

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.

Relevant departments carry out beautifying of urban area while residents need to keep residences and environment neat and tidy: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets town elders and businesspersons at hall of Command and General Staff College in Kalaw.

ARRANGEMENTS are being made to shape Putao, PyinOoLwin, Haka, Thandaunggyi and Kalaw as hill stations, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at a meeting with locals and businesspersons from Kalaw and Aungpan at the hall of Command and General Staff College in Kal-

aw yesterday afternoon. Town elders and businesspersons reported on requirements related to construction of a bus terminal between Aungpan and Kalaw, searching for water sources to supply drinking water to Kalaw, repairing of roads, construction of Aungpan-Intein Pagoda Road to improve tourism industry and social system, sys-

tematic town plan for Aungpan, deployment of higher health staff for providing health care services to Namtaing Village-tract, supply of fertilizers, conducting of agricultural training courses on increase of per-acre yield for agricultural crops and cultivation techniques, training for teachers to teach ethnic languages and

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Arrangements are being made to operate a rail transportation based in Kalaw for the Myintaik-Heho route and based in PyinOoLwin for the Zeebingyi-Nawngkhio route with the use of coal-fired locomotives.

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State Administration Council
Press Release

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

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

Information Team
State Administration Council

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

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Central Bank of Myanmar
Notification No 35/2021
Nay Pyi Taw
13th Waning of Tawthalin 1383 ME
3 October 2021

1. The Central Bank of Myanmar exercises the authority in sub-section (b) of Section 49 of the Foreign Exchange Management Law to issue this notification.
2. According to Section 38-b and Section 42-a of the Foreign Exchange Management Law and paragraph 35 of the Foreign Exchange Management Regulation, exporters shall not fail to deposit all their export incomes in foreign exchange, during the stipulated period, in their bank accounts in the State.
3. Exporters who have an account with an AD-licensed bank can use the export incomes for themselves and sell it to non-AD licensed banks or AD-licensed banks before 30 days of the transfers to their accounts.
4. Exporters must sell their remaining export incomes in foreign exchange of their bank accounts to the authorized AD licensed bank at the market prices within 30 days of the transfers without fail.
5. The non-AD banks such as people and organizations must use the export earnings for themselves or sell to AD licensed banks within 30 days and they must sell the remaining amount only to AD licensed banks before 30 days at the market prices without fail. They must not resell to other person and organizations.
6. In conducting the above mentioned procedures, the total period of sale to the AD licensed bank shall not exceed 30 days for the sale to AD licensed bank including resale via those who receive export incomes from the time of receiving the export earnings.
7. The notification No 33/2021 issued by CMB on 3 September 2021 was overlapped by this notification.
8. This notification shall come into effect from the date of issue.

Than Nyein
Governor



IDPs in Myebon Township get 2nd dose of COVID jab

HEALTH staff gave second dose of Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine to over 18-year-old local people at six IDP camps in Myebon Township, MraukU District, Rakhine State yesterday morning.

Under the supervision of U Min Oo, Chairman of the Township Administration Body and led by Dr Than Tun, Head of the Township Public Health Department, health staff, general administrative staff, village administrators and camp officials

cooperated in the vaccination works in six vaccination sites.

The second dose of Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine is being given to the people aged 18 and over at Kandauntgyi IDP camp, Thayettaung IDP camp, Pinkattaung IDP camp, Kyeegaungtaung IDP camp, Yetchaung IDP camp, and Pyathon IDP camp according to the township public health department.—Tin Win (Myebon Township IPRD)/GNLM

A health staff is vaccinating a displaced person at IDP camp in Myebon Township.

People aspire to the democratic election

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. 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.

(Excerpt from the speech to the meeting 1/2021 of the Union 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 27-9-2021)

Relevant departments carry out beautifying of urban area while residents need to keep residences and environment neat and tidy: Senior General

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transport and electrification for some villages.

After hearing the reports, the Senior General said the schools related to agriculture has been established. Local people were urged to learn agricultural techniques for applying the experiences in the farming tasks, and arrangements will be made for teaching the ethnic language.

Then, the Senior General said that Kalaw is a hill station for the people to take a rest, and arrangements are being made to shape Putao, PyinOoLwin, Haka, Thand-aunggyi and Kalaw as hill stations. Local people need to participate in beautifying the environs of Kalaw. The



Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing hears reports on measures of regional development by an official.

The government will provide pedigree species of animals to the local breeders. Efforts are being made to upgrade Heho Airport to the International facility to be able to transport domestic products to local and foreign markets.

government pledged to upgrade the roads, and relevant departments carry out beautifying of urban area while res-

idents need to keep residences and environment neat and tidy. Arrangements are being made to operate a rail transportation based in Kalaw for the Myintak-Heho route and based in PyinOoLwin for the Zeebingyi-Nawngkhio route with the use of coal-fired locomotives.

Aungpan is a business hub in Shan State (South) but its town plan is weak with lack of systematic layout plan. It is necessary to systematic draw the layout plan for the urban area facilitated with education,

health and recreation centres in addition to water supply and electrification. Development committee and local people are to join hands in beautifying of the town.

Production of value-added products through fruit processing can contribute to the development of the town. As such, all need to apply modern agricultural system for production of quality agricultural products. Efforts must be made for production of bio-fertilizers and for egg and meat production based on poultry,

pig and cow breeding farms.

Local youths need to learn high school education and higher education without fail and locals need to encourage the youths to pursue the university education. There are lesser number of people with skills and knowledge to operate business and agriculture and livestock farming except the work experiences. Hence, it is necessary to enhance the education qualification and provide assistance for the children to learn education.

Agricultural training schools should be established for learning the agricultural techniques. The government will provide pedigree species of animals to the local breeders. Efforts are being made to upgrade Heho Airport to the International facility to be able to transport domestic products to local and foreign markets. Only when agriculture and livestock farming achieves success more than now, will local people have development of living standard. The government is place emphasis on prosperity, peace and stability of the State with food sufficiency.

The Senior General then held a tea party with participation of town elders and businesspersons from Kalaw and Aungpan.—MNA

1,194 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 3 October, total figure rises to 468,463

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 468,463 after 1,194 new cases were reported on 3 October 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 422,755 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 17,883 after 48 died.

COVID-19 vaccine is being injected to those of priority groups in regions and states for prevention and control of the disease. Up to 2-10-2021, a total of 8,390,746 people have been vaccinated. Of them, 3,872,956 people have been vaccinated two times and 4,517,790 people once.—MNA

Gov't to shape Shan State into all-round development of agriculture

THE government makes efforts to produce skilled and medium-level agricultural workers and subject specialists, to develop the research sector, to open agricultural training schools and to arrange for the locals to join the agricultural and livestock institutes, said Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Tin Htut Oo during the meeting with the officials of farming sectors of Shan State yesterday.

The Union Minister inspected the sample corn, fermented soya-bean and edible crops of Aungpan Agriculture Research Station and instructed to grow new crops for commercial purposes and expand the research



Union Minister U Tin Htut Oo views seeds of maize and other crops at Aungpan Agriculture Research Station.

works based on the market. Then the Union Minister discussed about the preparations of Irrigation and Water Utilization Management Department to prevent the silting in Inlay Lake of Shan State, the use of silt scavenged annually in farming sector, production

of fertilizer using the collected duckweed, water hyacinth and flotsam and cooperation works between the government and private organizations to expand the tomato and vegetable cultivations in line with the GAP on floating fields.

Similarly, he instructed officials to breed *Cyprinus carpio*, to swift the tending of animals into feeding system and to use machines from the plating to cultivating of crops, to conduct educating programmes and research, to expand the edible crops and coffee cultivation including the effective use of vacant, fallow and virgin lands. —MNA

Union Minister for Health visits Pindaya People's Hospital in Shan State



Union Minister Dr Thet Khaing Win views round medical wards at Pindaya Township People's Hospital.

UNION Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win and Chairman of Danu Self-Administered Zone Administration Body U Akar Lin visited Pindaya People's Hospital in Shan State yesterday morning. The Union Minister inspected emergency and outpatient

department, operation theater, X-ray room and medical wards.

The head of Township Public Health Department and officials reported on providing medical treatment to the patients at the hospital and medical check-up services.

After that, the Union Minister encouraged the patients being treated at the hospital and inspected progress of the new two-storey building of the hospital.

During his visit, the Union Minister said that the Ministry will provide adequate coverage of the COVID-19 RDT Test Kit and vaccines to those who come into contact with COVID-19 vi-

rus-infected patients and COVID-19 suspect patients.

The Union Minister expressed heartfelt thanks to the health personnel for their hard work in providing health care services and gave certificates of honour to them.

The Pindaya Township People's Hospital is a 50-bed facility. Two doctors, 10 nurses, and 11 midwifery and health supervisors from the Department of Public Health are currently serving in the hospital.

A total of 73 patients including 32 COVID-19 patients and 41 inpatients for other diseases are receiving treatment at the hospital. —MNA

Public request by Ministry of Health

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

1. Stay at home as much as possible.
2. Don't accept the guests at the house. You don't visit other houses.
3. The older persons above 65 or those suffering from chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and heart must be worn masks in the house. They

4. must be placed at well-ventilated sites. Wear masks if you go outside without fail. Systematically wash hands. Take a six-foot distance from others. Avoid visits to the rooms where ventilation is not good.
5. Avoid the crowds.
6. If possible, go shopping once a week. Don't buy anything from the vendors who don't systematically wear masks.
7. Take care of carrying the virus to the houses whenever return home from outside. Systemati-

8. cally discard the used masks and single disposable equipment outside the houses. Avoid close contact with family members before changing clothes or washing the body.
9. As the vaccines for your quota is the best, accept vaccinations for full time. Despite receiving the vaccination, you should abide by the protective ways. Systematically cooperate in prevention, control and treatment of the disease with manpower, money, materials and expertise.

Ministry of Health (2-8-2021)

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Union Minister for Industry inspects departments, factories in Shan state

UNION Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than made an inspection tour to departments and factories in Shan State for three days from 30 September to 2 October.

On 30 September, the Union Minister arrived at the Department of Industrial Supervision and Inspection in Taunggyi, Shan State. Officials presented the operational implementation, support for the development of small and medium enterprises and staffing issues. The Union Minister instructed them to conduct appropriate training to transform labours in industrial zones into skilled workers, to set “standard” for occupational skills, to review and issue certificates to them.

Afterward, the Union Minister accompanied by the members of the Project Supervision



Union Minister Dr Charlie Than poses for documentary photo together with staff from No 2 Steel Mill (Pinpat).

Committee inspected the No. (2) Steel Mill (Pinpat) and discussed the report of the committee on the resumption of the mill. He gave instructions to the members of the committee on the necessary matters and made a detailed inspection of the completed and remaining work of each branch of the mill.

On 1 October, the Union Minister for Industry and Union

Minister for Electricity and Energy U Aung Than Oo inspected the power consumption and installation of the machines in Main Step Down Sub-Station, Heat Recovery Power Station and Air Separation Shop. The Union Ministers coordinated the matters related to the availability of stable power from different sources to prevent power outages for starting the kiln with the use of the Romelt technology.

On 2 October, the Union Minister cordially met with staff from the No. (2) Steel Mill (Pinpat), and said the mill will produce iron and steel by using the domestic resources and it is necessary that all staff work together to timely complete the productions that support the development of the State and the industrial sector. — MNA

MoHT Union Minister tours Mandalay region, discusses tourism development

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Htay Aung offered flowers, water and gold foils to the Maha Muni Buddha Image in Mandalay, and donated cash to the fund of the Image Board of Trustee yesterday morning. The Chairman of the board returned a scale model of Maha Muni Buddha image made of flowers and a certificate of honour.

Afterward, the Union Minister inspected the operation of the Tourist Information Centre, and coordinated with the Chairman of the board on the venue for Virtual Reality Tour Exhibition.

While in Mandalay, the Union Minister said the domestic tourism will be focused on when the tourism with COVID-19 resumes, and it is necessary not only for the travellers but also for everyone working in the sector to follow the COVID-19 rules and regulations. The Ministry is making a video to inform the public that the hotel

services are being carried out in accordance with the COVID-19 protection guidelines, which will be mentioned in state-run media, at conferences and meetings, as well as in hotel lounges, dining rooms and bedrooms in hotels, he added.

Afterward, an official from the Mandalay Region Hotels and Tourism Directorate presented the regional certification under the Enchanting Myanmar Health & Safety Protocol to hotels to an official on behalf of the Myanmar Hoteliers Association (Mandalay Zone).

The Union Minister also met with Chief Minister of Mandalay Regional government U Maung Ko and Consulate Mr Chen Chen to discuss possible ways to develop Myanmar-China tourism development cooperation in the COVID-19 period.

In the afternoon, the Union Minister visited Sithar Coffee



Hotels and Tourism Union Minister Dr Htay Aung visits Sithar Coffee Farm in PyinOoLwin Township.

Farm which is operating with tourism business in Phaungdaw village in PyinOoLwin township, Mandalay Region. He also inspected preparation for Ganamar Myaing and Thiri Myaing hotels to be ready for the resumption of tourism in PyinOoLwin.

Afterward, the Union Minister held a meeting with officials from departments, hotels and tourism sector to discuss the tourism development. At the meeting, the district authorities presented regional certificate to the hotels reopened under the Enchanting Myanmar Health & Safety Protocol.—MNA

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MoC facilitates import of COVID-19 medical supplies and equipment

THE Ministry of Commerce is joining hands with relevant departments in working hard to ensure people have access to essential medical supplies for prevention, control and treatment activities of COVID-19, including liquid oxygen and oxygen cylinders, arranging the continuous importation by airways, sea and border trade points.

Yesterday, three bowzers containing 19.97 tonnes of liquid oxygen and seven tonnes of masks were imported through Chinshwehaw and Myawady border trade points. One of the liquid oxygen vehicles led to Yangon.

It is reported that the Ministry of Commerce is giving priority to the import of essential medical supplies required in prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 through the SOPs coordinated with the relevant departments in order to avoid delays, and announcements and notices related to the import of medicines and related products have also been made available to the public on the Ministry's website, commerce.gov.mm.—MNA

Large cargo trucks are conveying medical supplies leaving border gate.



Over 10,000 people vaccinated with COVID jab in Pwintbyu Township

THE first dose of COVID-19 vaccine has been given to those who have not been vaccinated in Pwintbyu Township, Magway Region since 16 September.

To date, a total of 10,035 people have been vaccinated in the township, according to the township General Administration Department.

Under the leadership of the township administration, health-care workers are conducting the vaccination works in accordance with the health regulations at four vaccination sites: Bo Ottama Hall of the Township General Administration Department, Lekaing Village Basic Education High School, Konzaung Village Basic Education High School, and Mezali Village Basic Education High School.

A total of 350 people received the vaccinations at the vaccination sites yesterday.

Staff of the Township General Administration Department, Township Fire Brigade and volunteer team assisted in the vaccination programme.

In Pwintbyu Township, people who have not yet been vaccinated are systematically vaccinated in priority groups to keep people safe from the virus and reduce the spread of the disease.

A total of 10,035 people have been vaccinated for the first time since 16 September, according to Pwintbyu Township Administration Body Chairman U Aung Myat Khaing.—Ye Win Naing (NyaungU)/GNLM



Health staff are injecting anti-COVID-19 vaccines into local people in Pwintbyu Township. PHOTO: YE WIN NAING (NYAUNGU)



Yathedaung to start 2nd dose vaccination for IDPs aged 45 and above



THE second dose of COVID-19 vaccine (Sinovac) will be given to the people over the age of 45 who are taking shelters at internally displaced persons camps in Yathedaung Township, Rakhine State, starting from 9 October.

People will be vaccinated at six injection sites from 9 am to 4 pm daily, officials said.

Under the supervision of the COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee, the second dose of COVID-19 vaccine will be given to people over the age of 45 who have been vaccinated for the first time according to the COVID-19 regulations issued by the Ministry of Health.—Aung San Tun (IPRD)/GNLM

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Sagaing Region meets target of corn acres

SAGAING Region Agriculture Department completed cultivation of corn against the target in the region during the monsoon crop season this year, said U Aung Kyi Win, deputy head of the region department.

The cultivation of maize and baby corn commenced in June and 210,608 acres of maize, 74,728 acres of baby corn, 121,589 acres of millet and 6,365 acres of other grains have been planted as of September-end, as per data of Sagaing Region Agriculture Department.

“The number of maize acreage has grown this year. It is used in feedstuff processing business and snack food production industry. The maize market brings about potentials and benefits for the growers,” said U Aung Kyi Win.

The regional department covered 18,705 acres of sweet corn in Kalay District, 579 acres in Hkamti District, 19,036 acres in Naga Self-Administered Zone, 1,812 acres in Monywa District, 12,802 acres in Shwebo District, 151,603 acres in Kanbalu Dis-

trict, 2,908 acres in Sagaing District, 3,124 acres in Katha District and 39 acres in Kawlin District.

Additionally, 480 acres of croplands have been placed under baby corn plants in Mawlaik District, 1,382 acres in Tamu District, 11,381 acres in Kalay District, 4,698 acres in Naga Self-Administered Zone, 1,111 acres in Monywa District, 29,520 acres in Yinmabin District, 14,014 acres in Shwebo District, 669 acres in Kanbalu District, 7,424 acres in Sagaing District, 2,323 acres in Katha District and 1,726 acres in Kawlin District.

For mullets, 36,123 acres of mullet plantations were grown in Monywa District, 55,433 in Yinmabin District and 30,033 in Sagaing Districts while 6,365 acres of other grains have been planted in Naga region, as per the data of Sagaing Region Agriculture Department.

The department is raising awareness of fall armyworm invasion in the farms. It distributed 5,000 insecticides for natural pest management, the department stated.—Lulay/GNLM

Singaing Agriculture Dept meets with farmers of 200 model acres of extra-long staple cotton



Officials of Agriculture Department and local farmers view thriving of long staple cotton plants in the farm. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG

SINGAING Township Agriculture Department held discussions with the farmers who execute 200 model acres of extra-long staple cotton at 10 a.m. on 3 October at No. 46 farm yard of U Kan Tin, Natyekan village of Meethwaybok village-tract in Singaing Township, Kyaukse District of Mandalay Region.

At the discussions, U Toe Min, head of Mandalay Region Agriculture Department delivered a remark that the long cotton seeds produced from

the model farm in the 2020-2021 financial year will be used for the cultivation next season as pedigree seeds. This model farm aims to produce quality seeds for the following growing season. The department is also implementing the yield enhancement.

Afterwards, U Sai Than Aung, deputy head of the region department shared the know-how of emasculation and dusting technique and demonstrated the seed production.

They friendly talked about the detailed production steps with the farmers, inspected the farms and fulfilled the needs.

The township department covered 6,839 acres of long staple cotton and 200 model farms of long cotton for seed production in the 2020-2021 financial year. A total of 41 farmers carried out the model farming with the use of FS seed, Daw Soe Soe said.—Min Htet Aung (Mandalay sub-printing house)/GNLM

Number of companies registered on MyCO exceeds 4,965 in nine months: DICA

THE number of companies registered on the online registry system, MyCO, reached over 4,965 in the past nine months this year, the statistics released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) indicated.

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

During the January-September period, the number of registered companies on MyCO was 1,373 in January, 188 in February, 163 in March, 254 in April, 686 in May, 775 in June, 433 in July, 360 in August and 733 in September, the DICA's statistics showed.

At present, 100 per cent of the applicants are using the online registration platform, the DICA stated.

Last year, the figures of registered companies stood at 1,415 in January, 1,298 in February and 1,015 in March, only 348 companies in April, 798 in May, 1,314 in June, 1,650 in July, 1,551 in Au-

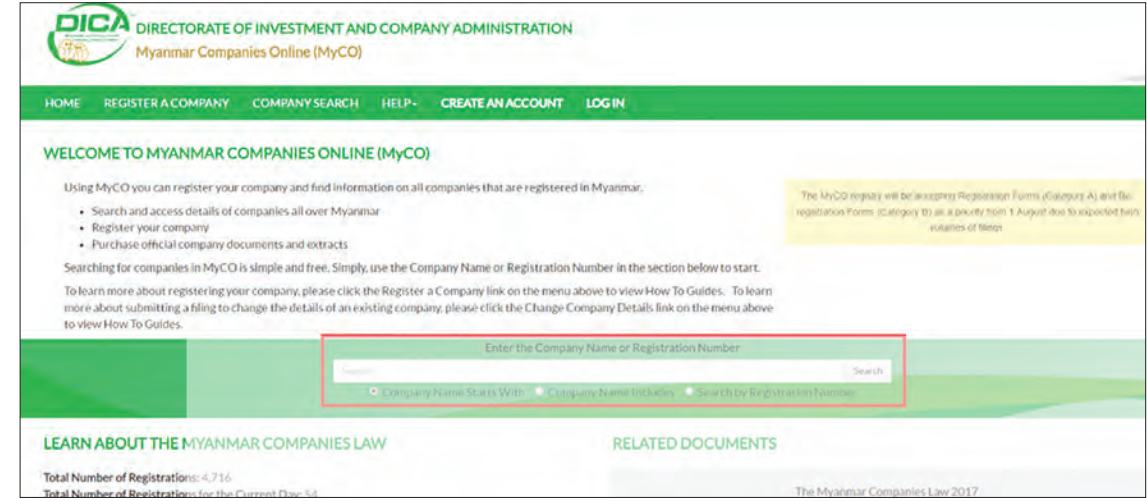


Photo shows page of website of Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

gust, 1,378 in September, 1,693 in October, 1,099 in November and 1,521 in December, as per statistics of the DICA.

In 2019, the figure stood at 1,733 in January 2019, 1,419 in February, 1,108 in March, and over 1,045 in April, 1,411 in May, 1,307 in June, 1,428 in July, 1,302 in August and 1,181 in September. The figures reached a fresh new peak of 2,059 in October 2019. Then, 1,615 new companies in November and 1,772 in December

were recorded, data of the DICA showed.

When the online registry was launched in August 2018, a total of 1,816 new companies have taken registration on MyCO. The figure stood at 2,218 in September 2018, 1,671 in October, 1,431 in November and 1,364 in December 2018.

In addition, all registered companies need to file annual returns (AR) on the MyCO registry system within two months of incorporation, and at least once

every year (not later than one month after the anniversary of the incorporation), according to Section 97 of Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

Section 266 (A) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017 mentions that public companies must submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5) simultaneously.

All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within

28 days of the financial year ending, as per Section 53 (A-1) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

As per DICA's report, about 17,000 companies were suspended so far for failure to submit AR forms within the due date.

Newly established companies are required to submit ARs within two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns.

The DICA notified that any company which fails to submit its AR within 13 months will be notified of its suspension (I-9A). If it fails to submit the AR within 28 days of receiving the notice, the system will show the company's status as suspended. Companies can restore their status only after shelling out a fine of K50,000 for AR fee, K100,000 for restoration of the company on the register, and K100,000 for late filing of documents. If a company fails to restore its status within six months of suspension, the registrar will strike its name off the register, according to the DICA notice.—GNLM

Dutifully combat transnational crimes in internal and international arenas

THE transnational crimes bring only disadvantages on security measures to relevant countries and citizens but terror acts complicated in the transnational crimes can impose threats on the standing of relevant countries.

As such, it is necessary to eliminate terrorism in transnational crimes not to emerge the chances for terrorists to commit terror crimes. It is because the terror acts are more atrocity than ordinary transnational crimes such as arms smuggling, drugs trafficking and human trafficking. So, Myanmar deploys its security forces on combating the transnational crimes along

the borders shared with the People's Republic of China, Laos, Thailand, India and Bangladesh.

In its historical background, Myanmar showed off its prowess in combating the terrorists in the transnational crimes, arresting the actual suspects and seizing the materials related to the crimes. The country saved many human trafficked victims, a large volume of various narcotic items such as heroin, opium and stimulants worth billions of US dollars on a yearly basis.

However, the above-mentioned three kinds of crimes that often break out along the borders between Myanmar and relevant neighbours are interrelated. As such, officials from various sectors should join hands in fighting against transnational crimes.

Nowadays, as terrorists utilize the digital platform to easily incite terror attacks on other sectors, ASEAN member states need to adopt an action plan on security and technical cooperation in the cyber arena

in addition to further cooperation among them while striving for suppressing the transnational crimes based on their responsibility and enhancing the exchange of information on crimes.

Concerted efforts must be made for beefing up the border management and effective exchange of information as the fake news remarkably and speedily spread rather than the true news in the advancement of technology, causing the surge of extremist attitudes. Hence, a special emphasis must be placed on combatting cybercrimes.

Myanmar pledges to serve its assigned duties and obligations for the successful establishment of the ASEAN Community, with readiness to cooperate with other ASEAN member states to perform the tasks for ensuring regional security, peace and stability and prosperity of the region.

That is why not only the government but the entire national people should participate in combatting transnational crimes in all forms along with borderlands and inland areas as a national duty.



UN World Data Forum meets at 'critical time' with COVID battle ongoing

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that quality data saves lives, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) said on Friday, ahead of the UN World Data Forum, due to start on Sunday.

THE forum, which takes place from 3-6 October in Bern, Switzerland, comes at "a critical time as the world is still dealing with the pandemic," Stefan Schweinfest, Director of the United Nations Statistics Division said.

"Disaggregated data is needed to contain the disease and for citizens to understand the world around them and guide their actions" he added.

'Huge gaps'

According to Mr. Schweinfest, "we are still faced with huge data gaps. 40 per cent of countries have no birth or death registration system - a basic source for governments to protect their population.

A year into the pandemic, only 60 countries had data on COVID-19 infections and death rates that could be disaggregated on gender and sex," he said. "Now is the time to strengthen our commitment.



The national hotline team in Republic of Moldova uses the dashboard to obtain real-time data about the disease and provide high-quality counselling support to callers. PHOTO: UNFPA/FILE

There's an urgent need to make data smarter and utilise emerging innovations to increase the amount and improve the

quality of data".

Better data for a better future
The UN World Data Forum

will bring together hundreds of data experts, users and producers working on new data solutions to support the imple-

mentation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Forum will culminate with the adoption of the Bern Data Compact for a Decade of Action on the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Compact will call on the community to produce data that leave no one behind, to ensure timely, open and impartial data and to build trust in data protection.

It also aims to strengthen the cooperation between various data communities at the local and global levels to achieve the SDGs through data.

Every two years, the Forum puts a spotlight on innovations and data gaps, showcasing progress in the implementation of the data revolution and the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data.

'Leaving no one behind'

Mr Schweinfest said that the Forum is organized around

six main thematic areas, which include: "leaving no one behind, understanding the world through data, building trust in data and statistics, increasing investment to enhance data collection and addressing gaps that exist".

He emphasized that this can be done by working "as one community to foster innovative practices and capture the status and the needs of all people, by presenting data in a timely manner, while preserving privacy rights and maintaining transparency".

While acknowledging that it would be difficult for governments to open up and widen their data ecosystems, Mr. Schweinfest said the challenge is to have more data with "quality assurances," adding that the Forum is a space for the community to collaborate on new initiatives to continue after 6 October.

SOURCE: UN

Merck's COVID Pill Cuts Hospitalisations By 50%

United States (US) pharmaceutical company Merck said Friday it will seek authorization of its oral drug molnupiravir for COVID-19 after it was shown to reduce the chance newly infected patients were hospitalised by 50 percent.

A simple pill to treat the coronavirus has been sought since the start of the pandemic and Friday's announcement was hailed as a major step towards that goal.

"We are optimistic that molnupiravir can become an important medicine as part of the global effort to fight the pandemic," said Robert Davis, the company's CEO and president, in a statement.

Anthony Fauci, chief medical advisor to President Joe Biden, told reporters: "The data are impressive," and highlighted that the trial results showed there were no deaths among patients who received the drug compared to eight deaths in the placebo group.

The US has procured 1.7 million courses of molnupiravir

should it be greenlighted, with the option to buy more.

Until now, COVID therapeutics such as monoclonal antibodies and Gilead's remdesivir have been administered intravenously.

"It's very exciting to have more options that are easy to deploy," Natalie Dean, a biostatistician at Emory University who specializes in infectious diseases said.

"You can have something that's similarly effective, but if one is much easier to use, that's going to have a bigger population-level impact."

But experts also stressed that if eventually approved the drug should complement highly effective vaccines, rather than replace them.

Compelling Results

In a late-stage clinical trial, Merck and its partner Ridgeback Therapeutics evaluated data from around 770 patients - roughly half of whom received either a five-day course of the pill, while the other received a placebo.

All the patients had lab-confirmed COVID-19 with symptoms that developed within five days of them being assigned to their respective groups. Of the patients who received molnupiravir, 7.3 percent were hospitalised by day 29, compared to 14.1 percent of those on a placebo - a relative risk reduction of around 50 percent.

Efficacy was said to hold up against variants of concern, including Delta, and the drug had a good safety profile.

The results were compelling enough that an independent data monitoring committee in consultation with the FDA decided to halt the trial early, which could indicate they felt it would be unethical to continue with a placebo arm.

Merck said it plans to submit an application for an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as soon as possible based on these findings and plans to submit marketing applications to other regulatory bodies worldwide.

Response from the medical community was favourable, with some notes of caution. Eric Topol, director of the Scripps Research Translational Institute, wrote on Twitter the fact the results were so positive the trial was stopped



An experimental COVID-19 treatment pill called molnupiravir being developed by Merck & Co Inc and Ridgeback Biotherapeutics LP, is seen in this undated handout photo released by Merck & Co Inc. PHOTO: MERCK & CO INC/AFP

"would be considered a Eureka moment in the fight against COVID." But "this is no substitute for vaccination. It's not a miracle cure but a companion tool," tweeted Peter Hotez, dean of Texas Children's Hospital.

Experts also said it would be crucial to administer the drug early for it to be effective. Since it isn't always clear who is at risk for developing severe disease, it would have the greatest impact if

it is cheap enough and safe enough to distribute widely.

Broad Application

Molnupiravir belongs to a class of antiviral drugs called "polymerase inhibitors," which work by targeting an enzyme that viruses need to copy their genetic material, and introducing mutations that leave them unable to replicate.

SOURCE: AFP



World Teachers' Day

5 October 2021

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 3 October 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is a few cloud over the North Bay and monsoon is weak over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 4 October 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Kachin State, fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, and Taninthayi regions and Southern Shan and Chin states, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Magway Region and (Northern and Eastern) Shan, Rakhine, Kayah, Kayin, and Mon states and isolated in Lower Sagaing, and Mandalay regions with isolated heavyfalls in Upper Sagaing, and Taninthayi regions and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4 - 7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of withdrawal of Southwest monsoon from the Deltaic Myanmar areas.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4 October 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4 October 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4 October 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

EARTHQUAKE NEWS

(Issued at 04:45 hour MST)

A slight earthquake of magnitude (4.0) Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar (about (2) miles southeast of Mohnyin), latitude 24.76°N, longitude 96.38°E, depth (10) kilometers, about (40) miles north of Katha seismological observatory was recorded at (04) hr (31)min (44)sec MST on 3 October 2021.

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NEWS
IN BRIEF

Australian mining giants back net-zero target

AUSTRALIA'S powerful mining sector has backed a 2050 net-zero carbon target, heaping pressure on the country's coal-championing government to follow suit.

The Minerals Council of Australia -- which represents mining heavy hitters like BHP and Rio Tinto -- said a 2050 target was achievable through "significant investment in technology". "A more sustainable minerals sector is not only important for Australia's post-Covid recovery, it is also helping to sustain and improve the lives of millions around the world," chief executive Tania Constable said.

Australia is currently one of the world's leading exporters of fossil fuels, particularly coal and natural gas. — AFP ■

Kenya drought leaves 2.4 million at risk of hunger by November: WFP

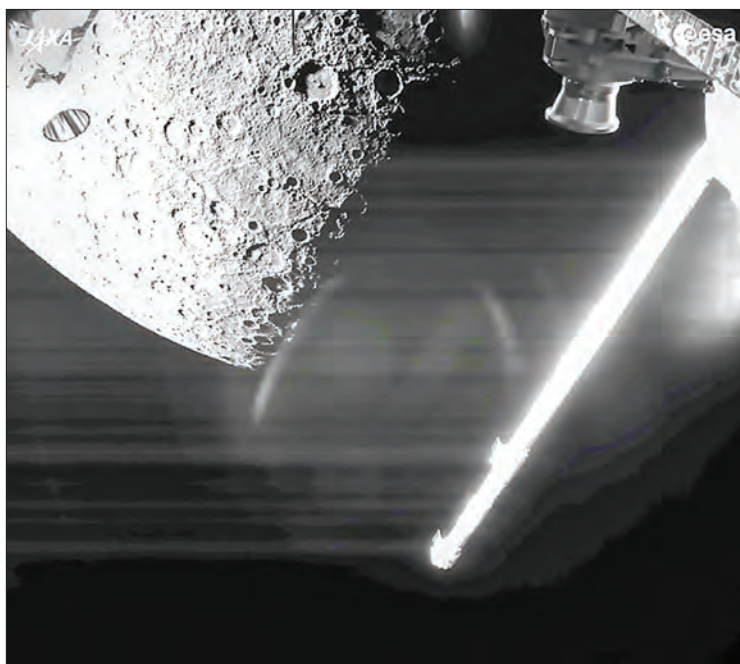
AT least 2.4 million people in Kenya risk going hungry by November as drought ravages the north and east of the country, a nearly threefold increase from last year, the World Food Programme warned Friday.

The East African country has been hit by an accumulation of calamities in recent years, including a months-long locust invasion from December 2019 and poor rainfall in 2020 and 2021, which has left the arid northern and eastern regions facing an emergency.

President Uhuru Kenyatta declared the drought a natural disaster last month, with 2.1 million people already grappling with hunger, according to the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA). The WFP's alarming projection is nearly three times the figure recorded last year between October and December, when 852,000 people were facing severe food insecurity, the UN agency said.

"This drought comes right on the back of Covid-19 which has had a tremendous economic impact on livelihoods. It comes on the back of locusts and, in some areas, floods," WFP representative and country director Lauren Landis told AFP. — AFP ■

Europe-Japan space mission captures images of Mercury



A view of Mercury captured on Friday by the joint European-Japanese BepiColombo spacecraft. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE European-Japanese BepiColombo spacecraft has sent back its first images of Mercury,

the nearest planet to the Sun, the European Space Agency said Saturday.

The images were obtained almost three years after the unmanned mission vessel was launched aboard an Ariane 5 Rocket.

The cameras attached the BepiColombo provided black-and-white images, the ESA said in a statement.

But as the spacecraft arrived on the night side of the planet, conditions were "not ideal" for taking images at its closest approach to the planet, an altitude of 199 kilometres (124 miles), so the closest was from about 1,000 km. The region shown is part of Mercury's northern hemisphere, including large craters and an area flooded by lava billions of years ago.

"The flyby was flawless from the spacecraft point of view, and it's incredible to finally see our target planet," said Elsa Mon-

tagnon, Spacecraft Operations Manager for the mission.

The BepiColombo mission will study all aspects of this mysterious inner planet from its core to surface processes, magnetic field and exosphere, "to better understand the origin and evolution of a planet close to its parent star", said the agency.

Mercury is also the only rocky planet orbiting the Sun beside our own to have a magnetic field.

Magnetic fields are generated by a liquid core but given its size, Mercury's should have grown cold and solid by now, as Mars did. This anomaly might be due to some feature of the core's composition, something BepiColombo's instruments will measure with much greater precision than has been possible so far. — AFP ■

In Venezuela, a village on stilts slowly succumbs to mud

CONGO Mirador was once an idyllic spot: a community of homes on stilts that seemed to float on the calm waters of a lagoon in western Venezuela. Now, the community is inundated with mud, a victim of silt generated by the Catatumbo river.

Most of its residents have left, and Congo Mirador is slowly fading away.

The river's source is in Colombia, and it flows into Venezuela's Lake Maracaibo, one of the biggest lakes in South America.

The Catatumbo's path has been diverted numerous times over the years, slowly sending muddy sediment, plant life, tree branches and other debris into the village -- to the point where it has been overwhelmed by the



The stilt homes in the Venezuelan village of Congo Mirador are now effectively in a swamp with snakes, toads and parasites that are irrevocably changing the ecosystem. **PHOTO: AFP**

mess.

Where once there were fish, now there are weeds.

"There was a magnificent lake, and now it's become a jungle," laments Euclides Villasmil,

one of the few residents of Congo Mirador who has remained there. — AFP ■

Fire brought under control after ravaging Honduran resort island



Guanaja island is seen after a fire was contained, on 2 October 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

AUTHORITIES managed to bring a major fire on a tiny

Honduran resort island under control Saturday, after the blaze

consumed dozens of homes and forced 400 people to evacuate.

"The fire is 100 percent controlled," said the head of the government's Permanent Intervention Commission (COPECO), Max Gonzales, at a mid-afternoon press conference.

A huge cloud of black smoke rose in the early morning from the island of Guanaja, located in the Caribbean off the north coast of mainland Honduras. Its 6,000 inhabitants live mainly from tourism.

Military helicopters dropped bags of water on what the island's deputy mayor Mireya Guillen described as "uncon-

trollable" flames.

Aided by police, people raced to save beds, furniture and other belongings as the blaze approached, video on social media showed.

Videos shared by local media showed the extent of the devastation, with "90 houses destroyed, 120 damaged... 2,500 people directly affected, three injured and three others to be confirmed," Gonzales said.

The blaze also forced the evacuation of some 400 people, firefighters and other authorities added. Emergency accommodations were set up in a church and a school. — AFP ■

Brazil top court upholds vaccine pass for tourist hotspot Rio

BRAZIL'S Supreme Court has upheld a requirement that all who access Rio de Janeiro's tourist spots starting Friday must have a Covid-19 vaccine certificate.

The mandate also applies for access to other public spaces such as cinemas, theaters, gyms, museums, sports stadiums and conference venues – but not restaurants, bars or shopping malls. Foreign visitors are allowed to present an international health pass.

A judge in a lower court had scrapped the measure, calling it tantamount to “health dictatorship.”

But federal supreme court justice Luiz Fux reversed that



Visitors show vaccination cards after they were inoculated against Covid-19 with the governor and mayor of Rio, at the Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro, on 18 January 2021. PHOTO: AFP

decision on Thursday night, arguing that the efforts to combat the pandemic, such as the health pass, are the responsibility of the

mayor's office. “This is a tourist city that

wants to celebrate New Year's, carnival and summer with its hotels full,” said Rio Mayor Eduardo Paes, welcoming the court ruling. “By the second half of November, almost 100 percent of (Rio residents) will have taken the second dose.... With the passport we want to tell the responsible tourist who was vaccinated: ‘Come without worry.’” And to those who are unvaccinated, Paes offered a blunt message: “Please don't come, you will not be welcome in Rio de Janeiro.” The city of 6.8 million people famous for its beautiful beaches and breathtaking views has seen a surge of coronavirus infections recently because of the Delta variant. — AFP ■

US sends more than 8 mln Covid vaccines to Bangladesh, Philippines



A health worker administers a dose of the BioNtech Pfizer Covid-19 vaccine in a Manila suburb. PHOTO: AFP

THE United States announced Friday it is sending more than eight million Covid-19 vaccine doses to Bangladesh and the

Philippines in the latest wave of aid to a world still struggling to tame the pandemic.

Five shipments totalling 5,575,050 doses will go to the Philippines by next week, a White House official told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Another 2,508,480 doses will arrive early next week in Bangladesh, the official said. The vaccines -- all Pfizer-BioNTech -- are being donated through the World Health Organization's Covax program. The “administration understands that putting an end to this pandemic requires eliminating it around the world,”

the official said, noting that US donations represent “the largest-ever purchase and donation of vaccines by a single country.” Hard-hit Bangladesh has already received millions of US vaccine doses, including another 2.5 million sent just last week.

According to AFP's database, only about 10 percent of Bangladesh's population has been fully vaccinated.

The impoverished country of about 170 million people, which neighbors India, has imposed some of the world's longest lockdowns in an attempt to stop the spread of Covid-19.

The Philippines has recorded more than 2.5 million infections, including over 38,000 deaths. Just over a quarter of the adult population has been fully vaccinated amid a delayed and slow vaccination rollout.

Officials warn the economy could take more than a decade to recover from the pandemic impact, which has thrown millions out of work. Nearly 70 percent of the economy, including 23.3 million workers, remained under “heightened quarantine” restrictions, Economic Planning Secretary Karl Kendrick Chua said Thursday. — AFP ■

California becomes first US state with COVID-19 vaccine mandate for schools

CALIFORNIA became the first state in the United States to announce plans to require student vaccination for COVID-19 by adding the vaccine to the list of vaccinations required for school, such as the vaccines for measles, mumps, and rubella.

According to an order approved by Governor Gavin Newsom on Friday, students in the Golden State would be required to be vaccinated for in-person learning after those vaccines against COVID-19 get full approval from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for students.

Newsom's latest order, the first of its kind nationwide, will roll out in two phases, with the first taking effect for students aged 12 and over following full approval by the FDA for that



A student receives a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at the Woodrow Wilson Senior High School in Los Angeles, California, the United States, on 30 August 2021. PHOTO: XINHUA

entire age group.

The FDA approved the vaccine for children aged 16 and over in August.

Newsom said California would apply the mandate for students aged 12 and up as early as Jan. 1 next year but

possibly as late as July 1 depending on when the FDA authorization takes place, and then would apply the mandate for students under 12 years of age in a second phase after the FDA gives the green light. — Xinhua ■

NEWS
IN BRIEF

Autumn session of Mongolian parliament opens amid resurgence of COVID-19

THE autumn session of Mongolia's State Great Khural, the country's parliament, opened here on Friday amid a resurgence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The COVID-19 situation is now dire in our country. Therefore, overcoming the difficult times of the pandemic and tackling the challenges will be a priority for the session,” Gombojav Zandanshatar, speaker of the parliament said at the opening ceremony of the session.

In addition, the autumn session will outline new policies of Mongolia's economic recovery, Zandanshatar said.

Strengthening governance capacity and building good governance are also two important goals of the session, he added. — Xinhua ■

UK: University jab scheme off to a slow start

A London university has set up a clinic for students to get vaccinated ahead of the new term. But attendance is low as many are reluctant to get jabbed.

Takeup of vaccines has been disproportionately low among young British people and the capital lags behind the UK as a whole.

The University of East London has set up a mini-clinic to vaccinate students, but when AFP visited, it was largely empty, with many skipping appointments. — AFP ■

Persistent price hikes pile pressure on ECB

PRICES in the euro area continue to rise at a fast clip, stoking heightened concerns among economists about inflationary pressures despite reassurances from the European Central Bank (ECB).

Eurozone inflation accelerated to 3.4 percent year-on-year in September, reaching a 13-year high, according to a flash estimate published on Friday by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. The data were released on the heels of a closely-watched two-day forum held at the ECB and attended by some major central bank chiefs.

Both ECB president Christine Lagarde and Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell renewed their belief at the event that the surging inflation seen across major advanced economies was temporary.



In Germany, the euro area's largest economy, the inflation rate climbed to 2.3 percent in June, overshooting the medium-term target of 2 percent stipulated in the mandate of the ECB. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

NO SIGNS OF ABATING

In Germany, the euro area's largest economy, the inflation

rate climbed to 2.3 percent in June, overshooting the medium-term target of 2 percent

stipulated in the mandate of the ECB. Inflation has been on the rise ever since and shot up to

4.1 percent in September, a level not seen since December 1993.

The hikes in the Germany have added to worries that the worst has yet to come.

Joerg Kraemer, chief economist of Commerzbank in Germany, believes the hike streak will continue because companies have not passed on the elevated costs to consumers.

Elevated inflation rates have been a shared concern among some euro area countries. Spain registered an increase of 4 percent, hitting a 13-year high, while France saw a 2.7 percent increase, a 10-year high.

Kraemer's prediction echoed that of Lagarde. The ECB chief said in a speech on Tuesday that the bank expected inflation throughout the euro area to climb further. — Xinhua ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

India, UAE review progress towards Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

INDIA and the UAE on 2 October reviewed progress towards a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement between the two countries. Both sides appreciated the efforts made to expedite discussions towards a well-balanced agreement that will considerably deepen bilateral economic ties and benefit the economies of both countries, said Piyush Goyal, Commerce & Industry Minister. "I'm overwhelmed by excitement in UAE around investing in India. In a sense, they asked us to present many more opportunities around roads, railways and infrastructure projects. They've offered cooperation to bring down cost of logistics in India," he added. — ANI ■

Three workers died building Dubai Expo, officials say

THREE workers died and more than 70 suffered serious injuries building Dubai's Expo 2020 site, officials said on Saturday, insisting safety standards were "world-class".

The figures were revealed after the European parliament called for a boycott of the six-month world fair, criticising the United Arab Emirates' human rights record and "inhumane" practises towards immigrant labourers.

More than 200,000 workers constructed the huge site on the outskirts of Dubai, which features hundreds of pavilions and other facilities on a showground twice the size of Monaco.

The UAE and fellow Gulf nation Qatar, host of next year's World Cup, are frequently in the crosshairs of activist groups over their treatment of labourers, often from South Asia, who build their ambitious developments.

"Unfortunately, there have been three work-related fatalities, 72 serious injuries to date," an Expo statement said, calling the welfare of labourers its "top priority".

It said 247 million work hours had been completed at the site, adding that the frequency of accidents was lower than Britain's.

"We have established world-class policies, standards and processes that protect and support the health, safety, and wellbeing of everyone involved in Expo 2020 Dubai," the statement said. — AFP ■

China's "Silicon Valley" posts robust revenue growth

MAJOR high-tech enterprises in Beijing's Zhongguancun, dubbed "Silicon Valley" in China, recorded a 27.8 percent year-on-year growth in total revenue in the first eight months this year, statistics showed.

The revenue of these large enterprises totaled 5.2 trillion yuan (about 807 billion U.S. dollars) in the January-August period, according to the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Statistics.

Companies in the field of electronics and information, bio-engineering and new medical technologies maintained high growth, it said. The number of research and development (R&D) staff in these major firms in Zhongguancun reached 751,000



Photo taken on 30 September 2018 shows Zhongguancun InnoWay, an entrepreneurship-oriented street in Haidian District of Beijing, capital of China. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

during the same period, up 8.9 percent year on year. Established in 1988 in northwestern Beijing, Zhongguancun, with

clusters of universities and research institutes, is the first national high-tech industrial development zone. — Xinhua ■

In Siberia, a copper mine hopes to become a global energy pivot



The company had to bring in 4,000 construction workers. **PHOTO: AFP**

IN 1949, a Soviet expedition in Siberia was looking for uranium to supply the national nuclear arsenal when it stumbled on a vast deposit of copper.

More than 70 years later, a mining complex in Russia's Far East between Lake Baikal and the Pacific Ocean is finally due to launch operations next year.

With copper key to the world's energy transition away from carbon, the hope is it will be a boon for Russia and beyond.

"The long-awaited project is a long-awaited event in the life of the Far East and the entire mining industry of Russia and the world," said Valery Kazikayev, chairman of Udokan Copper, the company developing the site.

Kazikayev, who makes the nine-hour journey by plane from Moscow to the mine twice a month, brought AFP journalists on a tour late September. At an altitude of 2,000 metres (6,500 feet), the heavy snow covering the mine offers a glimpse at the difficulty of rendering it operable. — AFP ■

Nigeria looks to revive ailing palm oil sector

STANDING beside the piles of dark red palm fruits ready for crushing for their essence, Nigerian farmer Micah Ojo hopes to cash in on the government's drive to revive the country's once thriving palm oil business.

His farm is one of the small plantations scattered across southern Nigeria where the government is investing heavily in the industry as part of its drive to diversify away from petroleum and help create jobs.

Once a major producer, Nigeria now imports from Indonesia and Malaysia, further straining foreign exchange reserves already battered by a fall in global crude oil prices and the pandemic.

But the story appears to be changing as Nigeria's government, through the central bank (CBN), is pumping billions of naira in loans to assist farmers and investors in the industry. Several states, including southern Edo and Akwa Ibom, where roads are lined by hectares of dark green palm trees and moribund factories, are injecting new life into the sector. "We need assistance. The business is capital-intensive," Ojo said at his farm in Edo. "We need government to come to our aid to assist us." — AFP ■

China to roll out new railway operating plan in October

CHINA will implement a new railway operating plan starting 11 October 2021, to further improve the country's railway passenger and freight transport efficiency, according to the national railway operator.

The freight train service between China and Europe will be improved and a daily average of 78 freight trains will connect 174 cities in 23 European countries, five more than the current plan, the China State Railway Group Co, Ltd. said. More than 21,000 freight trains will run on China's railways every day, the company said.

Several new rail lines will be put into operation at the end of the year with some cities ushering in their first railways, the company said. — Xinhua ■

China will implement a new railway operating plan starting 11 October 2021, to further improve the country's railway passenger and freight transport efficiency. PHOTO: XINHUA



New York's street vendors still waiting for pandemic recovery



An estimated 20,000 vendors are on the streets of the Big Apple, and many of them are immigrants who have no other way of earning money. PHOTO: AFP

AFTER his small Manhattan food stand lost its customers during the coronavirus pandemic, Abdul Rahman — an Af-

ghan vendor who arrived in New York in 1992 — has resumed service, albeit at a fraction of former business since offices are still

far from full.

Rahman and the thousands of street vendors like him, emblematic of New York's sidewalks,

were hoping things would finally go back to normal in September.

But that's far from the case: "The business is like, 20, 30 percent (less) than before the pandemic," Rahman, 44, told AFP, standing in front of a display case of doughnuts and other pastries. On the counter is a jug of coffee, which he says he has trouble emptying.

With a wave of his arm, he points to where customers used to form long lines in front of his mobile stand.

Like yellow taxis, the metal food carts — stocked with coffee, muffins, bananas and hard boiled eggs — are part of New York's cityscape.

An estimated 20,000 vendors are on the streets of the Big Apple, and many of them are immigrants who have no other way of

earning money.

A city hall permit is clearly visible on Rahman's cart, as is a photo of his three children, all born in the United States.

It has been 20 years since Rahman arrived in New York to escape the war back home in Afghanistan.

He set up shop on the sidewalk of Whitehall Street, in the south of Manhattan. It is a good location, at the foot of office buildings, near a subway exit and not far from the docks where ferries full of tourists leave and return for the Statue of Liberty, as well as boats transporting workers from Staten Island.

Better than nothing

Some customers are loyal, such as Mike Reyes, a maintenance worker, who says he comes every morning. — AFP ■

US private equity firm wins auction for UK's Morrisons

A US private equity firm has won an auction for British supermarket group Morrisons, the Takeover Panel which oversees merger and acquisition deals said on Saturday.

The panel said Clayton, Dubilier & Rice bid 287 pence per share, beating private equity giant Fortress, which bid 286 pence, the panel announced in a short statement. The winning bid values the company at about £7.1 billion (nearly \$9.5 billion, 8.2 bil-

lion euros), Morrisons said.

Shareholders will have the final say on whether to accept the offer on October 19.

Morrisons, based in Bradford, northern England, began business as an egg and butter merchant in 1899, expanding to become Britain's fourth-biggest supermarket by market share, after Tesco, Sainsbury's and Asda. The company, which employs more than 110,000 staff at nearly 500 stores across Britain,



Morrisons chairman Andrew Higginson said the board had approved the offer, which would now go to shareholders for the final say. PHOTO: AFP

has been at the centre of a bidding war for several months. The auction was held because neither

Clayton, Dubilier & Rice or Softbank-owned Fortress lodged a final offer on their earlier bids. — AFP ■

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NEWS
IN BRIEFGeorgia holds vote
after ex-president
Saakashvili's arrest

GEORGIANS were voting Saturday in closely watched municipal elections, a day after ex-president Mikheil Saakashvili's arrest on his return from exile deepened a protracted political crisis in the Caucasus nation.

The detention of Georgia's foremost opposition figure raised the stakes in the elections seen as a key test for the increasingly unpopular ruling party.

Saakashvili founded Georgia's main opposition party, the United National Movement (UNM), and was president between 2003-2013.

The 53-year-old said Friday he had returned from Ukraine, where he heads a Ukrainian government agency steering reforms.

The flamboyant pro-Western reformer was detained shortly afterwards over a 2018 conviction in absentia on abuse of office charges. He denies wrongdoing and had denounced his sentence of six years in jail as politically motivated. — AFP ■

Afghan interpreters
who worked for the
Dutch summoned
by Taliban: TV

AFGHAN interpreters who worked for the Netherlands have been summoned to appear in court by the Taliban who have threatened their families, Dutch public television NOS reported on Friday.

The interpreters are in hiding but their family members will be held responsible if they fail to show up in court "and severely punished to teach other traitors a lesson," said a letter from the Taliban, which was aired by the broadcaster.

NOS said the recipient, who worked for the EU's policing agency Europol in Afghanistan, was accused of taking "dishonourable and forbidden money" from foreigners.

"We will take revenge. If we are not able to get hold of you, we will settle scores with your near ones," said another letter to an interpreter whom the Taliban accused of being responsible for the deaths of some of their fighters. — AFP ■

Duterte rival Philippines VP to decide soon on presidential bid



Leni Robredo is yet to decide on accepting an opposition coalition's nomination to run for president in the Philippine elections. **PHOTO: AFP**

PHILIPPINE Vice President Leni Robredo will decide this week if she will run for president, her spokesman said Sunday, after her arch-rival and incumbent Rodrigo Duterte declared he was retiring from politics.

Robredo, a vocal critic of Duterte's controversial drug war, would likely be the only opposition candidate in a crowded field in the May 2022 elections.

Her spokesperson Barry Gutierrez told AFP she has not

yet accepted the opposition coalition's nomination, and will announce her decision before the filing deadline on October 8.

Duterte, who is constitutionally barred from seeking a second term, had declared in August he would run for the vice presidency.

But in a surprise announcement Saturday, he said he would retire — which was met with deep scepticism among analysts.

Duterte made a similar announcement in September 2015, saying he "will retire from public life for good" only to declare his presidential bid two months later.

Duterte has not named a successor, but indicated his daughter Sara will run alongside his longtime aide Senator Christopher Go.

A broadcaster asked him

Saturday if it was "clear it will be Sara-Go". Duterte responded: "It's Sara-Go."

Surveys have shown Sara Duterte, the son and namesake of former dictator Ferdinand Marcos, boxing great Manny Pacquiao and celebrity mayor Francisco Domagoso are the frontrunners among potential presidential candidates.

Pacquiao and Domagoso have announced they are running, while the other two have yet to confirm.

Sara Duterte has not responded to AFP's request for confirmation. Most of the top candidates have supported Duterte's controversial drug war, and political analysts say VP Robredo could struggle to compete if she decides to run. — AFP ■

Aristocrats flock to Russia for first royal wedding in century

RUSSIA on Friday held its first royal wedding since the 1917 Bolshevik revolution toppled the Romanov monarchy, with aristocrats travelling from across Europe for the lavish ceremony.

Grand Duke George Mikhailovich Romanov, 40, and his Italian fiancée Rebecca Virginia Bettarini, 39, were wed at Saint Isaac's cathedral in the former imperial capital Saint Petersburg.

Hundreds of foreign guests travelled to Russia's second city for the Orthodox Christian ceremony, including royals from 20 countries such as the last king of Bulgaria, Simeon II, the last king of Egypt and the Sudan, Fuad II, and Princess Lea of Belgium.

The guest list of around

1,500 people included other prominent names like Konstantin Malofeyev, a monarchist and billionaire close to the Kremlin, and Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova.

Bettarini converted to the Orthodox faith last year.

Young bridesmaids dressed in orange carried the bride's train that featured the coat of arms of the Russian Empire, embroidered in gold.

Bettarini also wore a diamond-encrusted tiara made by high-end jewellers Chaumet.

Surrounded by priests in golden robes, Romanov and Bettarini beamed as Metropolitan Varsofony of Saint-Petersburg and Ladoga performed the blessing.



After 100 years, the royal marriage of a descendant of the Russian royal family took place. **PHOTO: AFP**

Metropolitan Varsofony praised the couple for their desire to serve Russia.

"We are happy that you love Russia, and take part in charity projects," he said.

The ceremony included

the exchange of wedding rings made by Faberge. The House of Faberge said it was the first time it had created wedding rings for members of the Romanov family "since before the Russian revolution". — AFP ■

China expects over 63 million passenger trips on National Day

OVER 63 million passenger trips will be made by rail, road, water and air in China on Friday, the

first day of the week-long National Day holiday, the Ministry of Transport has said.

Of the total, 46.5 million trips are expected to be made by road, up 27.2 percent from Thursday,

the ministry said. About 15 million railway trips are expected on Friday, according to the ministry. China State Railway Group Co., Ltd., the country's railway operator, estimated approximately 15.8 million trips, noting that 1,346 additional passenger trains have been arranged to meet the surging demand. Some 127 million rail passenger trips will be made during the holiday rush that lasts from Sept. 28 to Oct. 8, with Oct. 1 to see the highest passenger volume, the operator said earlier.

Airlines are also predicted to see 1.52 million passenger trips on Friday, according to the ministry. Some 680,000 trips are expected on waterways, up 38.2 percent from Thursday. — Xinhua ■



Passengers walk to board a high-speed train in Wuhan Railway Station in Wuhan, capital of central China's Hubei Province, 5 May 2021. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Japan’s Kishida to take office as prime minister, form Cabinet Monday

FUMIO Kishida, the new leader of Japan’s ruling Liberal Democratic Party, will take office as prime minister on Monday and form his Cabinet, tasked with keeping COVID-19 under control while reviving a battered economy.

The former foreign minister will also be looking to bolster cooperation with the United States to counter China’s rising assertiveness and military buildup and address the recent resumption of ballistic missile tests by North Korea.

Kishida, 64, is all but guaranteed to be elected as prime minister when an extraordinary parliamentary session convenes Monday since the LDP-led ruling coalition controls both chambers.

The new premier’s first major test will be a general election in November in which he will need to defy his image as a moderate consensus builder who struggles to excite voters.

Signaling a break from the “neoliberal policies” the government has pursued over the past two decades, Kishida has promised to increase middle-class incomes and reduce wealth disparity.

An economic package worth “tens of trillions of yen” is in the works to help people and businesses hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, he has said.

Kishida’s rise to prime minister comes after his predecessor Yoshihide Suga last month announced his resignation after



Fumio Kishida sits on the chair reserved for the Liberal Democratic Party president at the Japanese ruling party’s headquarters in Tokyo on 29 September 2021. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

just a year in office amid criticism over his COVID-19 response.

With around 60 percent of Japan’s population fully vaccinated and infections in decline, Kishida will be responsible for steering the gradual lifting of restrictions on social and business activity and opening the border to foreign travelers. — Kyodo News ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

UN peacekeeper killed in north Mali IED attack

AN Egyptian peacekeeper was killed and four colleagues were seriously injured in improvised explosive attacks on their convoy in Mali’s volatile north on Saturday, the United Nations said.

Confirming the toll, a spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General said Antonio Guterres strongly condemned the attacks, which happened near Tessalit, close to the Algerian border. Guterres said attacks could constitute war crimes, and called on Malian authorities “to spare no effort” in finding those responsible.

“This incident is a sad reminder of the permanent danger hanging over our peacekeepers and of the sacrifices made for peace in Mali,” El-Ghassim Wane, who heads the UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA), said in an earlier statement. Already battling a jihadist insurgency, Mali slid into political turmoil when a military coup in August 2020 installed an interim civilian government only for it to be overthrown in a second putsch less than a year later. — AFP ■

Protesters in Brazil demand Bolsonaro’s impeachment



Hundreds of demonstrators take part in a protest against Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro, in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on 2 October 2021. PHOTO: AFP

TENS of thousands of Brazilians took to the streets around the country Saturday, once again calling for the ouster of unpopular President Jair Bolsonaro over his handling of the coronavirus pandemic, among other issues.

Large crowds gathered in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Brasilia and dozens of other towns and cities as part of the “Bolsonaro Out National Campaign,” which is backed by a dozen left-wing political parties and labor groups.

Among other issues, the

right-wing president has come under stinging criticism for his handling of the pandemic, which has claimed nearly 600,000 lives here.

Hundreds of people marched through the central Rio de Janeiro neighborhood of Candelaria, shouting “Bolsonaro out!” which was also emblazoned on several large banners.

“We’re going to get him out. The hope of the people here in the streets is to put pressure on legislators so that they call for impeachment,” 69-year-old retired professor Elizabeth Simoes told AFP. More than 100 requests for the impeachment of Bolsonaro have been filed with the Chamber of Deputies, but its leader Arthur Lira, a government ally, has refused to take any of them up. — AFP ■

US charges Canadian who narrated ISIS videos

A Canadian jihadist who fought for the ISIS group and narrated violent propaganda videos has been taken into custody by the United States and charged, the Justice Department said Saturday.

Mohammed Khalifa, 38 and born in Saudi Arabia, was captured during a firefight in January 2019 by Kurdish-dominated Syrian forces allied with the United States. He was handed over “recently” to US authorities and charged in Virginia with conspiring to provide material support to ISIS resulting in death, says a Justice Department statement.

Khalifa left Canada in 2013 to join the ISIS group in Syria, and by the next year had become a key member of its propaganda team because of his fluent English and Arabic, according to the statement. He allegedly served as a lead translator in ISIS propaganda production and as the English-speaking narrator on two violent recruitment videos. — AFP ■

Iraqis to elect new parliament amid deep crisis, apathy

WAR-SCARRED Iraq holds parliamentary elections on October 10, a year early to appease an anti-government protest movement, in a nation that remains mired in corruption and economic crisis.

The country is emerging from almost two decades of conflict and insurgency since the 2003 US-led invasion toppled dictator Saddam Hussein, promising to bring freedom and democracy.

Although security has improved in recent years, elections threaten new volatility in a nation still terrorised by militant attacks and where major political factions are heavily armed.

It is feared turnout will again be low among the 25 million eligible voters, many of whom are deeply disillusioned and view the entire political class as inept and corrupt.

Despite being a major oil producer, Iraq is close to being “economically and ideologically bankrupt,” said Renad Mansour of the London-based Chatham House.

The political system is “unable to ... provide sufficient jobs or services,” he added.

According to UN figures, nearly a third of Iraq’s almost 40 million people live in poverty, and the pandemic and last year’s



Iraqis will vote on October 10 in parliamentary elections that have been brought forward by authorities to calm an anti-government protest movement. PHOTO: AFP

fall in oil prices only deepened a long-running crisis.

“The country is still mired in corruption which affects all institutions,” said Iraqi analyst Ihsan al-Shammari. — AFP ■

Myanmar Futsal Team ranked fifth in ASEAN region

THE Myanmar National Futsal Team is currently ranking fifth in the ASEAN, according to the World Futsal Ranking released in September. The Team Myanmar dropped sixth place from the World Ranking of 84th. After FIFA Futsal World Cup 2021, Thailand team is still leading the ASEAN Futsal Ranking, and Vietnam has made rapid progress. Thailand Futsal Team is now World FIFA Ranking of 18th

with total points 1,315. Next Viet Nam Team is following Thailand with World FIFA Ranking of 39th with total points 1,105. Team Indonesia is in the third place in the ASEAN with World FIFA Ranking of 48th and total points of 1,000. Next, Malaysia Futsal Team has garnered the fourth place with World FIFA Ranking of 67th and total points of 881 garnered. Myanmar National Futsal

Team is placing in the fifth place in ASEAN with World FIFA Ranking of 90th with total points of 793. Cambodian Team is following the team Myanmar with World FIFA Ranking of 109th and total points of 588 garnered and Timor-Leste Futsal Team is sitting in the seventh place in ASEAN region with World FIFA Ranking of 110th and total points 581 garnered.—GNLM

Chelsea boss Tuchel urges Werner to keep improving

THOMAS Tuchel warned Timo Werner he must keep improving after the Chelsea striker's first Premier League goal since April helped seal a 3-1 win against 10-man Southampton on Saturday. Werner saved Chelsea from a frustrating end to a difficult week when he netted six minutes from full-time at Stamford Bridge. Tuchel's side had been pegged back to 1-1 after James Ward-Prowse's second-half penalty cancelled out Trevoh Chalobah's early opener. Ward-Prowse was sent off with 14 minutes left for a nasty lunge on Jorginho and Chelsea laid siege to the Southampton goal before Werner slotted home from Cesar Azpilicueta's cross. Ben Chilwell's last-minute goal wrapped up the points as Chelsea moved top of the Premier League, two points ahead of second-placed



Chelsea's German striker Timo Werner (R). PHOTO: AFP

Liverpool, who host Manchester City on Sunday. "We are all relieved, him and me and the whole club. Every time he scores we have the feeling there is a VAR decision to take it away from him, there have been a lot of very narrow decisions," Tuchel said. It was a much-needed victo-

ry for Chelsea after successive defeats against City and Juventus. After a troubled first season at Chelsea, it was a rare upbeat moment for Werner, whose relief was clear as he celebrated wildly after scoring and then smiled and joked with fans while conducting pitchside interviews. — AFP ■

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs
- (a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.
- (b) To emphasize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
- (c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy.
2. Economic affairs
- (a) To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern techniques and strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.
- (b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
- (c) To promote and support local businesses to create employment opportunities and increase domestic production.
3. Social affairs
- (a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
- (b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National peoples and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national characteristics.
- (c) To enhance the health, fitness and education quality of the entire nation.



South Korea's Ko Jin-young shares the lead with compatriot Park In-bee heading into the final round of the LPGA ShopRite Classic. PHOTO: AFP

South Korea's Park, Ko share LPGA ShopRite lead

KO JIN-YOUNG and Park In-bee set the stage for a South Korean shootout, firing second-round 65s to share a two-stroke lead heading into Sunday's final round of the LPGA ShopRite Classic. World number two Ko made five of her six birdies in the space of six holes in her six-under effort at Seaview Bay in Galloway, New Jersey. Park had seven birdies, bouncing back from a bogey at her penultimate hole, the eighth, with a birdie at the par-five ninth to grab her share of first place on 11-under par 131.

They were two strokes in front of Thailand's Patty Tavatanakit, who had six birdies in her six-under 65 for 133. A victory in the 54-hole tournament would make Ko the LPGA's second three-time winner of the season after triumphs at Dallas in July and Portland two weeks ago. "I had a lot of good opportunities for birdies," said Ko, who hit 15 of 18 greens in regulation and needed 27 putts. "I made a lot of really good putts, so I didn't make a bogey today. That makes me very happy and I can't wait to

play for tomorrow." She birdied three in a row starting at the par-five third, then added two more birdies at the seventh and eighth before picking up one more shot with a birdie at the par-four 16th. "My game was perfect on the front nine, but I was thinking, OK, I want to get more birdies on back nine," Ko said. "But I little nervous when I was thinking about that, but I had pretty good round today. Putting was good—putting, swinging, everything was good." — AFP ■