

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.

Over 6,000 pilgrims flock to ancient Bagan pagodas during Tazaungdine holidays

PILGRIMS from all over the country came in flocks to celebrate the Tazaungdine holidays in the Bagan-NyaungU Archeological Zone yesterday, according to U Than Myint Oo, Head of office of the Shwezigon Pagoda Board of Trustees.

Shwezigon Pagoda is one of the major pagodas where pilgrims usually pay visits in Bagan. The pagoda has extended visiting hours from 5 am to 8 pm during the holiday period although it is open from 6 am to 6 pm on regular days, he further explained. Nineteen pagodas have their boards of trustees in Bagan, and visitors were allowed to visit following COVID-19 preventive guidelines.

Bagan Archeological Zone is a historical site in Myanmar with over 4,000 pagodas and temples built between the 11th and 13th centuries. As of yesterday, the most famous pagodas such as Shwezigon, Ananda Temple, Thabgyinnyu and Dammayangyi pagodas, renowned as four major pagodas to visit in Bagan, were crowded with pilgrims. Moreover, visitors also paid visits to other historical pagodas, including Manuha, Lawkananda, Tooth relic Pagoda, Sulamuni, Soem-



Visitors are seen at the Shwezigon Pagoda in Bagan.

ingyi Okkyang and Minnanthu pagoda. In addition to the pilgrimage, they have become more interested in ancient mural paintings and artistic decorations of the pagodas. More than 6,000 pilgrims reportedly visited the Bagan-NyaungU Archeological Site on the Tazaungdine holidays. — Ko Htein(KPD)/GNLM

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Electric lights shine on Zalun Pyitawpyan Pagoda during Tazaungmon



Zalun Pyitawpyan Pagoda.

THE Zalun Pyitawpyan Pagoda in Zalun Township of Hinthada District of Ayeyawady Region was decorated with the colourful oil lamps and electric lights yesterday evening. The lighting festival is organized from 14th Waxing to 1st Waning of Tazaungmon. — Wai Yan (Zalun IPRD)/GNLM

Visitors throng Shinpin Chanthagyi Pagoda on 14th Waxing of Tazaungmon



Shinpin Chanthagyi Pagoda in Ayeyawady Region.

PILGRIMS visited Shinpin Chanthagyi Pagoda, situated on Chaung Wa Paing (1) Road in Einme Township, Myaungmya District, Ayeyawady Region on the evening of 14th Waxing of Tazaungmon (yesterday). Gold foils and cash trees offering ceremony will be held at the historic Shinpin Chanthagyi Pagoda on 18 November and a merit-sharing ceremony will also be held on 19 November, according to the Pagoda Board of Trustees. — Chit Thet Lei (Einme)/GNLM

Ancient MraukU pagodas packed with visitors in Tazaungmon

THE ancient pagodas in MraukU Township of MraukU District in Rakhine State saw a large number of people during the public holidays of Tazaungmon. Moreover, visitors from different regions and states also visited Yanaungzeya (aka Shitthaung Stupa and Htukkant Thein Stupa to study ancient architecture and 550 Jataka stories, including other fine artworks. Moreover, souvenir shops and photo studios were also crowded with visitors, including students. — Khin Maung Tun (IPRD)/GNLM



Worshippers seen visiting one of the ancient pagodas in MraukU.

Kyaikne mid-water pagoda in Thanbyuzayat expects visitors

THE festival of Kyaikne mid-water pagoda, located in the sea about two miles from the beach in Ankhe and Wekal-aung villages of Thanbyuzayat Township of Mon State, is held on 3rd Waning of Tazaungmon yearly. Due to the hospitality of local ethnic people and proper transport, the place can lure the visitors every year,” said a resident of Wekalaung Village. During the days of the festival, locals provide the free boat ride to the pagoda starting from 4 am. The visitors walk on that natural stone road when they return. Moreover, the township red cross society members and village social welfare organization members offer refreshment and distribute drinking water bottles and other necessary things. —Aye Aye Mon (IPRD)/GNLM



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Political maturity

POLITICAL maturity and unity of stakeholders and the entire people play a crucial role in building the Union based on democracy and federalism. It is necessary to take lessons that Myanmar could not achieve the deserved development due to requirements in political maturity in successive eras. We must try hard to overcome such challenges. We need to build political maturity and unity with wise mental faculty for ensuring the peace of the nation.

(Excerpt from the Message sent by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Chairman of the National Unity and Peacemaking Central Committee Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to mark the Sixth Anniversary of signing the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement-NCA on 15 October 2021)

MoFA Union minister participates in opening session of 13th High-Level Roundtable Meeting co-organized by Government of Lao PDR, UNDP

AT the invitation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin participated in the opening session of the 13th High-Level Roundtable Meeting which was organized by the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through video conferencing on 17 November 2021.

At the opening session, Prime Minister of the Lao People's Democratic Republic



Mr Phankham Viphavanh and UNDP Administrator and Vice-

Chair of the UN Sustainable Development Group Mr Achim

Steiner delivered the keynote speeches respectively.



The 13th High-Level Roundtable Meeting was held to strengthen the partnership between the Government of the Lao PDR and its Development Partners as well as other relevant stakeholders with the aim of achieving effective outcomes on sustainable development.

Also present at the session with the Union Minister were the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Ambassador of Myanmar to the Lao PDR and senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. —MNA

10th AEM-Canada Consultations held; launching of negotiations announced for ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Aung Naing Oo joined the 10th AEM-Canada Consultations which were held via videoconference on 17 November 2021 from the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations in Nay Pyi Taw.

The meeting was co-chaired by Dato Dr Amin Liew Abdullah, Minister at the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Finance and Economy II, Brunei Darussalam, and Ms Mary Ng, Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development, Canada. The meeting was attended by the Economic Ministers and Senior Economic Officials from the ASEAN Member States and Canada, the Secretary-General of ASEAN Secretariat and representatives.

At the meeting, the ministers exchanged views on the economic impacts of the Cov-

id-19 pandemic and the possible cooperation to mitigate these impacts, the progress of work plan to implement the ASEAN-Canada Joint Declaration on Trade and Investment, the capacity building programme which will be provided by Canada and recommendations raised by the Canada-ASEAN Business Council.

During the meeting, Myanmar supported the endorsement of the Reference Paper for a future ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and the announcement of the launching of the ASEAN-Canada FTA's negotiations.

In 2020, total two-way merchandise trade between ASEAN and Canada was valued at USD 19.9 billion and the stock of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from Canada to the ASEAN Member States reached USD 12.5 billion, an increase of 11.7 per cent year-on-year. The



trade and investment ties between ASEAN and Canada will be promoted through the establishment of the ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement. Myanmar, as a member of ASEAN, could enjoy the ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement by receiving Canada investment and promoting bilateral trade.

At the meeting, the Union Minister discussed the importance of reopening borders and resuming international travel safely and quickly for economic recovery from the pandemic, preparation for reopening the Myanmar tourism sector in early 2022 and the launch of negotiations for the ASEAN-Canada

Free Trade Agreement.

The Joint Media Statement of the 10th AEM-Canada Consultations was adopted at the end of the meeting.

The Deputy Minister and senior officials from the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations also attended the meeting. — MNA

Mathoe robe weaving ceremony held at Shwesandaw pagoda in Twantay

THE traditional Mathoe Robe Weaving ceremony was held yesterday at Shwesandaw Pagoda, an ancient pagoda in Twantay, Yangon Region.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic last year, the Mathoe Robe Weaving contest could not be held, however, the Mathoe Robe Weaving ceremony is held on six looms at the pagoda. The ceremony was opened by Chairman of the Township Administration Body U Kyaw Myint and Member (1) Major Zar Ni Maung and Chairman of the Shwesandaw Pagoda Board of Trustees U Min Lwin by cutting the ribbon.

The Chairman of the Township Administration

Body addressed the ceremony, and the Pagoda Board of Trustees Chairman explained the Mathoe Robe Weaving ceremony.

The robes were weaved on six looms and will be offered to the Buddha images before the dawn on the fullmoon day of Tazaungmon, according to Vice-Chairman of the Pagoda Board of Trustees U Aye Ko.

The Mathoe Robe Weaving Contest was held on nine looms in the past years and nine female groups from the villages participated in the contest and offered the robes to the Buddha images at Shwesandaw Pagoda. — Myo Hlaing (Twantay)/GNLM



The “Mathoe” robe weaving ceremony in action at the Shwesandaw Pagoda in Twantay.
PHOTO: MYO HLAING (TWANTAY)



The 95th “Mathoe” robe weaving ceremony in progress in Mudon.

95th robe weaving ceremony of Sandawshin Kangyi Pagoda held in Mudon

THE 95th robe weaving ceremony of historic Sandawshin Kangyi Pagoda was held yesterday morning in Mudon, Mawlamyine District, Mon State.

The ceremony was contributed by Yupar Mon Family led by U Kyaw Kyaw Oo and wife Daw Kyi Kyi Htay.

The well-wishers will also donate four weaving

looms worth K2.5 million for the weaving ceremony, the pagoda board of trustees said.

Robes will be offered to Kangyi Pagoda, Kangalay Pagoda, Thabaung Oo Pagoda, Kyaikkamowlay hilly Pagoda, Sutaung Pyae Pagoda and Binhlaing Pagoda in the township, local people said.

In the past, the robe

weaving competition was celebrated in front of the Sutaung Pyae Pagoda in Mudon on the night of the 14th waxing day of Tazaungmon.

According to the Kangyi Pagoda Board of Trustees, the pagoda will be open daily from 5 am to 8 pm in line with the COVID-19 preventive measures. — Aung Myo Thu (IPRD)/GNLM

Myeik-Yangon highway express bus service to resume with 50-per-cent capacity

AFTER three months of closure, the highway express buses running Myeik-Yangon were allowed to resume with 50 per cent of the total seat capacity in line with health protocols issued by the Ministry of Health, starting from 15 November, said an in-charge of Myeik Township Private Vehicles Supervision Committee.

The regional government has ordered the express bus lines to temporarily halt the operations for the past three months owing to the rapid surge of COVID-19 cases across the country.

The regional government directed the bus lines to resume the service from 15 November.

The seating capacity will reduce up to 50 per cent in compliance with the prevention measures for the COVID-19. The operators from Myeik, Dawei, Mawlamyine and Kawthoung are instructed to strictly follow the health guidelines.

The significant drop in the new COVID-19 cases led to the resumption of

highway services, said U Moe Kyaw Thu, secretary of Myeik Township Private Vehicles Supervision Committee.

Despite the resumption of highway bus lines, the curfew in Taninthayi, Bago and Yangon regions and Mon State has been imposed and transport at night is still prohibited. As a result of this, they are having transport barriers at present, drivers stressed. “The ticket for Myeik-Yangon costs K50,000 and Myeik-Dawei route is charged K30,000.

“There are 35 mini-bus lines and 15 buses operating from Myeik town. The region government gave the go-ahead to highway bus service with 50 per cent of the total seat capacity. The number of passengers is likely to increase when some COVID-19 test (PCR test) is eased. The bus line operators also have requested this to the government,” U Moe Kyaw Thu continued.

The transport hour limit caused delay and additional charges, making the passengers uncomfortable.



There are 35 mini-bus lines and 15 buses operating from Myeik town. The region government gave the go-ahead to highway bus service with 50 per cent of the total seat capacity.
PHOTO: MYINT OO (MYEIK)

“The ticket charges are not officially set. The bus lines are ordered to provide services with 50- per-cent capacity in line with health guidelines for the COVID-19. The terminals give the green light to those vaccinated passengers without PCR tests.

I like to request the authorities to ease the COVID-19 rules for those unvaccinated ones as well. We cannot avoid the delay due to the 8 pm curfew,” said Ko Thein Win, an in-charge of the Moe Kaung Kin bus station. — Myint Oo (Myeik)/GNLM

MoC processes daily imports of anti-COVID-19 equipment as planned

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 airports and seaports with the Standard Operating Procedures

(SOPs). Two companies imported 20 tonnes of liquid oxygen, 440 PPE suits and 14 tonnes of masks using four vehicles via Myawady, Chinshwehaw and Kampaiti trading zones yesterday. One liquid oxygen bowser arrived at Yangon from the Myawady trading zone. Officials from the relevant departments are cooperating

to facilitate and expedite the Standard Operating Procedures, including online registration for the import processes. It is reported that the Ministry of Commerce is coordinating with relevant departments, treatment of COVID-19, as well as contact persons for inquiries can be reached through the Ministry's Website: www.commerce.gov.mm. – MNA



The Covid test is underway in southern Shan State.

Hopong Township provides free screening for COVID-19

WITH the aid of RDT test kits, free screening for COVID-19 virus was provided to local people at MyoU Quarter, MyoU Kwatthit Quarter, and Western Quarter in Hopong Township, southern Shan State yesterday morning to reduce the rate of the pandemic infection as soon as possible, officials said.

To help local people in the township and reduce the incidence of the virus, officials used vehicles to provide screening for COVID-19. Screening for the COVID-19 virus was carried out by Township General Administration and Public Health Departments, and departmental

staff and the Red Cross members and volunteers provided necessary assistance. Screening activities are documented by officials followed by measuring body temperatures, blood pressure, and monitoring oxygen levels. — Hopong (IPRD)/GNLM

People with disabilities in Nawnghkio get COVID-19 jabs

HEALTHCARE officials gave the first dose of COVID-19 vaccines to over 18-year-old people with disabilities at St. Aloysius Orphanage in Nawnghkio Township, Kyaukme District, northern Shan State on 16 November. The vaccines (for the first time) are given to people with disabilities over the age of 18. The current vaccine is Sinopharm, manufactured in the People's Republic of China. The vaccines are given to five people each and 28 people with disabilities were vaccinated, officials said. Vaccination activities are documented by officials followed by measuring body temperatures, blood pressure, and monitoring oxygen levels. Vaccines were given systematically to the people, and

only those with normal health conditions are vaccinated. Resting for about 30 minutes after being vaccinated, people were given healthcare

education and then allowed to leave, according to the township COVID-19 disease prevention and control committee. — Htway Nge (IPRD)/GNLM



People with disabilities get jabbed in Nawnghkio.

Schoolchildren receive COVID vaccines in Kanma Township



HEALTH officials gave the second dose of COVID-19 vaccines to schoolchildren aged 12 and above in Kanma Township, Thayet District, Magway Region yesterday. Six groups of vaccination teams are carrying out inoculation processes at 32 basic education schools, including the Kanma Township Sasana Beik-

man Hall, Basic Education High School (Yenatha), Basic Education High School (Sissayan), Basic Education High School (Kyauksaung), Basic Education High School (Kyoepin) and Basic Education High School (Inbel) and other 15 designated places in Kanma Township, officials said. – Kyaw Zeya Win (Kanma)/GNLM

843 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 17 November, total figure rises to 515,559

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 515,559 after 843 new cases were reported on 17 November 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 487,145 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 18,975 after 12 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 17-11-2021, a total of 15,043,348 people have been vaccinated. Of them, 10,029,670 people have been vaccinated two times and 5,013,678 people once.—MNA

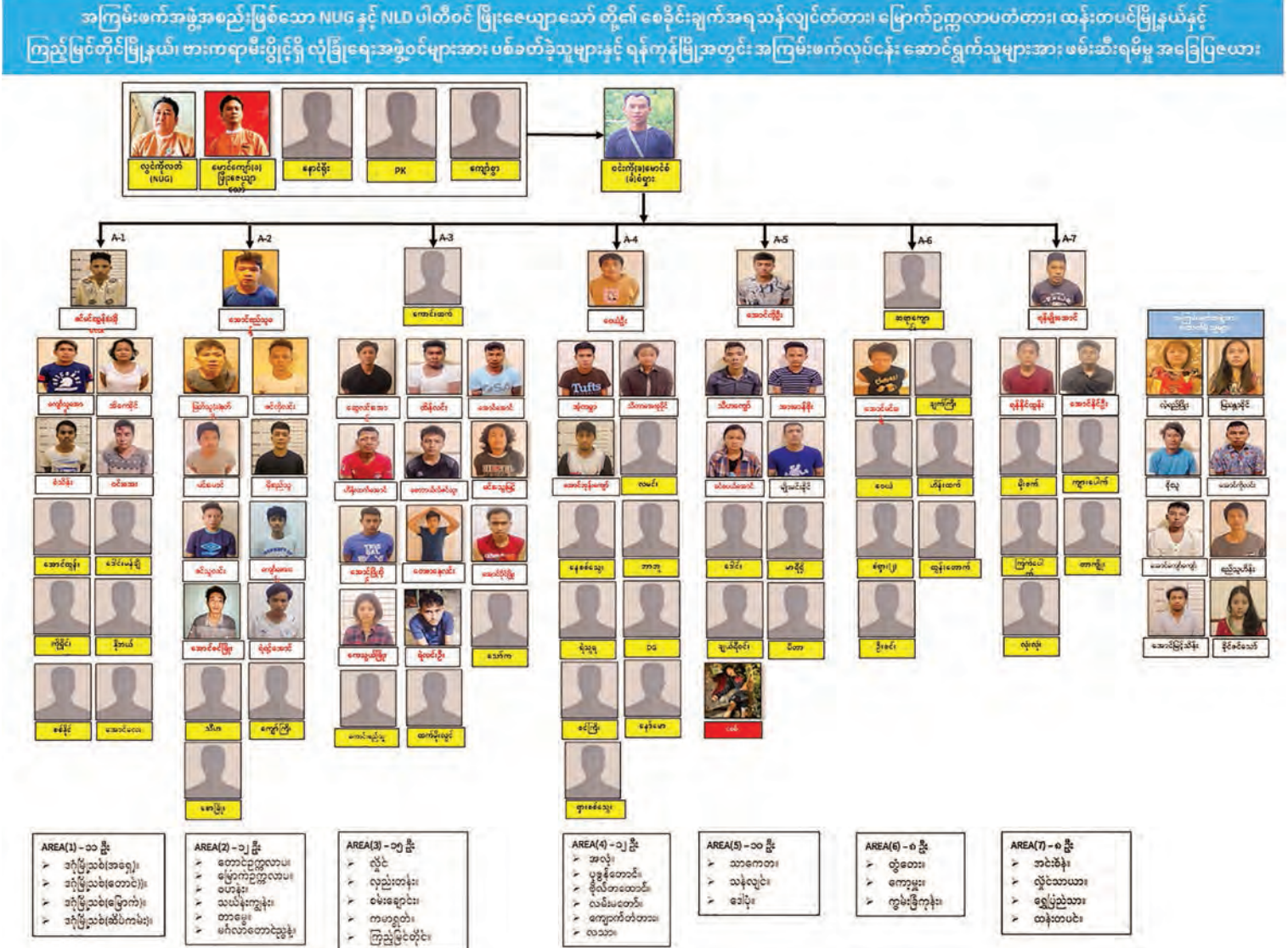
Terrorists responsible for armed attacks on security forces, acts of terrorism in Yangon arrested with ammunition

AS efforts are being made to recover terrorist acts carried out by CRPH, NUG and PDF groups, security forces arrested terrorists who are responsible for the armed attacks on members of security forces at Thanlyin bridge, North Okkalapa bridge, Htantabin bridge and Bergaya traffic point in Kyimyindine township in Yangon Region.

According to a report, security forces arrested Aung Zin Phy (a) Min Gyi, 19, in Inwa Housing in Dagon Myothit (South) Township on 12 November. Following his confession, Myat Thu (a) Nat Soe, 32, who was the main perpetrator of violent acts, Zin Ko Lin, 25, Mya Thanda Khine, 25, Lei Ye Phy, 29 and Aung Sithu Khant, 21, were arrested on 14 November.

According to the statement of Myat Thu (a) Nat Soe, security forces arrested Tay Zar Nay Lin, 20, Min Thway Myint, 24, Sithu Hein, 28, Aung Min Khant, 19, Min Maung, 31 and Wai Yan Oo, 26 in Sabei Phyu Condo in Zawana ward in Thingangyun Township on 15 November. On the same day, Soe Thu, 36, was arrested in Dagon Myothit (South), and Zin Thu Lin, 25, Swe Lin Aung, 29 and Aung Phyto Paing, 22, were arrested at Rock Star Restaurant in Thingangyun Township, according to the confession of Soe Thu.

According to the confession made by Soe Thu, 3 M4 guns and its 4 magazines; 2 M16 magazines, 1 Mk12 gun and its 2 magazines; 114 rounds of 5.56 ammunition; 40 rounds of 12-bolt ammunition were confiscated from the Htun Brother Steel Construction compound.



According to the confession of defendant Swe Lin Aung, security forces arrested Zin Min Tun (a) Do Lay, 26 and San Thein, 31, on 15 November in Thingangyun Township with 1 Mk12 gun and its 2 magazines; 2 AK-47 guns and its 4 magazines; 1 M16 gun and its 2 magazines; 15 12-bolt bullets; 30 rounds of 5.56 ammunition and 110 rounds of 7.62 ammunition. On the same day, Yan Myo Aung, Yan Naing Tun, Aung Naing Oo (a) Osamar were arrested in Hline Township. Defendant Aung

Phyo Paing statement led to the arrest of Ye Yint Aung, 24, and Kyaw Zaw Lin, 20. Defendant Zin Min Tun (a) Do Lay confession led to the arrest of Kyaw Thu Aung, 28, and Ei Kay Khine, 28, with 1 Sig Sauer pistol and its magazine; 24 rounds of 9mm ammunition; 4 homemade bombs and stimulant tablets.

Following the confession of defendant Swe Lin Aung, on 16 November, Aung Myint Thein, 32 and Khine Zin Thaw, 31 were arrested in Mayangon Township;



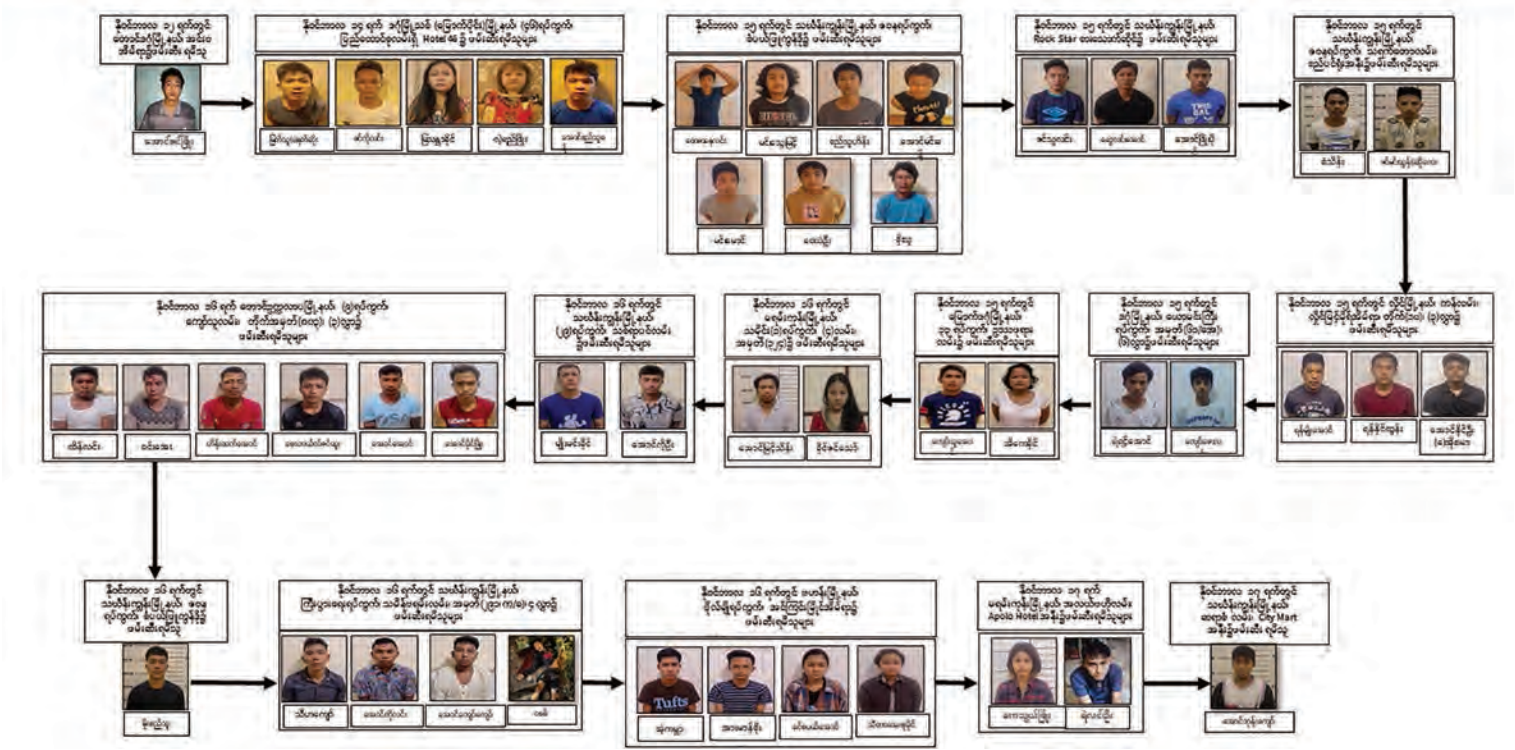
Aung Ko Oo (a) Gaung Gyi, 28, Leader of the Area-5 branch, Myo Min Khaing, 27, were arrested in Thingangyun Township; Htein Lin, 32, Win Aye, 27, Hein Htet Aung, 20, Saw Belzin Htoo, 21, Aung Aung, 24 and Aung Paing Phyto, 26, were arrested with

1 Sig Sauer pistol and its magazine and 23 rounds of ammunition in Thingangyun Township. Wai Yan Oo confession led to the arrest of Moe Sithu (a) Maung Moe at Sabei Phyu Condo in Thingangyun Township.

According to defendant Aung Ko Oo (a) Gaung Gyi's confession, security forces searched the house of No 20, Bomnyaung street, (3) Yanpyay ward, Thingangyun Township, and confiscated 2 M16 guns and its 4 magazines; 99 rounds of 5.56 ammunition; 2 AK-47 guns and its 4 magazines; 115 rounds of 7.62 ammunition and 2 homemade bombs.

During the search to the apartment located at No. 291, A/B, 4th floor, Thamainbayan street, Kyipwayay ward, Thingangyun Township, Thiha Kyaw, 23, Aung Ko Lin, 24 and Aung

အကြမ်းဖက်အဖွဲ့အစည်းဖြစ်သော NUG နှင့် NLD ပါတီဝင် မြို့နေလျာသော်တို့၏ စေခိုင်းချက်အရ သန့်လျှင်တံတား၊ မြောက်ဥက္ကလာပတံတား၊ ထန်းတပင်မြို့နယ်နှင့် ကြည့်မြင်တိုင်မြို့နယ်၊ တားကရာဇ်မြို့နယ်၊ လုံခြုံရေးအဖွဲ့ဝင်များအား ပစ်ခတ်ခဲ့သူများနှင့် ရန်ကုန်မြို့အတွင်း အကြမ်းဖက်လုပ်ငန်းဆောင်ရွက်သူများအား ဖမ်းဆီးရမိမှု အခြေပြဇယား



Kyaw Kyaw, 21, were arrested with 2 M16 guns and its 4 magazines; 2 Mk12 guns and its 4 magazines; 1 Sig Sauer pistol and its 1 magazine; 130 rounds of 5.56 ammunition; 28 rounds of 12-bolt ammunition and 7 rounds of 9mm ammunition. During the arrest, suspect Nga Sit died while jumping from the 5th floor.

homemade pistols, 25 rounds of 5.56 ammunition, 50 rounds of 12-bolt ammunition, 45 rounds of 9mm ammunition, 4 homemade mines and 4 remote mines on 17 November.

Following the statement of defendant Swe Lin Aung, Aung Phone Kyaw (a) O2, 23, was arrested with 1 M79 grenade launcher and 5 M79 grenades in Thingangyun Township on 17 November. Security forces also confiscated 6 M16 guns and its 25 magazines; 1 Mk-12 gun and its 6 magazines; 1 AK47 gun and its 2 magazines; 1 binoculars; 12 40mm grenades; 50 rounds of 12-bolt ammunition; 4 mines; 2 pistol magazines; 35 rounds of 9mm ammunition; 50 rounds of 7.62 ammunition;

Defendant Swe Lin Aung's statement also led to the arrest of Arnt Kabar, 21, Arman Soe, 32, Khin Sabei Aung, 19 and Thidar Aye Su Aung, 23, who were arrested near Ingyin Myaing housing in Bahan Township on 16 November.

According to the statement of Aung Ko Oo (a) Gaung Gyi, Ye Lin Oo (a) Nabee, 26, and Kay Thwe Phyo, 23, were arrested with 2 Mk12 guns, 1 Carbine, 3

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Develop human resources with noble goodwill

AS the infection of COVID-19 is down in the country now, higher education institutions are preparing to reopen after basic education schools have already been reopened. As part of sharing educational legacy to new generations, it is encourageable for the country to see the ceremonies to mark the fresher welcome and refresher courses to new generations of faculty members at universities and degree colleges as well as teachers from basic education.

This year's political changes caused vacancies in the education sector. Hence, the government recruited new generations of faculty members and basic education teachers in the vacant posts. Teachers are paralleled with the position of parents in the Myanmar tradition because of teaching pupils with goodwill, hobby and sympathy for improvement of educational knowledge at the students.

Some unscrupulous persons commit bombing attacks on school buildings, students and teachers without any reason. Their attacks left innocent schoolchildren and teachers injured as well as buildings damaged. As such, the government is focusing on protecting teachers and students against dangers. The government appreciates the concerted efforts of teachers, who understand two virtues in the Pali language, Hiri — shame at doing evil —and Ottappa—fear of the results of doing evil—for teaching the new generations of the country amid such difficulties and challenges. The teachers teach their pupils based on their goodwill like their offspring and conscientiously serve a teacher's duties. They must train their students in the best discipline. They see that they grasp their lessons well. They instruct them in the arts and sciences, they provide them for their safety in every corner, and they introduce them to their friends and associates. The people and the government heartily praise the teachers honoured as part of the Five Infinite Venerability for their efforts to turn out the human resources with noble goodwill. Teachers sustain their noble spirit in conformity with the attributes of teachers in nurturing the students amid various difficulties, coercions and disturbances to become outstanding educated youths and new blood for the State in the future. As such, it is necessary to build a secure and safe environment for students and teachers to be free from dangers in order to peacefully take academic measures in the future not to link out the process of turning out the educated persons across the nation.

■ ■ ■

Pfizer strikes global licencing deal for Covid pill

Under the deal struck with the global Medicines Patent Pool (MPP), Pfizer — which also produces one of the most widely-used Covid vaccines with German lab BioNTech — will not receive royalties from the generic manufacturers, making the treatment cheaper.

US PHARMACEUTICAL giant Pfizer on Tuesday announced a deal to make its prospective antiviral Covid-19 pill available more cheaply in the world's least-wealthy countries.

Pfizer will sub-licence production of its promising Paxlovid pill to generic drug manufacturers for supply in 95 low- and middle-income nations covering around 53 per cent of the world's population.

Under the deal struck with the global Medicines Patent Pool (MPP), Pfizer — which also produces one of the most widely-used Covid vaccines with German lab BioNTech — will not receive royalties from the generic manufacturers, making the treatment cheaper.

The agreement is subject to the oral antiviral medication passing ongoing trials and regulatory approval.

The Pfizer drug is to be taken with the HIV medicine ritonavir.

Ongoing trials

Interim data from ongoing trials demonstrated an 89 per cent reduction in the risk of Covid-19-related hospitalization or death compared to a placebo, in non-hospitalized high-risk adults



Employees are at work at the factory of US multinational pharmaceutical company Pfizer in Puurs, Belgium. PHOTO: AFP

with Covid-19 within three days of symptom onset, said Pfizer.

Similar results were seen within five days of symptom onset, it added.

The Geneva-based MPP is a United Nations-backed international organization that works to facilitate the development of medicines for low- and middle-income nations.

If approved, the pill could be on the market in “a matter of months”, MPP policy chief Este-

ban Burrone told AFP.

Pfizer also said Tuesday that it was seeking an emergency use authorization, or EUA, in the US for the Covid pill.

HIV drug mix

Pfizer will forego royalties on sales in all countries covered by the agreement while Covid-19 remains classified as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern by the World Health Organization.

Last month, the WHO maintained the highest level of alert over the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes Covid-19.

Paxlovid, or PF-07321332, is an investigational antiviral therapy designed to block the activity of the SARS-CoV-2-3CL protease — an enzyme that the coronavirus needs to replicate.

Taking it together with a low dose of ritonavir helps slow the breakdown of PF-07321332. It therefore remains active in the

body for a longer period at a high concentration, to help combat the virus. The pill could potentially help patients avoid severe illness, which can lead to hospitalization and death, Pfizer said.

“We believe oral antiviral treatments can play a vital role in reducing the severity of Covid-19 infections, decreasing the strain on our healthcare systems and saving lives,” said Pfizer chairman and chief executive Albert Bourla.

While a multitude of vaccines have been rolled out in the pandemic, the hunt for treatments for those who have already caught the disease has not been as fruitful.

Agreement follows Merck deal

The MPP was founded by Unitaid, which works on innovations to prevent, diagnose and treat major diseases in poorer countries.

“During a pandemic, saving time means saving lives. This agreement could help us to reach more people more quickly as soon as the medicine is approved,” said Unitaid executive director Philippe Duneton.

Potential sublicensees have until 6 December to register an expression of interest.

The announcement comes after the MPP signed a similar voluntary licensing deal with Pfizer's US rivals Merck & Co last month for its investigational oral antiviral medicine molnupiravir.

Subject to regulatory approval, the deal will help create broad access to molnupiravir in 105 low- and middle-income countries.

Pills are easier to make than vaccines, do not require a cold chain for delivery and can be self-administered by the patient.

In terms of relieving health systems by preventing hospitalizations, “it's a game changer”, said Burrone.

He said pricing for the Pfizer pill had not yet been set, but said that “in a competitive environment... the prices tend to come down” to a low level.

Doctors Without Borders (MSF) meanwhile suggested it might cost around \$700 per Pfizer treatment course, in line with molnupiravir.

The medical charity said it was disheartened by the deal, saying restrictive voluntary licences were no substitute for guaranteed global access to Covid tools to bring the pandemic under control.

SOURCE: AFP

Indian Covid vaccine ‘highly efficacious’: study

The Indian-developed vaccine has a 78-per-cent efficacy rate after two doses over a month, according to the WHO.

COVAXIN, the first Covid-19 vaccine developed in India, is “highly efficacious” and presents no safety concerns, according to a study published in the Lancet on Thursday.

Covaxin, developed by Bharat Biotech, gained emergency approval from the World Health Organization last week and has already been cleared for use in 17 countries. The UN body has described it as “extremely suitable for low- and middle-income countries due to easy storage requirements”. Some of the other approved vaccines must be stored at very low temperatures, which throws up logistical and cost problems.

Highly efficacious

Covaxin “was highly efficacious

against laboratory-confirmed symptomatic Covid-19 disease in adults,” the report said.

The jab was also “well tolerated with no safety concerns raised in this interim analysis”, it added.

The Indian-developed vaccine has a 78-per-cent efficacy rate after two doses over a month, according to the WHO.

It has joined the anti-Covid vaccines produced by Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna, AstraZeneca, Johnson&Johnson, Sinopharm and Sinovac on the WHO-approved list.

The roll-out of Covaxin can “increase the finite global manufacturing capacity, and improve insufficient supply of vaccines which disproportionately affects low-income and middle-income

countries”, said Chinese researchers Li Jingxin Li and Zhu Fengcai, who did not take part in the study.

They did however mention certain limits to the study, saying that as the trials had been conducted solely in India, there was a less ethnically diverse study group.

Also the studies were carried out between November 2020 and January 2021, before the more contagious Delta variant of the virus became widespread.

But despite the trial dates, the researchers involved were able to identify which of the patients were infected with the Delta variant. For this sub-group the study found that Covaxin still provided protection against Covid, but was slightly less effective.

SOURCE: ANI



Several million doses of Covaxin have now been supplied and administered in India and several other countries. A volunteer rides along a road with a mock vials of India-made vaccine Covishield and Covaxin in India. PHOTO: AFP



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Wednesday 17 November 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30) hrs M.S.T today, the low pressure area over Southeast Bay of Bengal and adjoining Southwest Bay of Bengal now lies over Northwest Bay of Bengal. It is forecast continuous to move Westwards and reach to Westcentral Bay and adjoining Southwest Bay of Bengal(off South Andhra Pradesh- North Tamilnadu coasts, India) around (18.11.2021). Weather is a few cloud over the North Bay and Eastcentral Bay of Bengal and partly cloudy to cloudy over the Andaman and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 18 November 2021: Wather will be partly cloudy ir Nay Pyi Taw, Lower Sagaing, Magway, Regions and Chin,Rakhine States, rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region and isolated in the remaining Regions and States.Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (30-35) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (7-9) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and about (4-7) feet off and along Rakhine Coast.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Shan, Kayah, Kayin, Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 18 November 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 18 November 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 18 November 2021: Partly cloudy.

Low Pressure Area Condition

Issued at (19:00) hours M.S.T on 17-11-2021

ACCORDING to the observations at (18:30)hrs M.S.T today, the low pressure area over Southeast Bay of Bengal and adjoining Southwest Bay of Bengal now lies over Southwest Bay of Bengal. It is forecast continuous to move Westwards and reach to Westcentral Bay and adjoining Southwest Bay of Bengal(off South Andhra Pradesh- North Tamilnadu coasts, India)around (18.11.2021).

General caution

DUE to the low pressure area, rain or thundershowers will be isolated to scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayah, Kayin, Mon States during commencing tonight to next (42)hrs.Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (30-35) m.p.h. Wave height will be about (7-9) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts.

Advisory

DUE to the low pressure area,people should be aware rain or thundershowers with strong wind and domestic flight, trawlers, vessels and ships in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts.

Terrorists responsible for armed attacks on security forces ...

FROM PAGE-7
1,085 rounds of 5.56 ammunition; 5 smoke bombs; 2 grenades, 7 packages of gunpowder from the United Condo in Bahan.

According to the statements of the defendants, Thanlyin Township NLD member Win Ko (a) San Shar, who has been hiding in the KNLA Brigade (6) has formed the Special Operation Force-SOF terrorist groups in Area-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. The members of the group were trained in small arms lessons, drone bombing and terrorism lessons in the KNLA Brigade 6 area, by KNLA commanding officer Yan Naing under the guidance of fugitive Lwin Ko Latt from the NUG. During the training, Lwin Ko Latt and Yan Naing said to contact and work with Phyto Zeya Thaw (a) Maung Kyaw for the terrorist acts in each township, and that necessary cash assistance and arms would be provided.

Terrorists perpetrate violent attacks in Yangon

The suspect Htet Moe Lwin from Area-3 threw a homemade bomb at No (1) police station in No (5) Ward of Thakayta Township together with another suspect Lin Yaung (still at large) on 5 September.

Zin Min Tun from Area 1 submitted a proposal to Win Kyaw (aka) San Shar to attack the security members at Bomhu Bahtoo bridge in North Okkalapa Township on 4 September, then he communicated with Swe Lin Aung to get the fire-

arms, on 10 September, Zin Min Tun assigned Hein Min Soe and Shine Htet Aung (still at large) as shooters, Sithu as driver, Aung Tun, Sit Naing, Noval Oo, Daung Mann Chi, Aung Lay (still at large), Ei Kay Khine and Myat Thu as informer, Zin Min Tun as storekeeper, and they shot the security members conducting duties on the bridge in North Okkalapa Township together with 11 members.

Aung Paing Phyto from Area -3 discussed attacking the Berkaya security forces together with Lin Yaung, Thawka (still at large) and Saw Bal Zin Htoo on 21 October, and on 21 and 22 October, Htet Moe Lwin, Hein Htet Aung and Si Thu Hein watched the situation and reported to them to attack the security forces, on 23 October, Saw Bal Zin Htoo served as the driver while Thawka and Lin Yaung as shooters, Aung Paing Phyto as video shooter and they changed the Honda Insight car driven by Swe Lin Aung at Pan Hlaing road and they left Honda Airwave there.

Zin Thu Lin from Area-2 threw a homemade bomb into a police outpost near the religious hall of No (12) Ward in South Okkalapa Township together with Lin Yaung (still at large) on 24 October.

Zin Ko Lin from Area-2 also exploded a remote-controlled bomb near No (25) Ward Administration office in Dagon Myothit (South) under the instruction of Myat Thu (aka) Nat Soe, to-



Seized weapons and ammunition in Thingangyun Township.



Seized weapons and ammunition in Mayangon Township.



gether with Aung Sithu Khant (aka) Thiha on 6 November.

Aung Ko Oo from Area-5 was instructed by SOF leader Win Ko (aka) San Shar to attack the security forces at Thanlyin Bridge on the side of Thakayta on 11 November. On 15 November, Peter, Aung Ko Oo, Joke and Bravo served as shooters riding the Probox driven by Phat Tee, while Nga Sitt, Mario, Sabai and Arr Mhan Soe served as informers and they attacked the security members and they kept the firearms at Safe House in Yangon Thit Ward of Thingangyun township.

on 15 November, Area-7 attacked the security forces of the Htantabin township inspection checkpoint due to the directives of Win Ko (aka) San Shar riding CRV unlicensed car. It was driven by Khun Tha (still at large) while Kyar Pauk and Kyat Pauk (still at large) shot and Yan Naing Tun and Aung Naing Oo served as watchers. They took the record of the attack by putting the phone on the phone holder on the car dashboard. They left the car in the drain and kept the firearms at Kyat Pauk.

The police arrested 47 suspects — 40 males and 7 females, 34 small firearms, 70 magazines, 2,105 bullets, 17 40mm grenades, 10 homemade bombs, 4 remote-controlled mines, 4 mines, 5 smoke bombs, two grenades, 7 packs of gunpowder, 1 binoculars and drugs. According to the health tests, the suspects were found using drugs to conduct the act of terrorism.

Lwin Ko Latt from terrorist group NUG communicated with Win Ko (aka) San Shar who was in KNLA Brigade 6 area to provide financial assistance, ammunition and explosives.

It was learned that Lwin Ko Latt instructed the in-charges of each area to carry out acts of terror in the public areas through zoom meetings. SOF Terrorist Group was reportedly planning to shoot the security forces at Gandama Wholesale and the traffic control room at Kyaukgon traffic light in Yankin Township in November and to accelerate the shootings and

terrorist acts starting from 15 November.

According to the further interrogations, they planned to kill teachers, security members and administrators in order to deteriorate the peaceful learning of teachers with grudge against the peace and stability of the State and regular situations with peaceful visits of people to the religious edifices, doing meritorious deeds, pay happy visits of families. As of 15 November before the Tazaungdine festival, Zaw Wai Soe, Yi Mon and Lwin Ko Latt from NUG instructed their subordinate terrorist groups to speed up committing of sabotages and terror acts across the nation.

Terrorists were arrested with the collaboration of the people and because of the responsible citizens who reported to the authority. As it has been announced by the Central Committee on Counter-Terrorism that if the tenants are found to have committed violence, they will be prosecuted under existing laws, and the property will be confiscated as State funds, the landlords of the apartment/house where the arrested terrorists stayed will be taken action under the law. It is also reported that the arrested suspects will be taken action under the law, and the people are requested to work together for the peace and safety of the towns and villages by secretly providing information of the related suspects to the relevant authorities. — MNA



Confiscated weapons and ammunition in Thingangyun and South Okkalapa townships.



Confiscated weapons and ammunition in Dagon Myothit (North) and Bahan townships..



Terrorist groups brutally kill teachers

TEACHERS are honoured as part of the Five Infinite Venerables, and the manner of paying respect to the teachers can be only seen in Myanmar as a tradition. The teachers teach their pupils based on their goodwill like their own offspring and dutifully serve a teacher’s duties. They must train their pupils and students in the best discipline. They see that they grasp their lessons well. They instruct them in the arts and sciences, they provide for their safety in every quarter, and they introduce

them to their friends and associates. Those who want to gain political profits, extremist NLD members and their supporters, NUG, CRPH and PDFs committed incitement against the education staff to join CDM with social punishment and threats and also committed bomb attacks and arson attacks on schools and killed the teachers to hamper the education sector. Due to the terrorist acts, 12 teachers died and 15 were injured between 1 February and 15 November.



Lists of teachers died due to the attacks of terrorists between 1-2-2021 and 15-11-2021						
Sr	Regions/States	Township	Teachers	Staff	Total	Remark
1	Sagaing	3	2	2	4	
2	Bago	1		1	1	
3	Magway	1	1	1	2	
4	Mandalay	4	3	1	4	
5	Yangon	1	1		1	
Total		10	7	5	12	

Lists of teachers injured due to the attacks of terrorists between 1-2-2021 and 15-11-2021						
Sr	Region/State	Township	Teachers	Staff	Total	Remark
1	Kachin	1		1	1	
2	Sagaing	3	3		3	
3	Bago	1	5		5	
4	Magway	1	1		1	
5	Mandalay	4	3	1	4	
6	Ayeyawady	1	1		1	
Total		11	13	2	15	

The people are urged to report on the movements of terrorists who killed the teachers to the nearest security forces. — MNA



Farmers start growing onions in Kyaukse

THE onions are started growing in the Kyaukse township of the Mandalay region. The onion plantations in Kyaukse village has succeeded and the local farmers from Kyaukse township have been growing onions since early October.

“One acre of onion plantation uses two pyis of onion seeds and it will cost around K1,300,000-K1,500,000 per acre, including cultivation cost, fertilizers and cropland rental fees,” said U Zin Thu, an onion grower.

There are 12 stations in Kyaukse township. The onions are cultivated about 433 acres in station 1, 1,082 acres in station 2, 245 acres in station 6, 139 acres in station 10, 72 acres in station

11 and 151 acres in station 12, according to the Township Department of Agriculture Land Management and Statistics.

Myanmar consumes five million visses of onion per month. The onion demand will be around 60 million visses per year. The onions were directly purchased from Bangladesh and India. Sometimes farmers have to send the onion to the Yangon market.

The onions are mainly grown in Pakokku, Salin, Hsinbhyukyun, Yenangyoung, Kyaukpadaung, Taungdwingyi, Myingyan, Taungtha, Myittha, Kyaukse, Monywa and Yinmabin. The onions are less grown in the lower Myanmar region. — Thet Maung (Kyaukse)/GNLM



Myanmar consumes five million visses of onion per month. The onion demand will be around 60 million visses per year. The onions were directly purchased from Bangladesh and India. **PHOTO: THET MAUNG(KYEUKSE)**

Muse border trade down by US\$487 mln as of 11 Nov



As of 11 November, Myanmar's exports to China through the Muse land border were valued at \$93.633 million, while imports are worth \$1.53 million. The trade showed a slump in both exports and imports compared to the corresponding period of last year.

THE value of trade between Myanmar and China via the Muse land border as of 11 November 2021 of the current mini-budget period (October 2021 – March 2022) showed a drastic drop of US\$487 million owing to the border trade suspension, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The value of the Muse border trade touched a low of \$95 million over the past month amid the COVID-19 impacts. The figures plummeted from \$582.399 million recorded in the year-ago period, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

As of 11 November, Myanmar's exports to China through the Muse land border were valued at \$93.633 million, while imports are worth \$1.53 million. The trade showed a slump in both exports and imports compared

to the corresponding period of last year.

China has closed down the border posts (Kyinsankyawt, Wamting) from 8 July 2021 following the COVID-19 cases in Myanmar.

On 30 March, Mang Wein, which is a major border crossing between Muse and Kyalgaung areas, was suspended owing to the COVID-19 cases. On 1 April, Nantaw and Sinphyu border posts were suspended operations. As a result of this, the border trade between Myanmar and China was completely halted.

The closure of the Sino-Myanmar border trade resulted in job loss of about 400,000-600,000 workers engaged in the Muse border post. Furthermore, the short-haul trucks from Muse to China were also affected by this

consequence. Additionally, traders from Muse border post were also battered by trade suspension, stopping the tax revenue.

Nonetheless, China will give the green light to the items stockpiled at the warehouses and the Kyalgaung checkpoint, China to be imported into Myanmar soon, in line with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Myanmar exports agricultural products, including rice, beans and corns, and fishery products such as crab, prawn, etc. Furthermore, Myanmar's natural gas export to China is also conducted through the Muse-Ruili border. The raw CMP materials, electrical appliances and consumer goods are imported into the country. — KK/GNLM

Fresh chilli pepper priced at K10,000 per five visses in Myawady border

FRESH chilli pepper was offered at K10,000 per five visses (a viss equals 1.6 kg) in the Myawady border, said Daw Ohnmar Kyaw, chair of the Myanmar Chilli Market and Technology Development Association.

“The price of chilli is worth K10,000 per five visses, including the transport and other processing costs,” she added.

At present, the local fresh chillis lack supply. It fetches K1,400-2,000 per viss.

“The price is quite good on the low stockpile. The fresh chilli pepper supply has become smaller in Myanmar. It is harvest time in Thailand for now. As a result of this, the price is possible to decrease during the plentiful harvest time in Thailand,”

Daw Ohnmar Kyaw continued.

Myanmar's chilli pepper is primarily conveyed to Thailand and China. Nonetheless, the closure of the major border Muse post between Myanmar and China from 8 July brought Myanmar's fresh chilli pepper export to China to a halt. Consequently, the chilli pepper produced by the Kyaukse area, which was supposed to be conveyed to China, was shifted to Thailand through the Myawady border.

It is commonly grown in Ayeyawady, Mandalay and Magway regions and Shan State. The export varieties of fresh chilli peppers are 692, 777, 999, Demon, Sunshine, Lucky one and Tharmo. — NN/GNLM



At present, the local fresh chillis lack supply. It fetches K1,400-2,000 per viss.

Japan, US launch new trade initiative amid China's rise

JAPAN and the United States on Wednesday launched an initiative to facilitate regular discussions on trade issues critical to both countries in the face of China's economic rise.

The first series of meetings under the US-Japan Partnership on Trade are expected early next year, with the initial areas of focus including "third country concerns" and cooperation in improving a rules-based economic order in the Indo-Pacific region, according to officials of

the two countries.

The announcement was made as Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi held a meeting with US Trade Representative Katherine Tai, who is on her first visit to Japan since assuming her position in March. "Our close collaboration will support the Biden-Harris administration's economic framework for the Indo-Pacific and help create sustainable, resilient, inclusive, and competitive trade policies that lift up our people and economies," Tai said

in a statement. In an apparent reference to China, Japan and the United States have repeatedly raised the issue of "market-distorting practices," such as industrial subsidies and overproduction, at meetings of the Group of Seven nations and other multilateral talks.

Earlier in the day, Japan's trade and industry minister Koichi Hagiuda separately discussed with Tai bilateral cooperation in responding to such practices, according to the trade ministry. —Kyodo ■



Containers are transferred to trucks at the Port of Tokyo on 19 August 2019.
PHOTO: KAZUHIRO NOGI/AFP/FILE

FedEx relocates pilots from Hong Kong over city quarantine rules



FedEx has decided to close its Hong Kong crew base and relocate its pilots because of the city's strict anti-coronavirus measures PHOTO: JOEL SAGET / AFP

GLOBAL delivery giant FedEx said Wednesday it was closing its crew base in Hong Kong and relocating pilots overseas because of the city's strict anti-coronavirus measures.

The move is the latest blow to Hong Kong's reputation as

a global logistics hub as strict travel curbs and mandatory quarantine rules keep the city cut off from the rest of the world.

"As the global business environment continues to evolve and with the pandemic requirements in Hong Kong, FedEx has made

the decision to close its Hong Kong crew base and relocate its pilots," FedEx said in a statement to AFP.

"FedEx will continue to maintain its operations in Hong Kong, which is vital to our Asia Pacific and global network," the company added.

The South China Morning Post also reported FedEx's decision and quoted from a company memo written by system chief pilot Robin Sebasco.

"The decision to close the Hong Kong base reflects this constant evolution and is designed to provide a measure of stability to these team members, as there is no clear timeline when life may return to normal in Hong Kong," Sebasco wrote.

He added that the company would continue to serve Hong Kong with pilots based in Oakland, California.—AFP ■

Abu Dhabi's ADNOC to invest \$6 bln for more oil drilling

ABU Dhabi's national oil company announced Tuesday a \$6 billion investment in crude oil drilling as it ramps up production capacity.

The announcement comes a day after the United Arab Emirates (UAE) said a recent UN climate summit in Glasgow was a "success" but that the world needs to keep investing billions in oil and gas.

The UAE is one of the world's top crude exporters, with an aver-

age of 4.2 million barrels per day.

The Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) said the \$6 billion investment would "enable drilling growth as it boosts its crude oil production capacity to 5 million barrels per day by 2030".

The ADNOC investments include contracts with multiple companies, some lasting for a decade, according to a statement released on the second day of the Abu Dhabi International Petrole-

um Exhibition and Conference.

Both the UAE and neighbouring Saudi Arabia, the world's number one oil exporter, have announced net zero carbon goals, despite efforts to ramp up oil production. The UAE has said it hopes to be carbon neutral by 2050. Nearly 200 countries at the COP26 summit pledged Saturday to speed up the fight against rising temperatures, after two weeks of negotiations.—AFP ■

Robots, big data as Gulf nations bet on AI

ROBOTS pattering around Dubai's hi-tech Expo site could be a sign of things to come for the Gulf, where new cities are being built from scratch with artificial intelligence at their core.

The 5G-enabled Expo, covering an area twice the size of Monaco, will remain as a "city of the future" and tech industry hub, Expo's chief told AFP before its grand opening last month.

But the \$7 billion project, featuring robots that greet visitors and can be used to order food, is not alone in the wealthy Gulf, where petro-dollars are being invested heavily in a post-oil future.

Neighbouring Saudi Arabia is lavishing \$500 billion on NEOM, a brand new, next-generation Red Sea tech centre that will offer ultra-connectivity to its planned population of

one million-plus, and is trialling airborne taxis.

AI is also at the heart of other Saudi developments including the Red Sea Project, a new tourist area that will use smart systems to monitor environmental impacts and visitor movements.

Analysts say the Gulf monarchies are willing to bet big on AI, knowing they must move away from their reliance on fossil fuel industries and become more active in tech, tourism and other areas.

"You've got very forward (-looking), somewhat risk-loving leadership that sees the need to transform," said Kaveh Vessali, a partner at consultancy firm PwC Middle East.

"I think that's just completely the opposite of what I see in the rest of the world."—AFP ■



While the region might be known as culturally conservative, some local players say its AI strategies are better characterised as liberal and aggressive. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Israel judges postpone key testimony in Netanyahu graft trial



Former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu (2nd R) arrives for a court hearing on corruption charges, on 16 November 2021 in Jerusalem. **PHOTO: JACK GUEZ / AFP**

FORMER Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu returned to court for his graft trial Tuesday, but judges granted a defence request to postpone highly anticipated testimony from his former

spin doctor.

Netanyahu, now opposition leader in parliament after he was ousted by a broad coalition of rivals in June, arrived at the Jerusalem court house without the large security contingent and crowds of rival protesters that were on hand when he appeared as premier.

He has been charged with bribery, fraud and breach of trust in three separate indictments that collectively accuse him of accepting improper gifts and illegally trading regulatory favour with media moguls in exchange for positive coverage.

The testimony of his former spokesman Nir Hefetz had been expected to shed light on

the ex-premier's dealings with the Bezeq telecommunications group.

In the Bezeq case, considered the most serious, Netanyahu is accused of offering regulatory benefits that could have been worth millions to the company in return for politically advantageous coverage on the group's Walla news site.

But Netanyahu's lawyers argued they were unprepared to respond to Hefetz's testimony following recent press revelations about new evidence he might share.

The prosecution said it regretted the leaks about Hefetz's expected testimony but urged the session to go ahead.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Japan experts craft 'super clone' of destroyed Afghan mural

Japanese researchers have crafted a "super clone" of an Afghan mural destroyed by the Taliban, using a mix of traditional and digital techniques that they hope will salvage the work's "spirit" for future generations.

Not a single fragment remains of the seventh-century cave painting demolished in 2001 along with two massive Buddha statues and other artefacts in Afghanistan's Bamiyan valley, sparking global condemnation.

But a precise replica, the result of three years of state-of-the-art reproduction efforts, went on display at a museum in Tokyo in September and October, just weeks after the Taliban returned to power in Kabul.

The mural on the ceiling of a cave near the famous statues depicted a blue Bodhisattva — or someone on the path to becoming a Buddha.

At six metres long and three metres high (20 by 10 feet), the intricate full-size copy has been dubbed a "super clone" by the reproduction team at Tokyo University of the Arts.—AFP ■

East Libya strongman Haftar says to run for president

THE strongman in the east of war-scarred Libya, Khalifa Haftar, said Tuesday he would run for president in a 24 December election that is also set to be contested by a son of former dictator Moamer Kadhafi.

"I declare my candidacy for the presidential election, not because I am chasing power but because I want to lead our people towards glory, progress and prosperity," he said in a speech, broadcast live on Libyan television.

His announcement comes two days after the candidacy of Seif al-Islam Kadhafi — the son of slain dictator Moamer Kadhafi



The military strongman of eastern Libya, Khalifa Haftar, despised by many in the west of the country for the devastating offensive he launched on the capital Tripoli in 2019, declares his candidacy for a 24 December presidential election. **PHOTO: LIBYA ALHADATH TV/AFP**

— who has been accused of war crimes by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Both are controversial fig-

ures. Haftar, backed by Russia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, is despised by many in western Libya and has been accused of seeking to establish a military dictatorship.

In April 2019, his self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA) launched an offensive on the capital Tripoli under the pretext of rooting out militant groups.

The year-long war left the outskirts of the capital in ruins and Libya more divided than ever, but a United Nations-brokered ceasefire last October paved the way for a peace process leading to elections set for 24 December.—AFP ■

Polish forces fire tear gas at migrants on Belarus border

POLISH forces fired tear gas at stone-throwing migrants trying to cross the border from Belarus on Tuesday, the defence ministry said, as Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko claimed he wanted to avoid a "confrontation".

Polish border guards estimate up to 4,000 migrants are now camped out along the border between Poland and Belarus in increasingly dire conditions and freezing temperatures. Western powers accuse Belarus of orchestrating the crisis, possibly with the backing of Russia, by luring migrants to the border to sow division in the EU — though Minsk and Moscow deny the claims. At least 11 migrants have died on both sides since the influx started in the summer. One of them, a 19-year-old Syrian from the war-torn city of Homs, was laid to rest on Monday.—AFP ■

Iran enacts population law seen to limit women's healthcare

A law aimed at boosting Iran's population came into force on Tuesday after concerns were raised that it would limit women's access to reproductive healthcare.

The "Youthful Population and Protection of the Family" legislation was approved by parliament in October and entered into effect by notification from President Ebrahim Raisi.

The law renders reproductive screening optional, imposes restrictions on abortion and limits access to contraception, while providing added benefits to families with more children.

It also tasks public broadcasters with producing content

that encourages women to have more children and denounces celibacy or abortion.

About 46.6 per cent of Iran's population of 83 million is under 30 years old, according to the latest data published in 2019 by the national statistics office.

The population under 30 has dropped since 2010 however at a negative rate of 3.24 per cent.

According to the World Bank, Iran's population growth rate has sharply declined from over four per cent in the early 1980s to 1.29 per cent in 2020.

The law has been criticized by United Nations experts, as well as by women's rights ac-



Iranian women cross a street in downtown Tehran on 20 July 2021, as authorities tighten restrictions amid the Covid-19 pandemic. **PHOTO: AFP / ATTA KENARE**

tivists and other rights groups.

"The consequences of this law will be crippling for women

and girls' right to health," the UN experts said in a statement on Tuesday.—AFP ■

Chile’s Senate declines to impeach president over business deal revealed in Pandora Papers



The vote was 24 in favour of impeachment, 18 against and one abstention. Those voting to charge the billionaire president with corruption needed at least 29 votes to pass the measure. **PHOTO: AFP**

CHILE’S Senate declined Tuesday to impeach President Sebastian Pinera over a business deal revealed in the Pandora Papers leaks, refusing to go along with the lower chamber of Congress in opening proceedings against him.

The vote was 24 in favor of impeachment, 18 against and one abstention. Those voting to charge the billionaire president with corruption needed at least 29 votes to pass the measure.

“The defence has forcefully

disproven each one of the facts that are presented as causes of this impeachment,” Senator Francisco Chahuan, from Pinera’s center-right National Renewal party. This means the case is closed, with no punishment of Pinera over the controversial sale of a mining company in 2010 when he was serving the first of two non-consecutive terms.

If impeached, Pinera could have risked up to five years in jail. Applause could be heard

coming from the presidential headquarters of the Palacio de La Moneda after it became mathematically clear that lawmakers had summoned enough support for the president to avoid impeachment, even though a dozen senators still had to add their own votes.

Pandora Papers

The Pandora Papers highlighted offshore transactions involving major political figures around the world.— AFP ■

MOX fuel from France arrives at nuclear power plant in Japan



A freighter carrying plutonium-uranium mixed oxide fuel, known as MOX fuel, arrives at Kansai Electric Power Co.’s Takahama nuclear power plant in the Fukui Prefecture town of Takahama, central Japan, on 17 November 2021. **PHOTO: KYODO**

A cargo ship carrying uranium-plutonium mixed-oxide fuel processed in France arrived Wednesday at a nuclear power plant in central Japan, the third such shipment since

the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster.

The shipment of MOX fuel will be used for the and 4 reactors at the Takahama nuclear power plant in Fukui Prefec-

ture, according to the plant operator Kansai Electric Power Co. The reactors currently use MOX fuel for so-called pluthermal power generation.

The fuel, created using plutonium and uranium extracted from reprocessing spent reactor fuel, is a key component of resource-poor Japan’s nuclear fuel recycling policy.

Around 20 local residents protested outside the plant against the arrival of the MOX fuel shipment that left France in September, saying the fuel should not be used due to the risk of plutonium being diverted to make nuclear weapons.

After the ship arrived at the plant’s port, the unloading of the roughly 6.2 metre-long and 108-tonne containers commenced after the radiation level was measured.—Kyodo ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

US China agree to ease visa restrictions for journalists

THE United States and China have agreed to ease visa restrictions on journalists from each country after they were tightened last year amid deteriorating bilateral relations, a US State Department spokesperson said Tuesday. The announcement came a day after US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping met virtually for their first summit talks as leaders of their respective countries. According to a Biden administration official, the visa issue was not discussed between them. Last year, the two countries took tit-for-tat measures to restrict the media sector, with China expelling American journalists working for some major US newspapers and the administration of then President Donald Trump limiting visas for Chinese journalists to 90 days.—Kyodo ■

UK’s Johnson faces grilling from MPs amid sleaze row

PRIME Minister Boris Johnson faces a parliamentary grilling Wednesday over charges of sleaze within his Conservative party and lacklustre leadership at the COP26 climate summit.

Johnson will be quizzed by the heads of parliament’s cross-party select committees at 1500 GMT for a stock-take of government policy, typically held three times a year and which can prove uncomfortable for under-fire leaders.

This session — Johnson’s sixth since becoming prime minister in mid-2019 — coincides with a simmering crisis over MPs’ conduct, primarily from his own ruling Conservative party, over potential conflicts of interest and lucrative second jobs.—AFP ■

Germany calls for space security rules after Russian satellite strike

GERMANY’S government said Tuesday it was “very concerned” by Russia’s destruction of one of its own satellites during a missile test, calling for urgent measures to “strengthen security and confidence”.

“We call on all states to engage constructively in this process and in the development of principles for responsible behaviour in space,” the Germany foreign ministry said in a statement.

Russia on Tuesday admit-

ted to having destroyed one of its satellites during a missile test a day earlier, provoking criticism from the United States and several European countries.

The US said the strike had created a cloud of debris and forced the crew of the International Space Station to take evasive action, a claim that Moscow rejected. “This irresponsible behaviour carries a risk of error of judgement and escalation,” the German statement said.—AFP ■



This image shows the Plesetsk Cosmodrome in northern Russia, the site of a Russian anti-satellite missile test in April 2020. **PHOTO: ROSCOSMOS/FILE /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.

FIFA Ranking: Team Myanmar stands fourth in ASEAN after Qualifiers

THE Myanmar men’s national football team is currently standing fourth in the ASEAN region and ranked 145th in the world with 1,057 points, according to the FIFA rankings released after the second round Asian Cup Qualifiers.

Team Viet Nam is still standing first in ASEAN with a world ranking of 98th and 1,223 points earned.

Meanwhile, Thailand’s national football team is placed

second in ASEAN with a FIFA ranking of 117 and 1,149 points.

The Philippines squad is third with a world ranking of 127 and 1,132 points.

Next, Malaysia national team is fifth after Myanmar in ASEAN and the team is standing as 155th in the world ranking with 1,041 points earned.

In the meantime, Singapore is next with a FIFA world ranking of 160 and 1,000 points.

Indonesia and Cambodia

are in seventh and eighth place in ASEAN with FIFA ranking of 165th and 175th.

Laos is next in ninth place with a FIFA world ranking of 185. Brunei and Timor-Leste are in tenth and eleventh place with a FIFA ranking of 188 and 194 respectively.

Myanmar had the highest records of FIFA ranks as 97th in April 1996 and lowest as 182nd in August 2012, according to FIFA. — GNLM



Myanmar star striker Aung Thu (No. 9) carries the ball during an international friendly match against Singapore on 11 June 2019. **PHOTO: MFF**



Lionel Messi (left) was unable to inspire Argentina to victory upon his return to the starting line-up in a tight clash with Brazil. **PHOTO: AFP**

Argentina qualify for World Cup after Brazil draw

ARGENTINA qualified for next year’s World Cup in Qatar as a point in their 0-0 draw with Brazil on Tuesday proved enough after defeats for Chile and Uruguay.

The reigning Copa America champions came into the match against their arch rivals knowing that a win might not be enough to secure their ticket, but a draw could be.

And Chile’s 2-0 defeat at home to Ecuador, coupled with

Uruguay’s 3-0 loss to Bolivia, sent Argentina through.

It caps a fine year for Argentina and Lionel Messi, who won their 15th Copa America in July with a 1-0 final victory over Brazil at Rio de Janeiro’s iconic Maracana stadium.

“If we analyze this year, it was beautiful. What we’ve been through with the fans ... everything was complete,” said Rodrigo De Paul.

Argentina welcomed back

six-time Ballon d’Or winner Messi to their starting line-up while star forward Neymar missed out for Brazil.

But Messi was unable to inspire his team in a match of few chances, against opponents who booked their ticket to Qatar on Thursday with a 1-0 win over Colombia. Brazil remain top of the qualifying group, six points clear of Argentina, who took their unbeaten run to 27 matches. — AFP ■

Dutch book ticket to Qatar with win over Norway

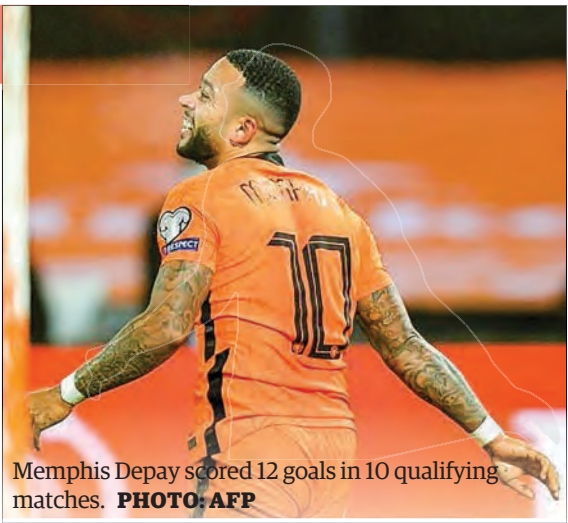
TWO late goals by Steven Bergwijn and Memphis Depay on Tuesday saw the Netherlands book a ticket to the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, as they held Norway at bay with a 2-0 victory in Rotterdam.

Bergwijn, the standout player of the evening on the right wing, drilled the ball into the roof of the net following an assist by Arnaut Danjuma after a lacklustre 83 minutes that saw both sides struggle to create chances. Bergwijn again played a key role in the Dutch’s second goal a few minutes later, after a counter-attack saw him run almost the length of the field before passing the ball to Depay, who slotted it past a diving Orjan Nyland.

Depay’s 12th goal of the qualifying campaign rounded off the evening for the Netherlands, who only needed a draw against Norway to finish top of Group G ahead of Turkey and the Norwegians.

“They stuck to the game plan, they were a lot more compact,” Dutch coach Louis van Gaal told the NOS public broadcaster.

Van Gaal admitted he was “worried that things could go wrong”, especially after the his side’s shocking 2-2 draw against Montenegro over the weekend when they let a two-goal lead slip in the final 10 minutes. “But this evening we kept the match under control,” he added.— AFP ■



Memphis Depay scored 12 goals in 10 qualifying matches. **PHOTO: AFP**