hotels, tour agencies, tourism companies, airlines and transport services. It can be said that the tourism industry is of great importance in undertaking the multiple developments of a country, and the creation of job opportunities may mitigate the economic inequality. This year's ceremony to mark World Tourism Day will be held in line with the theme: Tourism for Inclusive Growth, aimed at enabling the global countries to understand the development of the tourism sector which would improve all related sectors across the world.

Everybody knows that the tourism sector gaining momentum in recent years faced total suspension of the arrivals of international tourists to Myanmar as the suspension on issuance of entry visa, running of international flights and control of travels were triggered by controlling the infection of COVID-19 which started in December 2019. It shows that all need to strive for their full recovery in the crisis of the



Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing virtually addresses on the occasion of World Tourism Day-2021 on 27 September 2021.

tourism industry in the international community including Myanmar.

According to the data issued by the UN World Tourism Organization, it can be seen that the arrivals of international tourists across the world declined by 85 per cent from January to May 2021 in comparison with the corresponding period of 2019. It declined to 460 million international tourists. It is the worst in the history of the world tourism industry.

With regard to the Asia-Pacific region, the arrivals of international tourists dropped 95 per cent in the first five-month period in 2021 compared to the corresponding period of 2019, 85 per cent in Europe, 83 per cent in the Middle East, 81 per cent in Africa and 72 in America respectively.

The tourism industry which is one of the main pillars to meet the aims of poverty alleviation, gender discrimination, good jobs and economic development involved in the sustainable development goals is facing unsuccessfulness and loss. Hence, international organizations, local organizations and global countries including the UN World Tourism Organization are carefully striving for the resumption of the tourism industry. In My-

anmar, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism cooperates with relevant ministries and private organizations in the earliest resumption of tourism services.

As construction of the trust among the local and international travellers is important for the resumption of the tourism industry, the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism conducts training courses on the prevention of COVID-19 to service providers in the tourism sector while implementing the work process to inspect hotels, lodges, restaurants, tourism companies, tour guides, souvenir shops and transport services whether they meet the standards for the prevention of COVID-19 and directives and identify them at local, national and international levels with the issuance of the certificate of Health and Safety Protocol.

COVID-19 pandemic has changed the options of tourists who wish to choose better specific and healthy destinations. They are more interested in the less populous areas for free visits such as Nature-Based Tourism, Ecotourism, Agri-tourism, Marine Tourism and Rural Tourism instead of populous urban areas.

Myanmar is inhabited by 135 ethnic nationals. Each ethnic national possesses

very interesting diverse items such as culture and customs, faiths, traditional festivals and domestic products as well as foods. A special emphasis should be placed on the implementation of community-based tourism in line with the health guidelines to expose the traditional culture of ethnics, reducing the poverty of rural people and conserving the natural environment.

Myanmar is very beautiful in its geographical conditions. On one hand, the natural beauties of Myanmar are very attractive to travellers. Myanmar possesses the snow-capped mountain ranges in the northern part and beauties of sea beaches and archipelagos in the southernmost point.

Islands with beautiful beaches, underwater natural resources and beauties in Myeik Archipelagos in the southern part of Myanmar, beaches in Taninthayi Region, Mon State, Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State give the best options of travels to the local and foreign tourists. In addition to these natural travelling sites, it is necessary to create new destinations and travel forms such as cruise rail service, cruise vessel service, jungle trekking and mountain climbing for local and foreign travellers.

Efforts are being made for

the resumption of the tourism industry. On the other hand, it is important that people from all arenas should have proportional benefits from the tourism industry.

The tourism industry can create job opportunities for labourers with different skills and experiences with more social consolidation.

It is necessary to notice the spreading of COVID-19 in the development of Myanmar's tourism industry. The decline of the infection rate of COVID-19 is the most important for a resurgence of the local and international tourism sector. Individual cooperation with conscience and supervision and assistance of all responsible organizations can contribute to the rapid development of the tourism sector. I'd like to urge all to emphasize the tourism industry which is an all-inclusive and beneficial service. I'd like to urge relevant ministries, region and state governments, tourism associations and businesspersons to emphasize that not only departments concerned but also private entrepreneurs need to harmoniously implement the work process of the tourism industry in line with the guidelines on prevention and containment of COVID-19. The tourism industry benefits all participants from many sectors. The tourism industry is important in the prioritized sectors of the State as it contributes to the State economy as well as preserves friendly relations among the global countries and cultural and natural heritage.

In conclusion, I'd like to urge all to strive for the development of the tourism industry and improvement of the opportunities obtained from the tourism sector and other social-economic sectors by sharing the proportional development with the local people in conformity with this year's theme of the World Tourism Day "Tourism for Inclusive Growth".



MoI Union Minister inspects construction of MRTV Diamond Jubilee Museum, shooting of Inzali Anyeint troupe

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn and Deputy Minister U Ye Tint inspected the construction of the MRTV Diamond Jubilee Museum in Tatkon of Nay Pyi Taw and enjoyed the shooting of Inzali Anyeint troupe (a traditional dance performance with comedians) performed by MRTV staff yesterday evening.

During the inspection tour to the construction site of the museum, Director-General U Ye Naing of MRTV and officials presented the progress of the museum and objects to display in the museum. Then, the Union Minister said MRTV is a historic department and it should make preparations to prove that it has served its duties for generations and is a reliable service for the country and the people.



The MoI Union Minister, Deputy Minister and officials make an inspection tour around the construction site of the MRTV Diamond Jubilee Museum yesterday.



The construction of the two-storey MRTV Diamond Jubilee Museum has now completed by 70 per cent and will display machines and tools in successive eras of MRTV, scale models and

studios to the public. Then, the Union Minister met the MRTV staff and performers of Inzali Anyeint troupe. MRTV will broadcast Inzali Anyeint performance every Sat-

urday evening starting 1 October to entertain the people. Moreover, MRTV also arranges entertainment programmes and broadcasts music shows every Friday evening

while Anyeint performance every Saturday evening, international movies after 7 pm every night and Myanmar studio and modern songs after 6 pm every night. — MNA

Union Minister for Science & Technology attends China-ASEAN Vocational Education Exhibition, Forum



UNION Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw virtually attended the China-ASEAN Vocational Education Exhibition and Forum in Nanning, capital of Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, People's Republic of China yesterday (top photo).

The Union Minister addressed the virtual meeting

with a video message. At the meeting, the Union Minister said that the vocational education system is career-oriented vocational education. "The production of skilled workers required for the workplaces is essential for industrial development and sustainable development. It supports economic development and poverty

alleviation," Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Kyaw said. "However, as new technologies are evolving on a daily basis, new jobs are emerging in some areas and new skills are needed. There are challenges in many countries in producing skilled workers who can meet the needs of the workplaces. In doing so, it is necessary for strong cooperation from all sectors. "Views of communities, supports of the government and funding are key requirements for the establishment of an appropriate vocational education system. Regional cooperation is one way to address these issues. "Therefore, the China-ASEAN Vocational Education Fair and Forum welcomes the promotion of regional economic cooperation and the emergence of

qualified workers. "The forum aims to promote long-term cooperation between China and ASEAN in vocational education. It is hoped that detailed and practical discussions will be held in various forms to share good practices," the Union Minister added. The Union Minister continued that the forum, with the joint efforts of China and ASEAN, would set a good example of cooperation in promoting mutual learning and the China-ASEAN cooperation programmes would continue to be implemented for mutually beneficial results. After that, the representative from the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, education officials from ASEAN countries and officials from Guangxi Zhuang

Autonomous Region delivered speeches. Ministers of Education and Science and Technology of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Brunei Darussalam, Representatives from the ASEAN Member States, officials from Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, officials from Education Departments, representatives from international organizations, representatives from more than 100 colleges in China and ASEAN countries and China-ASEAN vocational trainees also attended the event. Director-General of the Department of Vocational Education and Training Dr Sai Kyaw Naing Oo and Deputy Director-General Dr Nay Myo Tun also joined the videoconference. — MNA

Palm oil distributed at reasonable price

THE Ministry of Commerce and Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association imported the palm oil at the CBM reference rate and sold it at fairer prices for the public beginning 20 September. A total of 2,653,200 vissees of palm oil equal to 4,336 tonnes have been sold in Yangon,

Mandalay, Sagaing, Bago and Magway regions and Shan State to date. The officials arrange oil tankers to sell in the wards of Yangon and also will provide trucks in regions/states. The palm oil wholesalers will have to resell the oil not more than 2

per cent of net profit at retail outlets and the wholesalers/retailers can contact Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association at 09-444437295 and 09-401527049 and Department of Consumer Affairs, Yangon Region at 01-250270 and 09-43666668 to buy the palm oil. — MNA

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

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



Lorries are transporting the imported anti-Covid devices to the needed regions.

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

On 27 September (yesterday), anti-COVID-19 equipment, medical products, including oxygen plants and concentrators,

were imported by two companies and transported by three vehicles.

A total of 40 tonnes of oxygen (liquid) was carried by two bowzers, and 5,309 empty oxygen tanks, five oxygen plants, nine tonnes of gloves and eight tonnes of masks were imported via Myawady and Chinshwehaw trading posts.

One oxygen bowser and five oxygen plants were transported to Yangon and another oxygen bower to Monywa 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

Stake and pile driving ceremony to construct collective office, staff housing conducted in Hlinethaya Township

THE stake and pile driving ceremony of departmental staff housing was held in western Hlinethaya Township yesterday.

First, U Tin Maung Kyi, Engineering Department Head of YCDC clarified the construction of staff housing on 12.258 acres of land located in front of Anawrahta Industrial Zone, beside Yangon-Pathein Road section, including offices and community hall, drainage system, parking and land management.

Then, Yangon Region Chief

Minister U Hla Soe, governmental officials and engineers conducted the ceremonial procedures.

For the first phase of the project, the officials drove the stake and pile into the ground to construct 16 buildings—12 five-storey building with car parking space, another 3 buildings with a community hall, SSB clinic, Convenience stores and public toilets and a building for the fire brigade.

Yangon Mayor U Bo Htay reported on the construction of

the retaining wall and precast drain of Yangon-Pathein Road and land allocation for the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) project.

The Region Chief Minister then called for the completion of the operation in time as per the fixed quality and standards.

— San Kyaw Oo (IPRD)/GNLM



The stake and pile driving ceremony of departmental staff housing in progress.

Nearly 1,000 people vaccinated against COVID-19 in Monywa

A total of 990 people were provided with the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine yesterday in Monywa Township, Sagaing Region.

The Ministry of Health is conducting the COVID-19 immunization to the target groups including the people over the age of 55, and this is the second batch that the vaccines are administered in Monywa Township.

Yesterday, a total of 422 men

and 568 women were vaccinated against the COVID-19 disease at four respective vaccination sites in Monywa Township, according to the Township COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee.

Healthcare workers, relevant department officials and volunteers worked together for the vaccination process in line with the COVID-19 rules and regulations set by the Ministry of Health. — IPRD/GNLM



Inoculation process is underway in Monywa.

IDPs get second dose of COVID jabs in Sittway Township



An IDP receives the second dose of Covid vaccine in Sittway Township.

PEOPLE aged 45 and above who are taking shelters in IDP camps in Thae Chaung Village, Saythama Village-tract and Ohntawchay Village in Sittway Township received Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine for the second time.

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

Next health officials measured the body temperature, blood pressure and monitoring

oxygen level before the vaccination.

Vaccines were given systematically to the local people, and only those with normal health conditions are vaccinated, officials said. After resting for about 30 minutes after being vaccinated, people were allowed to leave, officials said.

Males and females are segregated in a multi-purpose storm shelter building in Thae Chaung Village, and officials gave COVID-19 vaccines to

males on the top floor of the building while females took the vaccines on the second floor in accordance with the COVID-19 prevention protocol.

Similarly, the second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine was given to people aged 45 and over who were sheltering in IDP camps in Saythamar Village-tract and Ohntaw Village, Sittway Township.

Staff from the General Administration Department and the Information and Public Relations Department, members of the Myanmar Police Force, members of the fire brigade, members of the auxiliary fire brigade, members of the Red Cross, Ward Village Administrators, and IDP camp officials assisted in the vaccination works. For the first time since 29 August, a total of 50,000 people have been vaccinated with 50,000 doses of Sinovac vaccine distributed by the Union Government to IDPs and IDP camps in Rakhine State, officials said. — Tin Htun (IPRD)/GNLM

Start new days with happiness along lifespan

HAPPINESS is a common wish for everybody. So, they need to start every morning with optimism and a healthy heart so as to win happiness. Everybody passes the lifespan from birth to death with experiences of sadness and happiness. In fact, they accept sadness and happiness as gifts of nature.

They must create happiness for themselves in various ways and means. Happiness is concerned with a good mentality but the age of life. To be able to enjoy happiness, they need to take a practice forgetting the losses and grudges. These losses are a hindrance to happiness. As such, they all should abandon the losses and grudges from their minds as quickly as possible.

To overcome the tensions and depressions, everybody needs to take any kind of sports exercise. If so, they will be active with regular working of the heart. The healthy heart which operates good blood circulation contributes to the emergence of active critical thinking with optimism. It will be confident for happiness.

should hold up compassion and sympathy overall. Those who disperse the compassion, loving-kindness and sympathy to all living beings would have the chance to enjoy the happiness as a reflection of their moves.

To overcome the tensions and depressions, everybody needs to take any kind of sports exercise. If so, they will be active with regular working of the heart. The healthy heart which operates good blood circulation contributes to the emergence of active critical thinking with optimism. It will be confident for happiness.

■ ■ ■

COVID-19 vaccinated pregnant women pass protection to newborns: study

The new study of 36 newborns whose mothers received either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine during pregnancy found that 100 per cent of the infants had protective antibodies at birth.

ACCORDING to a new study, women who receive the mRNA COVID-19 vaccine during pregnancy pass high levels of antibodies to their babies.

The findings of the study were published in the "American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology MFM".

The effectiveness of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna mRNA COVID-19 vaccines, the researchers say, lies in their ability to trigger the production of the right antibodies, blood proteins capable of protecting individuals from infection. Whether this protection could pass from mothers to their infants before birth had remained a question.

The new study of 36 newborns whose mothers received either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine during pregnancy found that 100 per cent of the infants had protective antibodies at birth. Antibodies can either be produced as part of the natural

response to infection or triggered by vaccines.

With that in mind, the research team was able to tell apart antibodies in the neonatal blood that were created in response to natural infection from those made in response to the vaccines.

The result is relevant because natural antibody responses against the SARS-CoV-2 virus are not sufficiently protective for many people.

Recent data from the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests that just 23 per cent of pregnant women have been vaccinated, despite growing evidence of prenatal vaccine safety.

Led by researchers at NYU Grossman School of Medicine, the study authors observed the highest levels of antibodies in cord blood of mothers who were fully vaccinated during the second half of their pregnancies. This insight provides evidence of transferred

immunity to neonates, which correlates to protection against infection for infants during the first months of life.

"Studies continue to reinforce the importance of vaccines during pregnancy and their power to protect two lives at once by preventing severe illness in both mothers and babies," said Ashley S. Roman, MD, director of the Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine and the Silverman Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at NYU Langone Health, and one of the study's principal investigators.

"If babies could be born with antibodies, it could protect them in the first several months of their lives, when they are most vulnerable," added Roman.

As the COVID-19 vaccines received authorization from the US Food and Drug Administration, the CDC consistently asserted that they should not be withheld



Experts have urged pregnant women to get the vaccination. PHOTO: ISHARA S. KODIKARA/ANI

from people who are pregnant and want the vaccine. Dr Roman and colleagues confirm the strong evidence that the mRNA vaccines are safe during pregnancy in a study published on August 16 in the "American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology-Maternal-Fetal Medicine", titled "COVID-19 Vaccination in Pregnancy: Early Experience from a Single Institution".

The study found no increased risks during pregnancy, birth com-

plications, or identifiable risks to the fetus among those who received the vaccine.

In the current study, though the sample size is small, "it is encouraging that neonatal antibody levels are high if women are vaccinated," said Jennifer L. Lighter, MD, associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics, hospital epidemiologist at Hassenfeld Children's Hospital at NYU Langone, and the study's senior author.

Existing studies analyse anti-

bodies to the spike protein (anti-S IgG) alone, which may be present after natural infection or vaccination, and do not include antibodies to the nucleocapsid protein (anti-N IgG), which is only present following natural infection.

Among the 36 samples collected, all had high levels of anti-S IgG. Of those samples, 31 were tested for anti-N IgG and were negative.

SOURCE: ASIAN NEWS INTERNATIONAL

Bats with Covid-like viruses found in Laos: study



Researchers said their findings show that viruses genetically close to the SAR-CoV-2 pandemic virus 'exist in nature' among bat species. Bat sampling in a laboratory in Ratchaburi Province, Thailand, 12 September, 2020. PHOTO: CFP/XINHUA / FILE

SCIENTISTS have discovered another clue to the origins of the virus that causes Covid-19, with bats living in caves

in Laos found to be carrying a similar pathogen that experts suggest could potentially infect humans directly.

The virus has killed millions since it emerged in China in late 2019, and controversy continues to swirl around where it came from. Some experts say it is animal-driven but others have pointed to the possibility the pathogen leaked from a lab.

Researchers from France's Pasteur Institute and the National University of Laos said their findings showed that viruses genetically close to the SARS-CoV-2 virus "exist in nature" among bat species in the limestone caves of northern Laos, which neighbours China.

Of the viruses they identified among the hundreds of bats tested in Vientiane Province, three were found to closely resemble

the virus that causes Covid-19, particularly in the mechanism for latching on to human cells. "The idea was to try to identify the origin of this pandemic," Marc Eloit, who leads the Pasteur Institute's pathogen discovery laboratory, told AFP.

Eloit, whose team analyzed the samples collected, said there were still key differences between the viruses found and SARS-CoV-2.

But he said the work was "a major step forward" in identifying the pandemic's origin, confirming the theory that the coronavirus that has spread across the world could have started with living bats.

The authors of the study,

which has been submitted to Nature for peer review, warned that their findings suggest the new viruses "seem to have the same potential for infecting humans as early strains of SARS-CoV-2".

"People working in caves, such as guano collectors, or certain ascetic religious communities who spend time in or very close to caves, as well as tourists who visit the caves, are particularly at risk of being exposed," the authors said.

'Natural spillover'

International experts sent to China by the World Health Organization (WHO) in January concluded that it was most likely that the SARS-CoV-2 virus jumped from bats to humans via

an intermediate animal.

A competing hypothesis that the virus leaked from a lab like the specialized virology laboratory in Wuhan was deemed "extremely unlikely", although it has yet to be ruled out.

Martin Hibbert, Professor of Emerging Infectious Disease at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine — who was not involved in the Laos research — said the most closely related virus was found to be able to infect human cells "as easily" as SARS-CoV-2 and therefore might be capable of infecting humans.

But he stressed that the virus is "not an ancestor of the pandemic strain".

Source : AFP

Myanmar Gazette

Confirmation of Heads of Service Organizations

THE State Administration Council has confirmed the following persons appointed as the Heads of Service Organizations shown against their names after the one-year probationary period.

Name	Appointment
(1) U Win Maw	Director-General Oil and Gas Planning Department Ministry of Electricity and Energy
(2) Dr Aung Kyaw Thin	Rector Bhamo University Department of Higher Education Ministry of Education
(3) Dr Theingi Shwe	Rector Hinthada University Department of Higher Education Ministry of Education

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 27 September, 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 28 September, 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be isolated in Kachin State, scattered in Sagaing Region and Northern Shan State, fairly widespread in Eastern Shan State and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of regionally heavyfalls in Ayeyawady Region and Rakhine State and isolated heavyfalls in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Magway and Yangon Regions. Degree of certainty is (100%).

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of thundery activities in the Central Myanmar areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 28 September, 2021: One or two rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 28 September, 2021: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 28 September, 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

Flood Bulletin

(Issued at 09:00 hrs M.S.T on 27-9-2021)

Flood condition ofThaungyinRiver

ACCORDING to the (08:30) hrs M.S.T observation today, the water level of Thaungyin River at Myawady has exceeded by about (6) feet above its danger level. It may fall below its danger level during the next (2) days.

Advisory

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

CBM sells \$15 mln on 27 September



The Central Bank of Myanmar.

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) has announced that they have sold US\$15 million on 27 September 2021, at an auction market rate, totalling sales of US\$ 48 million in September five times. About \$15 million was sold at an auction exchange rate of K1,755 per US dollar.

The CBM report sold \$15 million on 13 and 20 September, \$8 million on 15 September and \$10 million on 22 September. With the rising US dollar exchange rate, the CBM has been constantly selling the US dollar at an auction exchange rate since 12 May.

The bank has also sold about \$28 million in total in August seven times, according to figures released from the CBM.

This CBM’s move is aimed at governing the market volatility and strengthening the local currency value.

Rules and directives have been set out for the CBM’s auctions. Following such rules and directives, the CBM is trading the foreign currency with three state-owned banks, 19 local private banks and 13 foreign banks, which are holding authorized dealer-AD licences.

The CBM sold \$6.8 million in February 2021, a foreign exchange auction, but did not sell in March. The CBM sold \$12 million in April, \$24 million in May, \$12 million in June, \$39 million in July and \$28 million in August. — Aye Maung/GNLM

Vendors start selling Thadingyut lanterns, toys in Pakokku

THE lanterns and toys are started selling in Pakokku township, Magway region before the Thadingyut festival period.

These Thadingyut signature lanterns and toys are sold along the entrance gates of Myoma market and in front of the Thihoshin pagoda. Those are made for sale by the Myanmar traditional handicraft artists from wards 1, 10 and 13.

Prices for Thadingyut lanterns range from K600 to K800, while toys come in various shapes, including aeroplanes, ships, rabbits and horses, costs from K1,500-K3,000 per one depending on the size and design. They also accept special orders for lanterns and toys in

the Thadingyut festival.

People start making lanterns and toys in September. To make them, the handicraft artists buy K500 for parchment paper and K200 for grease-proof paper. Last year, they sold them up to K10,000 per day. But, this year, they are selling a maximum of K60,000 per day due to the pandemic. They started selling them on 20 September, said a lanterns maker from ward 1.

The current outbreak of COVID-19 depressed the supply of lanterns and toys from foreign markets and more Myanmar handicrafts in Pakokku are being sold very well this year. — Salai Ko Key (IPRD)/GNLM



Prices for Thadingyut lanterns range from K600 to K800, while toys come in various shapes, including aeroplanes, ships, rabbits and horses, costs from K1,500-K3,000 per one depending on the size and design.

Construction of Government Technical Institute (Dala) under implementation



THE Department of Technical, Vocational Education and Training has been implementing the construction of the Government Technical Institute (Dala) under the allocated state budget in each financial year starting from the 2019-2020FY on 25 acres of land at No.186 plot of 11/14 Ward, Dala Township, with a view to encouraging emergence of technicians to excel in their career paths, developing skills and capacity and producing the skilled technicians for the socio-economic development of the State (top photo).

“The construction of dormitory housing for male and female students was totally completed. Two steel structure workshops, a 192x38 feet three-storey lecture hall and one staff housing will be constructed

in the next mini-budget. The project commenced in the 2019-2020 FY. The construction work is ongoing. Once it is completed, the institute will offer vocational courses in industry and is expected to produce about 300 engineers holding AGTI Diploma certificate,” said Principal U Myat Ko of the Government Technical Institute (Insein).

This project will include 192x39 feet RC three-storey building for training, 78x94 feet staff housing, two four-storey RC buildings, two 125x82x18 feet steel structure workshops, two gates, other utilities including power and water supply, waste management and water storage, a 50x36 feet RC building for management office, a 36x48 feet RC kitchen theatre, one 60x50 feet RC

building, one 88x44 feet two storeyed buildings for training, one 156x40 feet two-storeyed academic building, a 152x34 feet two-storeyed dormitory, one 78x94 feet four staff housing and one 217x130 feet three-storeyed main building.

This institute will bring the great opportunities to the local residents in Dala, Twantay, Seikkyi Khanaungto, Kawhmu and Kungyangon townships in South Yangon District and Ayeyawady Region. It also helps mobilize the human resources for the public sector goals.

Additionally, the institute also gives the opportunities to take up new careers in the industry and enhance the socio-economic status of the low-income students.—Naing Lin Kyaw (IPRD)/GNLM

Myanmar ships over 157,000 tonnes of peanut to international markets as of 17 Sept

MYANMAR has exported US\$187.9 million worth more than 157,933 tonnes of peanut to the foreign trade partners as of 17 September 2021 since 1 October 2020, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar's peanuts are mostly exported to China. At present, it is highly demanded in the domestic market rather than the Chinese market as the price of imported palm oil edged up. Consumers' behaviour has changed and the demand for peanut oil has risen on these days. The peanut oil fetches about K6,500 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes), whereas the palm oil is priced

at above K4,300 per viss on 27 September.

Following the high demand of the local millers, the prices of peanuts move in the range of K2,700-K2,950 per viss, according to the Mandalay wholesale market.

Myanmar oil body has been planning to export peanut oil produced in line with Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).

There are about 300 oil millers in Mandalay, of whom only 50 hold FDA certificate, while the rest have been unable to meet the FDA criteria.

The Myanmar Oil Millers Association plans to help mill-

ers in the entire supply chain get approved by the Food and Drug Administration, to eradicate illegal sales in the market and ensure a firm market for producers.

It also helps millers earn the trust of consumers and place them in a better position to compete with other oil brands being sold in the domestic market, said Mandalay oil millers. — KK/GNLM

Myanmar's peanuts are mostly exported to China. At present, it is highly demanded in the domestic market rather than the Chinese market as the price of imported palm oil edged up.



Gold hit all-time high of above K2 mln per tical on 27 September



Gold jewellery is pictured at one of the local gold outlets.

THE price of precious yellow metal reached the highest of K2,000,000 per tical (0.578 ounce, or 0.016 kilogramme) in history on 27 September, Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association's price data indicated.

As gold is still the best safe-haven asset in times of crisis, the gold bull market is predicted to continue in 2021, an investment observer shared his opinion.

The price of pure gold metal hit fresh new peaks and reached the highest of above K2,010,000 per tical on 27 September tracking the devaluation of Kyat in the forex market, which soared from K1,900,000 per tical recorded on 23 September. The figures show a gap of about K100,000 per tical within four days, as per the YGEA.

The global gold price stood at only US\$1,750 per ounce on 27 September, while a US dollar

exchange rate was worth above K2,200 in the black market.

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

The political development, high demand in the domestic gold market, shortage of raw gold metals, the price gain in the international market and the Kyat depreciation are contributing factors to the spikes in the gold market.

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

The association has curbed the amount of gold that investors can trade. It permits only 10 ticals for daily trading.

In recent days, some received purchase orders without

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

In January 2021, the gold price was ranged between the minimum of K1,316,000 per tical (28 January) and the maximum of K1,336,000 per tical (6 January). It reached an all-time high of K1,410,000 per tical on 3 February and hit the minimum of K1,340,000 per tical on 2 February. In March, the rate fluctuated between the highest of K1,391,000 (25 March) and the lowest of K1,302,000 (4 March). The price was registered the highest of K1,455,000 (30 April) and the lowest of K1,389,000 (1 April). The price reached an all-time highest of K1,709,000 (12 May) and the lowest of K1,447,000 in May. The price moved in the maximum of K1,575,500 (11 June) and the minimum of K1,543,000 (19 June). It fluctuated between K1,562,300 (26 Jul) and K1,587,000 (K1,587,000). Last month, the price of gold reached the lowest of K1,572,800 (3 Aug) and the highest of K1,698,000 (31 August), the gold traders said.— GNLM

MoC sells over 2,000 tonnes of palm oil at fairer prices on past three days

THE Ministry of Commerce reportedly sold more than 2,000 tonnes of palm oil at fair prices on the past three days (20-22 September), in coordination with Myanmar Oil Dealers' Association.

The volume of palm oil that was sold between 20 and 22 September is equivalent to the amount that the oil importers directly purchased the foreign currency from the Central Bank of Myanmar. The MoC sold a total of 1,230,350 viss (2,010 tonnes) of palm oil, with 768,350 viss (1,255 tonnes) in Yangon Region, 462,000 viss (755 tonnes) in Mandalay, Magway, Sagaing and Bago regions and Shan State.

This scheme will proceed to other regions and states. The wholesalers and retailers must also resell them to the consumers with a gross profit of less than 2 per cent.

Under the plan of the association, palm oil is sold with the mobile market trucks.

Those wholesalers and retailers who want to buy them can come and buy at the association's office located at No 104/108 on Strand Road, Ahlon Township through the contact numbers 09444437295 and 09401527049 of the association and 01250270 and 0943666668 of the Yangon Region Consumer Affairs Department.

At present, the price of palm oil hit a peak of above K4,300 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) in the market, the association stated.

On 1 July 2021, palm oil was priced only K3,200 per viss, whereas it soared to K4,300 per viss on 27 September. The figure reflects an increase of over K1,000 per viss over the past two months.

The price hike is attributed to the depreciation of the local currency in the forex market, traders stressed.

Additionally, the association notified the consumers not to worry over the supply of the edible oil on 15 July.

The association is also making concerted efforts with the organizations concerned and the related departments to secure the edible oil sufficiency and offer a reasonable price to the consumers as per the statement.

The association is trying not to occur unnecessary issues regarding edible oil amid the global pandemic impacts.

Myanmar Oil Dealers' Association is attempting to maintain price stability, prevent market manipulation, import palm oil from foreign countries sustainably for self-sufficiency and distribute the edible oil at a fair price to the consumers.

The domestic consumption of edible oil is estimated at 1 million tonnes per year. The local cooking oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. To meet the self-sufficiency in the domestic market, about 700,000 tonnes of cooking oil are yearly imported. — NN/GNLM

Fuel ‘panic-buying’ in UK could see army to rescue



“Out of Use” pumps are pictured at a Tesco petrol station in Camberley, west of London on 26 September 2021. **PHOTO: ADRIAN DENNIS / AFP**

BRITAIN experienced further ‘panic-buying’ of motor fuel Monday as a shortage of lorry drivers on Covid and Brexit fallout could reportedly prompt the government to use the army to make deliveries.

The Petrol Retailers Association claimed that almost half of the UK’s 8,000 fuel pumps had run out of petrol on Sunday, as desperate drivers formed long queues to fill up tanks.

PRA chairman Brian Mad-

derson told the BBC that shortages were down to “panic buying, pure and simple”.

In an emergency move, Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said he had suspended oil industry competition laws to ensure suppliers “can share vital information and work together more effectively to ensure disruption is minimised”.

It comes as UK media widely reported that British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is considering whether to call upon soldiers to deliver fuel to petrol stations across the nation.

Questioned over the weekend, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps refused to rule out requesting military assistance.

Britain’s shortage of lorry drivers is affecting many sectors including the food industry, although German supermarket

Aldi on Monday insisted it was coping well with regards deliveries to its many UK stores.

Oil giant Shell meanwhile said it is “working hard to ensure supplies for customers”.

It added in a statement: “Since Friday we have been seeing a higher than normal demand across our network which is resulting in some sites running low on some (petrol) grades.

We are replenishing these quickly, usually within 24 hours.”

The situation has evoked the dark days of the 1970s, when energy supply problems led to a three-day working week and fuel rationing in Britain.

It is reminiscent also of late 2000, when people protesting over high fuel prices blockaded oil refineries, bringing the country to a virtual standstill for weeks. — AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

South Korea’s President Moon raises dog meat ban

SOUTH Korea’s President Moon Jae-in raised banning the eating of dogs in the country on Monday, his office said, a traditional practice that is becoming an international embarrassment.

The meat has long been a part of South Korean cuisine with about one million dogs believed to be eaten annually, but consumption has declined as more people embrace dogs as companions rather than livestock.

The practice is now something of a taboo among younger generations and pressure from animal rights activists has also been mounting.

“Hasn’t the time come to prudently consider prohibiting dog meat consumption?” Moon told Prime Minister Kim Boo-kyum during a weekly meeting, according to the presidential spokeswoman. — AFP ■

Volcano lava flow halts but many confined over toxic gas fears

A Canary Islands volcano that has been erupting for over a week fell silent Monday as coastal residents were confined over toxic gas fears when the lava hits the sea.

La Cumbre Vieja, which straddles a southern ridge in La Palma in the Atlantic archipelago, erupted on 19 September, spewing out rivers of lava which have slowly crept towards the sea.

But on Monday morning, there was no lava and ash emerging, with the week-long rumble of the eruption fading to silence, an AFP correspondent at the scene said.

It was not immediately clear whether the eruption had stopped completely or merely paused, as smoke was still emerging from the top.

“Volcanic activity in La Palma has reduced significantly in the last few hours. We must be very vigilant about how it evolves because the scenario can change quickly,” Madrid’s Institute of Geosciences tweeted.

“It seems the volcano has



The Cumbre Vieja volcano spews lava, ash and smoke as seen from Los Llanos de Aridane on the Canary island of La Palma on 25 September 2021. Clouds of thick black ash from volcanic eruptions in Spain’s Canaries archipelago forced the closure of the airport on La Palma island today, authorities said. **PHOTO: DESIREE MARTIN / AFP**

entered a phase of decreased activity. We will see how it evolves in the coming hours.”

And the Involcan volcanology institute gave a similar assessment.

“In the last hours, the volcanic tremor has almost disap-

peared, as well as the... explosive activity,” it tweeted.

Contacted by AFP, Involcan was unable to say whether the eruption had finished or just paused, with a spokesman saying its experts were “evaluating the different scenarios”.

Overnight, the inhabitants of several coastal areas were ordered to stay at home to avoid harm from the release of toxic gases when the lava finally reaches the sea, a process which has been much slower than initially expected. — AFP ■

Japan to shorten quarantine period for vaccinated travellers

THE Japanese government said Monday it will ease quarantine rules for people vaccinated against COVID-19 entering the country starting 1 October, shortening the required period for self-isolating at home from 14 days to 10 days as it looks to restart international travel.

People who have been fully vaccinated will be able to go outside as long as they test negative for the virus after 10 days following their arrival, Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato told a press conference. Only shots developed by Pfizer Inc., Moderna Inc. or AstraZeneca Plc are eligible. People travelling from any of 45 countries including Britain, India and the Philippines had been required to spend three of the 14 days in a government-designated facility, but will no longer be required to do so if they are fully vaccinated. — Kyodo News ■

Encrypted messaging app Signal hit by outage

ENCRYPTED instant messaging app Signal was hit by an outage late Sunday that interrupted services on the platform.

“Signal is currently down, due to a hosting outage affecting parts of our service,” the company said on Twitter. “We’re

working on bringing it back up.”

Internet outage monitor DownDetector said users began reporting network problems at 11:05 pm Eastern Standard Time (0305 GMT).

The site logged reports of interrupted service in the Unit-

ed States, Europe, Hong Kong and other parts of the world.

First launched in 2014, Signal saw a surge in downloads earlier this year after Facebook-owned messaging service WhatsApp tweaked its terms of service and sparked privacy

concerns.

Its profile was boosted by a tweeted recommendation by tech entrepreneur and Tesla founder Elon Musk and the app was downloaded more than 100 million times as of March. — AFP ■

Tokyo stocks close marginally lower

TOKYO stocks gave up early gains and closed slightly lower on Monday as traders eyed developments in the crisis surrounding Chinese property giant Evergrande.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 index edged down 0.03 per cent, or 8.75 points, to end at 30,240.06, while the broader Topix index slid 0.14 per cent, or 3.01 points, to 2,087.74.

“The market is bearish because of the problems facing China’s property industry,” Okasan Online Securities said in a note.

Shares worldwide plunged last week on fears that Evergrande, one of China’s biggest developers, would collapse under debts worth over \$300 billion, taking other companies with it and serving a blow to the world economy.

While concerns about its default have abated for now, analysts warn that markets are

far from out of the woods.

Tokyo investors were also in a wait-and-see mode ahead of various domestic events and the release of US economic data later this month, Okasan said.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga is expected to announce that a virus state of emergency will end later this week as the number of Covid-19 cases drop.

The restrictions — which mainly limit alcohol sales and restaurant opening hours — currently cover Tokyo, Osaka and other key economic hubs.

Investors are hopeful that the new leader of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, who will replace Suga after a vote on Wednesday, will inject fresh pandemic stimulus to kickstart the economy, analysts said.

The dollar stood at 110.67 yen in Asian trade, against 110.73 yen in New York on Friday. — AFP ■



A view of the Evergrande Centre building in Shanghai on 24 September 2021. PHOTO: AFP

Shares in Evergrande EV unit plunge as cash dries up

SHARES in debt-laden Evergrande’s e-vehicle unit slumped by more than 10 per cent Monday after the firm scrapped a proposed Shanghai listing, and with the property developer mired in a liquidity crisis.

Evergrande is struggling with more than \$300 billion of debt from a years-long acquisition binge, including into electric vehicles once billed as a rival to Elon Musk’s dominant Tesla brand.

There are fears any defaults on tens of millions of dollars of interest payments could spark a chaotic implosion of the firm, China’s second-largest developer, with major repercussions for the domestic economy and the rest of the world.

Shares in Evergrande New

Energy Vehicle, also known as Evergrande Auto, fell to HK\$1.95 in early trading in Hong Kong Monday, after it scrapped the planned Shanghai listing via a Sunday stock exchange filing.

In a separate exchange filing late Friday, Evergrande NEV said its parent company’s cash crisis would have a “material adverse impact” on production.

The firm warned of a “serious shortage of funds” which forced it to suspend “paying some of its operating expenses and some suppliers”.

It admitted “there is no guarantee that the Group will be able to meet its financial obligations under the relevant contracts”, as it looks for strategic investors.

The car unit’s share price has lost 80 per cent of its value

since February this year.

Evergrande’s travails have spooked global markets and raised fears of a tightening of Chinese consumer confidence, which could quickly seep into everything from home buying to demand for steel as well as the appetite for luxury goods.

As the debt crisis threatened to overwhelm the company last week, Evergrande agreed a last-minute deal with domestic bondholders that would avoid default on one bond payment.

But it remained silent on a separate \$83.5 million bond interest payment due one day later.

A \$47.5 million interest payment on a US dollar bond is due Wednesday — another key milestone likely to be closely watched by markets.— AFP ■



A pedestrian walks past an electronic quotation board displaying share prices of the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo on 24 September 2021. PHOTO: AFP

Osaka Ohsho dumpling diner opens 1st Chinese outlet in Shanghai

JAPANESE restaurant chain operator Eat & Holdings Co has started serving meals at its first Chinese outlet of the new-style Osaka Ohsho dumpling diner in Shanghai prior to its grand opening next month.

The first “Osaka Fun Dining Osaka Ohsho” restaurant, located at the Henderson Metropolitan shopping mall in downtown Shanghai, offers specialty dishes from Osaka in addition to regular Chinese food including “gyoza” dumplings and ramen noodles, the Tokyo-based company said. Saturday’s pre-opening came ahead of the grand opening scheduled for 10 October.

In January, Eat & International Co, which engages in the group’s overseas operation, set up Eat and Fun Co, a Shanghai-based joint venture with Laox Co to promote its restaurant business in

China. Eat and Fun runs the new eatery.

The new restaurant is equipped with an open kitchen, enabling customers to watch the chefs cook their meals. About 60 per cent of the menu items are specialty dishes from Osaka and it is hoped that each customer will spend around 120 yuan (\$18.5).

Tomonori Takada, president and representative director of Eat & International, said, “We will try to distinguish ourselves from rival restaurants by having customers feel value more than prices.”

The group operates 22 Osaka Ohsho restaurants overseas, including Thailand and Singapore, but the new restaurant in China is the first to offer Osaka specialty dishes in addition to Chinese dishes, according to Takada. — Kyodo news ■



Photo shows the first Chinese outlet of the new-style “Osaka Fun Dining Osaka Ohsho” diner opened by Japanese restaurant chain operator Eat & Holdings Co in Shanghai. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

Pelosi hints infrastructure delay as US Congress begins huge week

US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi expressed confidence a massive infrastructure bill will pass this week but acknowledged it might not get a Monday vote as planned, with fellow Democrats warning critical work remains to meet the party's deadlines.

Democrats have been scrambling to hammer out a landmark plan to upgrade the nation's roads and bridges, but are also under immense pressure to finalize a \$3.5 trillion public investment package and fund the government to avert a looming shutdown — all by 30 September.

The week is among the most critical of President Joe Biden's tenure, with opposition Republi-

cans digging in against his Build Back Better programme that would invest in climate change policy, lower childcare and education costs for working families and create millions of jobs. But Pelosi, despite her confidence that the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill that has already cleared the Senate with bipartisan support will pass the House of Representatives "this week," hinted at potential quicksand ahead.

"I'm never bringing a bill to the floor that doesn't have the votes," the top Democrat in Congress told ABC Sunday talk show "This Week," asked about whether she will bring the infrastructure bill to the floor Monday

as previously agreed.

"It may be tomorrow — if we have the votes," she said.

"You cannot choose the date," she added. "You have to go when you have the votes, in a reasonable time. And we will."

Biden told reporters on Sunday he was "optimistic" Pelosi would get the agenda through the house this week, adding "it's going to take the better part of the week."

Pelosi told her Democratic colleagues in a letter Saturday that they "must" pass both of Biden's huge spending bills, along with legislation that keeps the federal government operating into the next fiscal year begin-

ning 1 October.

"The next few days will be a time of intensity," she wrote.

'Irresponsible beyond words'

Pelosi is running into not only a buzzsaw of opposition from Republicans; Democratic progressives and moderates have made clear they need to see quickly exactly what goes in the \$3.5 trillion bill.

"The votes aren't there, so I don't think she's going to bring it" to the floor Monday, congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, who chairs the House progressives, told CNN's "State of the Union," regarding the infrastructure bill. — AFP ■

Three dead, dozens injured after US train derailment

AMTRAK on Sunday expressed condolences to the families of those killed when a train derailed the day before in northern Montana, saying it was "fully cooperating" with an investigation into the deadly incident. "We have no words that can adequately express our sorrow for those who lost a loved one or who were hurt in this horrible event," the US rail operator's CEO, Bill Flynn, said in a statement.

Around 141 passengers and 16 crew members were travelling from Chicago towards the Pacific coast on Saturday afternoon when eight of the 10 cars came off the tracks at around 4:00 pm (2200 GMT), killing three people and injuring dozens more.

"We are fully cooperating with the investigation, working closely with National Transportation Safety Board, the Federal Railroad Administration, local law enforcement and response agencies," Flynn said.

"We share the sense of urgency to understand why the accident happened; however, until the investigation is complete, we will not comment further on the accident itself." — AFP ■

Israel releases Palestinian MP Khalida Jarrar from prison



Palestinians welcome lawmaker Khalida Jarrar in Ramallah city in the occupied West Bank, following her release from an Israeli prison on 26 September 2021. **PHOTO: ABBAS MOMANI / AFP**

ISRAELI authorities on Sunday released from jail Palestinian lawmaker Khalida Jarrar after

two years in detention.

Jarrar, 58, was sentenced to two years in March 2021 for

belonging to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), which Israel and the United States label a "terrorist" organization. But the Israeli military did not find evidence Jarrar had taken part in violent acts.

She had been detained without charge since 2019 when she was arrested along with several other Palestinian figures following an attack that killed an Israeli teenager. Israel blamed the attack on the PFLP.

Jarrar was elected to the Palestinian Legislative Council, or parliament, as part of the PFLP.

On Sunday the group congratulated Jarrar on her release,

describing her as a "comrade in arms" known for her "patience and tenacity".

After leaving jail Jarrar visited the tomb of her daughter Suha who died in July, an AFP correspondent said.

At the time, Israeli prison authorities refused to allow Jarrar to attend the funeral.

Jarrar has been arrested and jailed many times and often held without charge in what Israelis call administrative detention.

Israeli administrative detention orders allow suspects to be held without charge for renewable six-month periods. — AFP ■

Germany's Social Democrats win election but uncertainty beckons

GERMANY slipped Monday into a period of political unpredictability after the Social Democrats narrowly won a general election but faced a rival claim to power from outgoing Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative camp.

For a country synonymous with stability after 16 years of Merkel's steady leadership, the coming weeks and months promise to be a rocky ride as both Finance Minister Olaf Scholz's SPD and the conservatives led by Armin Laschet scramble for coalition partners. The power struggle risks putting Germany out of play on the international scene

for some time, even though the upcoming COP26 climate summit will be demanding action from the world's biggest powers. Europe's largest economy will also hold the presidency of the G7 club of rich nations next year, and will need a government capable of setting the international agenda. European markets nevertheless heaved a sigh of relief, climbing after the tight results, predicting that a government led by either the SPD or the CDU would bring continuity in economic policy.

Preliminary official results showed that the centre-left Social Democrats (SPD) narrowly won

the vote at 25.7 per cent, while Merkel's centre-right CDU-CSU bloc sunk to a historic low of 24.1 per cent. The Green party placed third at 14.8 per cent, its best result yet but still short of expectations. Laschet, 60, took responsibility for his side's poor showing and vowed "renewal in all areas".

But he insisted that "no party" — not even the SPD — could claim a mandate to govern from Sunday's outcome, as he said he was ready to head a coalition. Scholz, 63, said the conservatives belonged in the opposition. "The CDU and CSU have not only sig-



German Finance Minister, Vice-Chancellor and the Social Democratic SPD Party's candidate for chancellor Olaf Scholz (L) and Germany's Social Democratic SPD party co-leader Saskia Esken arrive for a SPD leadership meeting at the party's headquarters in Berlin on 27 September 2021, one day after general elections. **PHOTO: ODD ANDERSEN / AFP**

nificantly lost votes, but they have essentially received the message from citizens — they should no

longer be in government, but should go into the opposition," he said. — AFP ■

Sydney gets ‘blueprint for freedom’ as virus cases fall



This picture taken on 17 August 2021 shows a resident (R) waiting for her turn to receive a Covid-19 vaccination at a pharmacy in the suburb of Cabramatta in Sydney. **PHOTO : AFP**

VACCINATED Sydney residents will finally emerge from a lengthy Covid lockdown by mid-October, Australian officials said Monday, outlining a “blueprint for freedom” as case numbers fell in the city.

Stay-at-home orders are set to be lifted in Sydney and surrounding New South Wales when the double-dose vaccination rate hits 70 per cent, with state premier Gladys Berejiklian saying “quite confidently” that was now expected to occur on 11 October.

Shuttered pubs, res-

taurants and shops will be allowed to reopen to the vaccinated while friends and families living across Australia’s biggest city will be able to reunite for the first time in more than three months. “It is just this week and next week that we have to hang in there for,” Berejiklian said.

“We are nearly, nearly there, and let’s not give up at the last minute.”

Deputy premier John Barilaro said the “blueprint for freedom” would allow travel across New South Wales once 80 per cent of over-16s are fully

vaccinated, which is likely by the end of October.

Restrictions on guest numbers at funerals and weddings would be lifted at the same time, while sporting fixtures would also be permitted to resume.

However, unvaccinated adults will need to wait until at least 1 December to enjoy the same freedoms, when it is predicted that around 90 per cent of the eligible population will be vaccinated, officials said.

The announcement came as new daily cases dipped below 800 in New South Wales on Monday — down from peaks of around 1,500 earlier in September — and the number of adults with at least one vaccine dose reached 85 per cent. Berejiklian warned that hospitals still faced being overwhelmed by a surge in Covid-19 patients in the coming weeks.

“We know that once we start reopening at 70 per cent double dose that the case numbers will go through the roof,” she said. — AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

5.7-magnitude quake shakes Philippines’ main island: USGS

A strong earthquake hit off the Philippines’ main island Monday, but there were no immediate reports of damage, the US Geological Survey and local officials said. The deep 5.7-magnitude quake struck off Batangas province on Luzon island at 1:12 am (1712 GMT), with residents in the nearby capital of Manila woken by their buildings shaking.

The quake was recorded at a depth of 98 kilometres (60 miles), the USGS said. The local seismological agency warned of damage and aftershocks. Deep quakes tend to do less damage than shallow tremors. But authorities near the epicentre said they had not received any reports of damage. “It was really strong,” Jose Clyde Yayong, a disaster officer in Tagaytay city in the neighbouring province of Cavite. “So far there are no untoward incidents relating to the earthquake.” Leonardo Tristan, a disaster officer in Looc town on Occidental Mindoro island, said the force of the quake sent some residents rushing outside.

“My wife was shouting ‘there’s an earthquake!’” Tristan told AFP.

The Philippines is regularly rocked by quakes due to its location on the Pacific “Ring of Fire”, an arc of intense seismic activity that stretches from Japan through Southeast Asia and across the Pacific basin.— AFP ■

Fire at Iran Guards building injures three

IRAN’S Revolutionary Guards said a fire broke out on Sunday in one of their research facilities injuring three employees. “The fire broke out in the afternoon in one of the Guards’ research centres west of Tehran, injuring three members of staff,” a statement on the forces Sepahnews website said. The injured were taken to hospital, the statement said, adding that the blaze was put out by firefighters who work at the centre. It did not say, however, what caused the blaze. The Guards are the ideological arm of Iran’s military. — AFP ■

OBITUARY Asleep in Jesus U Kevin Aung Tin Thein Aged 67 Years

Residing at No.4(A) Kaba Aye Road. 8th Mile, Mayangon, Yangon, **U Kevin Aung Tin Thein** aged 67 years, grandson of the late U Tun Pe (Judson College) and Daw Khin U Zun, the late Dr Ba Han (Attorney-General of the Union) and Daw Thein Lwin, beloved son of (U Teddy Tin Thein) and Daw Marjorie Myint Myint Han, beloved brother of Brian Pe Tin Thein–T. Seng Jum, Rory Han Tin Thein–Angie Kying Kho Mang Moong and Lwin May Thein–Min Thu, and dearly beloved uncle “U Nge” of Teza Han, Khinza Han, Haemar Min Thu, Waimar Min Thu and Tin Pe Thein, fell asleep in Jesus at 4(A) Kaba Aye Road, Yangon on 27 September 2021. Cremation will be at Yayway Cemetery at 9 am on Tuesday 28 September 2021 after the funeral service.

Bereaved family

2 men arrested over unauthorized copying of Japanese-style artwork

TOKYO police arrested Monday two men from western Japan on suspicion of copyright infringement in connection with the circulation of prints of Japanese-style artworks by late master Nihonga painters including Ikuo Hirayama.

Former art dealer Yuzo Kato, 53, and block print studio manager Masashi Kitabata, 67, are suspected of conspiring to produce prints of works by famous traditional Japanese-style painters without permission from their families, thus violating the copyrights they hold, investigative sources said.

Authorized prints must be made from blocks produced by craftspeople with permission from the copyright holder.

According to the sources, Kato allegedly

sold some of the prints delivered by Kitabata to other dealers, who then distributed them to department stores in Japan.

Kato from Osaka Prefecture and Kitabata from Nara Prefecture were arrested for allegedly making seven copies of five artworks including Kaii Higashiyama’s 1972 lithograph piece titled “Forest with a White Horse” without the family’s approval over a two-year period from January 2017, the sources said.

After an earlier probe by an art dealers’ association, Kato had said via his lawyer, “I apologize for any inconvenience caused to copyright holders, buyers, and the art industry. I will work to repair the damage.” Meanwhile, Kitabata said in an earlier interview with Kyodo News that he produced roughly 20

prints each of about 40 artworks at the request of Kato for about eight years, adding, “I was in need of money. I thought (Kato) had obtained permission.” The Contemporary Graphic Art Dealers Association of Japan launched a probe after a staff member noticed an unusually high volume of works by Hirayama was in circulation in spring last year.

The unauthorized prints were elaborate enough to deceive many, except for specialists, who noticed that the signatures and colouring were slightly unnatural.

Kato, who was a member of the association, admitted to selling the unauthorized prints during the probe. He was then expelled from the organization in December last year.

The association said in February that the probe has confirmed unlicensed copies of a total of 10 artworks by renowned Japanese artists — Hirayama, Higashiyama and Tamako Kataoka. After appraising a total of 201 pieces of the 10 artworks brought in by dealers that were suspected to be unauthorized, an art experts group said in May that 120 pieces, or about 60 per cent, were found to be unlicensed.— Kyodo News ■



Unauthorized prints of Japanese-style artworks by late master Nihonga painters confiscated by police are pictured in Tokyo on 27 September 2021. **PHOTO : KYODO NEWS**

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.

AFC set new venue for Myanmar team's Asian Cup Qualifiers

THE Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has recently announced the venue for Group D of the 2022 AFC Women's Cup Qualifiers in which the Myanmar Women's Team are participating.

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has decided

to host the group stage in Kyrgyzstan at the Dolan Omurzakov Stadium in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, which is scheduled to be held from 18 to 24 October.

The group stage, previously hosted by Lebanon, was originally scheduled to take place from 17 to 23 September

but was postponed by about a month due to a change in the host country.

Myanmar is falling in Group D together with the UAE, Lebanon and Guam.

The Myanmar women's team is taking training for the tourney and football authori-

ties will select the final squad just before the tournament.

Head coach U Tin Myint Aung is in charge of the team.

The Myanmar team will play against Lebanon on 18 October, Guam on 21 October, and the UAE on 24 October, respectively.

Some group matches from the AFC Women's Cup Qualifiers have been completed and four teams: South Korea, the Philippines, Iran and Thailand have already qualified to the next stage.—Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

PSG still 'a work in progress' for Pochettino after Messi arrival



Paris Saint-Germain's Argentinian forward Lionel Messi (C), Brazilian forward Neymar (L) and French forward Kylian Mbappe take part during a training session at the club's Camp des Loges training ground in Saint-Germain-en-Laye on 27 September 2021 on the eve of their UEFA Champions League first round group A football match against Manchester City. **PHOTO: AFP**

PARIS Saint-Germain coach Mauricio Pochettino admits his team remains far from its best following the arrival of Lionel Messi in the summer, as the French club get ready to face Manchester City in a blockbuster Champions League clash on Tuesday.

"It is a fact, not an opinion, that we are a work in progress. There needs to be some common sense. That is not up for debate," Pochettino said at Monday's pre-

game press conference in Paris.

PSG were widely criticized for their performance in drawing their opening Champions League Group A match away to Club Brugge in Belgium a fortnight ago while City trounced RB Leipzig 6-3. That means failure to beat Pep Guardiola's team at the Parc des Princes on Tuesday will put them in a potentially tricky position, at least when it comes to advancing top of their group. City

beat PSG in the semi-finals last season before losing to Chelsea in the final.

"We will be playing against Manchester City who have in my opinion the best coach in the world in Pep Guardiola," said Pochettino. "They are also building and their dream is also to win the Champions League -- it is never an obligation because there are 10 or 12, maybe even 15 teams, trying to do the same thing.

"It is a dream for us too. This club is 50 years old and has always been looking to establish itself as the best in Europe but it is a process that needs patience, time and investment. "Manchester City are far ahead of us in the process, but this is a game of football and anything can happen." Messi is expected to return to the side after sitting out PSG's last two matches in Ligue 1 with a minor knee problem. Italian playmaker Marco Verratti could also return after almost a month out, but Angel Di Maria is still suspended following his sending-off in last season's semi-final. — AFP ■

Osaka feels 'itch' to make tennis return 'soon'

FOUR-TIME Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka says she will return to tennis soon after feeling the "itch" to play again.

Osaka said earlier this month she planned to take an indefinite break from the sport after an early exit from the US Open.

The 23-year-old had previously pulled out of the French Open and skipped Wimbledon to protect her mental health.

"I know I'm going to play again," Osaka told HBO show 'The Shop'.

Adding that her return would be "probably soon", Osaka said: "I kind of have that itch again.

"It wouldn't really matter to me if I won or lost, I'd just have the joy of being back on the court."

Osaka, who recently dropped out of the top five in the world rankings, said her problems were exacerbated by speaking to the media after matches.

She had also made an early exit from Cincinnati last month, and had bowed out of

the Tokyo Olympics in the early rounds in July.

"I used to love the competition and just being competitive," she said.

"If I were to play a long match, the longer it was the more fun it was for me.

"I just started to feel recently the longer it was the more stressed out I became, but I just needed a break to go within myself."

Osaka was fined for failing to meet mandatory media requirements after her opening round win at Roland Garros. She withdrew from the tournament a day later.

Roger Federer has joined calls to improve the relationship between players and the media.

"Players, the tournaments, journalists, we need to sit down together in a room and go, 'OK, what would work for you and what works for us,'" the 20-time Grand Slam winner told GQ magazine on Monday.

"We need a revolution. Or at least an evolution of where we are today. — AFP ■