

# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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

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

**Thanks to literary works of Myanmar writers with patriotic spirit, Myanmar has been standing tall with the improvement of literature and culture among global countries despite changing the political system in various eras, says Senior General**

MYANMAR nationals and Myanmar literature bilaterally benefit each other in successive eras, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the awarding ceremony of the National Lifetime Award for Literary Achievement, National Literary Award and Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award for 2020 at the Myawady Media Centre in Yankin Township of Yangon Region yesterday morning.

First, the Senior General viewed the display of biographies of winners in the National Lifetime Award for Literary Achievement and prize-winning works in the national literary and Sarpay Beikman manuscript awards for 2020, fiction and non-fiction books published in 2020-21.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said that literature is a front part of the culture of a country as well as an important cultural arena in the development of the State

**SEE PAGE-2**



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presents 2020 National Lifetime Award for Literary Achievement to Saya Gyi U Maung Maung Latt (Naung) on 4 December 2021.

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Thanks to literary works of Myanmar writers with patriotic spirit, Myanmar has been standing tall with the improvement of literature and culture among global countries despite changing the political system in various eras, says Senior General



Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivers the speech at the awarding ceremony of the National Lifetime Award for Literary Achievement, National Literary Award and Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award for 2020 at the Myawady Media Centre in Yankin Township of Yangon Region on 4 December 2021.

FROM PAGE-1

and national affairs. Myanmar national and Myanmar literature bilaterally benefit each other in successive eras.

Myanmar literature has been about 1,000 years from the 12<sup>th</sup> century of the Bagan era to today. Myanmar language and literature are the cultural heritage that has been strongly existing in Myanmar history. The Government presents prizes for the national literary awards selected as the best works of literati with the aim of developing the Myanmar literary world.

Good manuscripts of writers which could not be published for various reasons were selected as Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award through competition and awarded in 13 genres. This year, cash awards for the prizes will be increased for honouring the literati and ensuring sufficiency for scholars with the goodwill of the State Administration Council. The cash award for the National Lifetime Award for Literary Achievement was K5 million in the past, compared with K10 million this year. The National Literary Award winners were presented K2.5 million in the past compared with K3 million. With regard to the Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award, the first, second and third prizes were awarded K1 million, K700,000 and K500,000 in the past in comparison with K1.5 million, K1 million and K700,000 for first, second and third prizes. I expect all literary personnel may be delighted with it.

The National Literary Award selection committee was formed

It can be seen that artiste organizations such as literary, motion picture, music and theatrical drama emphasized the development of the nation depending on the policies of the government in successive eras. They could stimulate the people to join the mainstream of the nation while preserving the Myanmar traditions and national characters in addition to performing education and entertainment to the people.

and entertainment to the people.

On 1 November, the Senior General recounted he met with artistes from literary, film, theatrical and music arenas and presented foodstuffs and K400 million as the fund for them. It showed the goodwill of the State and emphasis to the artistes. It is necessary to turn out the outstanding persons and qualified, capable youths in building the Union based on democracy and federalism. The Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister and party take the commemorative photo together with 2020 National Lifetime Award for Literary Achievement awardees on 4 December 2021.

with 28 experienced literati and the Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award selection committee with 24 literati. They selected the best works at different levels. This ceremony, a total of 12 of 19 genres for 1,122 books published for the first time in 2020 in the National Literary Award and 27 manuscripts in 13 genres for 259 entries in the Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Contest will be awarded.

It can be seen that artiste organizations such as literary, motion picture, music and theatrical drama emphasized the development of the nation depending on the policies of the government in successive eras. They could stimulate the people to join the mainstream of the nation while preserving the Myanmar traditions and national characters in addition to performing education

stressed the need to raise the reading habits of the new generation youths to be able to develop physical and mental prowess. Only when the youths have high reading habits, will the country have qualified human resources.

SEE PAGE-3



Thanks to literary works of Myanmar writers with patriotic spirit, Myanmar has been standing tall with the improvement of literature and culture among global countries despite changing the political system in various eras, says Senior General



The Senior General looks into the books of the display at the event.



SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presents National Literary Award (Myanmar Culture and Fine Arts) to Saya Naing Zaw.

FROM PAGE-2

It is necessary to improve libraries for raising the reading habit of the people. Relevant ministries are fulfilling the technical needs of libraries for ensuring the people have access to books and for systematically maintaining the libraries in order to give historical evidence, subject-wise and social knowledge to the people.

It was vividly found that doyen literati participated in the development of the nation in history. It is necessary to steer the people to gain good thoughts and correct knowledge, to have morale and moral characters and develop human resources through liter-



SAC member Mahn Nyein Maung presents National Literary Award - English language (Aesthetic) to Sayama Aye Phyu.



SAC member Daw Aye Nu Sein presents third prize of Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award (Novel) to Saya Tin Lin Zaw.



Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Ko Ko presents the second prize of Myanmar Culture and Fine Arts to Saya Min Shin Aung (Twantay).



Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn presents the first prize of Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award (collection of poems) to Saya Kaung Nwe.

ature. Hence, literati and writers are urged to participate in the development of the nation with might and main.

Any country and any national especially value the literature and culture. It can be seen that religions, economy and cultures can be exchanged between the countries. Thanks to the literary works

of Myanmar writers with patriotic spirit, Myanmar has been standing tall with the improvement of literature and culture among the global countries despite changing the political system in the various eras. The current generation and posterities are responsible for preserving noble traditions. So, doyen literati and literary re-

searchers are urged to hand over the stipulations and creation to new generations with goodwill. Moreover, they have to continuously discover the traditional works, perspectives and culture of Myanmar.

The Senior General presented the National Lifetime Award for Literary Achievement to vet-

eran literati U Maung Maung Latt (Naung), U Sein Hlaing (Thura Zaw) and Daw Cho Cho Tin (Ma Sandar) for 2020, awards to writer Ma Chu Pwint in the novel genre, writer Chit Su Aung in classical poem genre, and writer Naing Zaw in Myanmar culture and fine arts genre through winners and their families.

Then, SAC members Mahn Nyein Maung and Daw Aye Nu Sein presented national literary awards to winners. Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Ko Ko, Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw, and Union Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs U Min Thein Zan presented winners in the Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award.

On behalf of the winners, National Lifetime Award for Literary Achievement awardee Sayagyi U Sein Hlaing (Thura Zaw) expressed thanks to Head of State and officials for increasing the cash award for winning works to the prize winners.

Later, a video clip on the development of Myanmar literature in successive eras and the assistance of the government was presented.

The Senior General posed for documentary photos with awardees.—MNA



Gather the raw materials at home and produce export-quality products

BASED on a cooperative system, efforts must be made for the development of the rural area. Moreover, it is necessary to gather the raw materials at home and produce export-quality products. The Senior General also stressed the need to improve motor roads and railways for the development of public transport.

(Excerpt from the speech delivered by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at meeting 2/2021 of the Union Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 26 October 2021)

MoI Union Minister views "Tu Shin Hnwal Pyaw Gita Pwal Taw" singing contest at MRTV



UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn attended the "Tu Shin Hnwal Pyaw Gita

Pwal Taw" singing competition organized at MRTV on Pyay road of Yangon Region together with



Region Chief Minister U Hla Soe on 3 December (in pictures). First, the Union minister

and region chief minister cordially greeted the artistes at the festival and discussed the enter-

taining programmes. He then enjoyed the competition of nine candidates from Nay Pyi Taw and Regions/States in the second match of Group (1) of the "Tu Shin Hnwal Pyaw Gita Pwal Taw" which marks the 75<sup>th</sup> Diamond Jubilee of Union Day which will fall on 12 February 2022. After the event, the Union minister and party greeted the three judges and nine candidates and presented the gifts. A total of 45 contestants – three each from Nay Pyi Taw and Regions/States will participate in the competition. There will be 12 matches in the event and it will be held from 26 December 2021 to 11 February 2022. — MNA

Kanbawzathadi palace alive with visitors

PEOPLE were seen visiting the Kanbawzathadi Palace in Bago on 4 December, enjoying peace and relaxation. The palace was built by King Bayintnaung, founder of the Second Myanmar Empire, and is a historical and cultural heritage site. "Although fewer visitors are seen on weekdays, many visitors come and visit the palace during public holidays and weekends, and we provide the best service as possible as we can during their visit," said an official. For the convenience of visitors to the palace, a traditional Thai restaurant, a Myanmar restaurant, a barbecue and a coffee shop have been opened. For those who would like to read while relaxing, a variety of books and Wi-Fi are

available. "I am from Bago. Friends from Yangon are visiting here. We are just relaxing and using Wi-Fi after the tour to the palace and I am glad that they enjoyed it," said Ko Myo Win. It is also learned that plans are underway to open more restaurants (no alcohol, betel, smoking) to make it more convenient for the visitors. The Kanbawzathadi Palace is also an archaeological site that has been unearthed by the Department of Archeology of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, and artefacts used by ancient Myanmar kings, excavated teak pillars, the miniature and the original dimension of the royal coach used by King Bayintnaung were displayed.—Min Ye Mann/GNLM



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# MoE Union minister meets YU, YUE rectors, pro-rectors, head professors

UNION Minister for Education Dr Nyunt Pe met the rector, pro-rector and head professors of the University of Yangon yesterday.

First, the Union minister pledged to provide budgets for the library for 21 subject departments of the university, including cupboard and bookshelf and said to submit budgets via the officials if it needs to spend more than the fixed budget amount.

Similarly, the needed requirements will be fulfilled at the Universities' Central Library and Yangon University Library. Currently, the government is arranging to reopen the universities in January. The matriculation examination will be held from 30 March to 9 April. Therefore, arrangements are also being made to



check the answer papers in time. The universities are also allowed to sign MoU with for-

eign universities to cooperate in education and research. The University of Yangon and the

University of Mandalay should be implemented as role models and the teachers should work

together in unity with full of respect and teach the students with goodwill.

Then, the head professors reported on the respective subjects and the Union minister instructed the necessary things.

Afterwards, the Union minister went to the Practising High School, Yangon University of Education and inspected the school compound, and met teachers.

The Union minister also visited the Yangon University of Education and discussed with the rector, pro-rector and head professors regarding the construction of new school building, maintenance, painting processes and other matters related to sports and appointment of subject teachers. — MNA

# Workshop on formation of Myanmar Tourism Board held



UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Htay Aung attended the workshop on the formation of the Myanmar Tourism Board for the systematic implementation of sustainable tourism in Myanmar yesterday

morning through videoconferencing in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the workshop, the Union minister said that tourism is a service industry with a deep and broad nature and it is an important activity in preserv-

ing cultural heritage and natural resources, in addition to socio-economic development. He highlighted the need to take the studies drawn up at the national and international level into account in developing

projects and plans as there are possible side effects in running a tourism business.

He called on the participants of the workshop to take into account the research conducted by the Ministry and the international community in the preparation to form the Myanmar Tourism Board. He mentioned the need to consider the emergence of good plans that can cover not only the economic sector but also the development of the whole society. The private sector, government and the people must work together for sustainable tourism in Myanmar, he continued.

Afterwards, the Myanmar Tourism Federation chairman discussed matters in connexion with the formation of the board, and Director U Naung Naung Lin Aung explained the formation of the tourism boards in the international community and their activities.

The general secretary of

the Myanmar Tourism Federation presented the inclusion of the private sector in the board, the purpose of the formation, requirements, proposed amendments to be implemented. Then, a panel discussion was held by four groups on four topics, including legal and policy issues, duties and responsibilities of the board, finance, and board structure.

Director U Zeya Myo Aung briefed the results from the workshop and the Union minister concluded the meeting.

The Union minister also attended and addressed an opening ceremony of the "Training for the Trainers for the Asian Ecotourism Standard for Accommodations – AESA" organized by the Asian Ecotourism Network – AEN. It is reported that the training was attended by 98 international trainees and 29 officers from the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. — MNA

## Graduation ceremony of 63<sup>rd</sup> intake of the Defence Services Academy to be broadcast live

THE graduation ceremony of the 63<sup>rd</sup> intake of the Defence Services Academy will be broadcast live on MWD Channel, MWD Variety Channel and MRTV starting from 7:30 am on 7 December. — MNA

## 374 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 4 December, total figure rises to 524,122

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 524,122 after 374 new cases were reported on 4 December 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 499,800 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 19,135 after 8 died.—MNA



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

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 border trading zones, international airports and seaports with the Standard Operating Procedures.

Anti-COVID-19 equipment and medical products, including oxygen plants and concentrators, were imported by three companies and transported by five vehicles yesterday.

A total of 37 tonnes of masks were imported via the Chinshwehaw trading zone.



Chinshwehaw

From 1 November to 4 December, 406 tonnes of liquid oxygen carried by 166 bowzers, six tonnes of oxygen, 10,188 empty oxygen tanks, 46 oxygen plants, 16 oxygen generators, 962 oxygen concentrators for home use, 83,840 PPE suits, 43 tonnes of gloves and 830 tonnes of masks were imported by 81 companies.

In the same period, 17 bowzers transported liquid oxygen to

Yangon, Mawlamyine and Nay Pyi Taw, respectively.

Out of 46 oxygen plants, 37 were transported to Yangon, two each to Myitkyina, Yesagyo and Myothit and two each to Danuphyu, Mandalay and Yenanchaung, respectively.

Officials from the relevant departments are cooperating to facilitate and expedite the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) including online registration for the import process.

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](http://www.commerce.gov.mm). — MNA

CDF terrorists attack security forces guarding school in Kanpetlet, Chin state



Attack incident site.

A group of about 50 CDF armed terrorists attacked security forces who were providing security to the No (1) Basic Education High School in Kanpetlet Township, Chin State, on 3 December.

The armed terrorists fired at the security forces from south of the school near the football field, and from the houses north of the school at around 11:30 am. After being retaliated, they retreated at around 2:20 pm. Due to the attack, the windows of the school were shattered.

It is reported that investigations are underway to take action against perpetrators of the above ambush with the collaboration of the Tatmadaw forces.

The NUG, CRPH and PDF terrorists have been committing terrorist acts such as shootings, bombings and planting mines at schools in some areas in an attempt to disrupt the education of schoolchildren and injure peaceful communities.

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

Ministry of Health (2-8-2021)

Officials welcome Myanmar returnees at various land borders

MYANMAR nationals from abroad are welcomed at various border crossings this month.

On 3 December, a total of 257 returnees – 126 males and 131 females – returned home through Muse, Shan State

(North).

Similarly, a total of 23 returnees – 16 males and seven females – came back home through Chinshwehaw in northern Shan State and one male and two females through

Laukkai.

Healthcare officials from relevant public hospitals and members of the Tatmadaw Medical Corps conducted COVID-19 tests and provided quarantine entry documents

for the returnees.

Next, instructions of the Ministry of Health were explained systematically and departmental officials provided necessary assistance.

The township administra-

tion then escorted them to their respective places in passenger vehicles, and the infected people were kept in separate places to facilitate the necessary medical and administrative matters, officials said. —MNA



# Inputs required for winter corn cultivation costs more than double this year

THE input required for winter corn cultivation has increased more than double this year than previous years, said U Min Khaing, chair of the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

Regarding this matter, the increase was due to the rising of international input prices and it has also increased in the domestic market, he added.

“The major problem is the input price changing in the international market. It means the price of fertilizer was fetched around US\$300 per tonnes in the international market last year. But, it has increased to over \$600 per tonne this year, said U Min Khaing.

At present, this is the time of winter corn season, which produce 30 per cent of Myanmar’s corn, the association stated.

Therefore, Myanmar Corn Industrial Association is coor-



Myanmar exported approximately 2.3 million tonnes of corn to the external market in the financial year 2020-21, according to the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

minating with the private loan provider to get 500,000 loans per acre for winter corn growers.

The association also requested authorities to provide loans for winter season corn growers due to the rising input costs of the corn.

The prevailing prices of corn move in the range of K690-K710 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilograms), whereas the FOB price is approximately \$240-260 per tonne.

The country targeted to export around 2 million tonnes of

corn to the external market in the corn plantation season in the 2021-22FY, said U Min Khaing, chair of the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

Myanmar exported approximately 2.3 million tonnes of corn to the external market in the

financial year 2020-21, according to the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

Of 2.3 million tonnes, the majority of them were delivered to Thailand, whereas the remaining corns were conveyed to China, India and Viet Nam.

Myanmar exported over 2.2 million tonnes of corn to the foreign market in the past FY2019-2020, with an estimated value of over \$ 360 million, according to the data of the Ministry of Commerce.

Currently, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. There are about 1.12 million acres of corn in Myanmar and it has three corn seasons — winter, summer and monsoon.

The country produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn annually. — NN/GNLM

## Total border trade value down by \$673 mln



Among all land borders, the Myawady checkpoint sees the largest volume and value of border trade, with an estimated value of more than \$337 million this FY, followed by Hteekhee with \$142 million and Muse with \$95.36 million.

THE total border trade value has reached over US\$667.6 million as of 19 November in the mini-budget year of 2021-22, down \$673 million, according to the official statistics from the Ministry of Commerce.

The total border trade value, as of 19 November, included \$432.9 million in exports and \$234.6 million in imports. Compared to the last FY, the export earnings went down by more than \$577.96 million, while the import value decreased by \$95.9 million. This time last year, the border trade was valued at \$1.34 billion.

Myanmar border trade is being conducted through 18 border trade

points with four neighbouring countries – China, Thailand, India and Bangladesh.

Among all land borders, the Myawady checkpoint sees the largest volume and value of border trade, with an estimated value of more than \$337 million this FY, followed by Hteekhee with \$142 million and Muse with \$95.36 million.

Myanmar’s major export items are farm, animal, marine, forest, mining, CMP and other products. Myanmar mainly imports capital goods, industrial raw materials, personal goods and CMP raw materials. — Zwe/GNLM

## People receive COVID-19 vaccines in regions/states

THE Tatmadaw medics, health officials, nurses and health workers of public hospitals, including volunteers, conduct vaccination programmes in regions and states for monks, nuns, people aged over 40, inmates, people with disabilities, ethnic armed groups, patients with chronic diseases, people at IDP camps and above 12-year-old students.

About 1,260 people in Kyaukme and Hsipaw townships of Shan State (North) were inoculated against COVID-19 yesterday while 7,035 people in seven townships of Shan State (East), 26,758 monks and people in 15 townships of Mon and Kayin states, 3,215 people in three townships of

Yangon Region, 53,340 people in 26 townships of Ayeyawady Region, 15,007 people in six townships of Rakhine State, 640 people in Kalay and Taze townships of Sagaing Region, 78,200 people in seven districts of Mandalay Region and 560 people in Htantabin Township of Bago Region.

Similarly, 310 students in three townships of Shan State (East) received their vaccines, while 6,899 students in 26 townships of Ayeyawady Region, 1,714 students in Maungtau Township of Rakhine State and Paletwa Township of Chin State. The respective region commanders and officials inspected the immunization drive and instructed where necessary. — MNA



An above 12-year-old student gets jabbed against COVID-19 in Thabaung Township, Ayeyawady Region.

## Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanma Alinn, the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit [www.moi.gov.mm/mal](http://www.moi.gov.mm/mal), [www.moi.gov.mm/km](http://www.moi.gov.mm/km), [www.moi.gov.mm/nlm](http://www.moi.gov.mm/nlm) and [www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper](http://www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper).



# Encourage the development of ethnic languages

THE government has pledged to shape the country as a Union based on democracy and federalism. As a result, the political culture will be newer as a drive to march towards the goal of the nation.

Myanmar is a nation inherited by more than 130 ethnic national races. Most of the ethnics possess their own cultures and works of literature. All the people including the government are responsible for encouraging the development of the culture and literature of respective national races.

Everybody wishes to taste the development. So, everybody

needs to read for having a wider knowledge day by day. Hence, ethnic people should read to broaden their scopes for improving themselves including cultures and works of literature.

Only when they improve their works of literature, can the people from their ethnic groups understand their histories and their lands. If so, they will have newer knowledge on how to develop themselves and upgrade their areas. Thanks to the reading, they will have the knowledge on the rights of ethnics and fundamental rights of citizens mentioned in the Constitution (2008).

Various issues such as cultures, customs, languages, human rights, gender equality and humanitarian measures can be disseminated to the ethnic people through relevant ethnic languages. On one hand, they will realize internal and international affairs through media. In developing ethnic languages, emphasis should be placed not to waste valuable time.

Improvement of ethnic languages will help ethnic people set new historical records of relevant ethnic groups. The Constitution (2008) mentions Section 365 which stipulates “Every citizen shall, in accord with the law, have the right to freely develop literature, culture, arts, customs and traditions they cherish. In the process, they shall avoid any act detrimental to national solidarity. Moreover, any particular action which might adversely affect the interests of one or several other national races shall be taken only after coordinating with and obtaining the settlement of those affected.”

The authorities need to encourage the development of ethnic languages. It is because ethnicities will be varied. Hence, their interests will be different. The development of ethnic languages cannot be implemented in a single day. It will be a long term plan. Actually, it is necessary to lay a sound foundation for ethnic language affairs to flourish fiction and non-fiction works of literature related to their languages. As such, the ethnic people will have the chance to taste the fruits of the Union based on democracy and federalism.

## Undeniable Evidence

By Min Khant

ONCE you read the title, you might want to know what is being denied. According to the title, the facts presented in this article are not just opinions nor accusations, but the explanation with hard evidence. The facts should be read from the view of a citizen with a neutral and pragmatic approach, then the situation will be clearly seen.

The controversial question is whether the NUG is a terrorist organization or not. In particular, some diplomatic communities assumed that NUG could hardly be designated as a terrorist group for the reason that the majority of the people support them. In fact, people who support NUG are denying the fact that their actions are terrorist actions, while the victims, mostly innocent civilians, are considering that those are cruel violent actions. Therefore, the question of whether NUG is a terrorist organization or not needs to be answered objectively.

The assumption of some countries that NUG/PDF is supported by the majority of the people, is derived from the assumption that NLD is supported by the majority of the people. NLD won a landslide victory in the 2015 general election thanks to the “First-Past-The-Post (FPTP)” electoral system. At that time, 26,368,207 (over 26 million) out of 38,020,297 (over 38 million) eligible voters voted in election. Among them, 12 million voters voted for NLD. These figures said that even among those who cast the votes in that election, over 14 million voters did not support NLD. Therefore, the assumption that NLD is supported by the majority of the people in Myanmar is just an exaggeration.

During the NLD administration, the government failed to bring success in all aspects such as politics, economics, social and peace processes. Moreover, due to the conflicts with some ethnic groups, its popularity had declined during their term 5 years. These arguments are not based on the pessimistic view about NLD, but even NLD supporters had noticed the weak performance of the NLD government. There is also some evidence that responsible persons from the NLD party admitted that they could not fulfil the expectation of their supporters.

After taking State’s responsibility by Tatmadaw, there have been peaceful protests. The highest number of people staging protests reached on 22 February. Even on that day, there were only around 5 million people (9.52% of the total population) staging protests. However, local and international media, activists and social influencers, who were backed up by some foreign countries and organizations, intentionally portrayed the image that the whole country staged the protests against the Tatmadaw. They are still doing so until now.

During the NLD administration, the government and ruling party, by using the public budget, worked with a Facebook team to manage

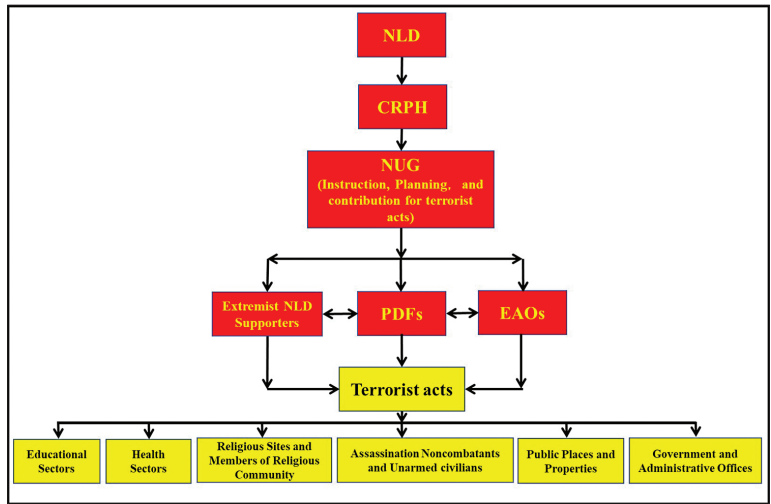
The highest number of people staging protests reached on 22 February. Even on that day, there were only around 5 million people (9.52% of the total population) staging protests. However, local and international media, activists and social influencers, who were backed up by some foreign countries and organizations, intentionally portrayed the image that the whole country staged the protests against the Tatmadaw.

the public perception or to control the public opinion via Facebook which is quite influential social media in Myanmar. In doing so, they limited the users who criticized their government and the ruling party, then, they took down the official pages and accounts of people who had different opinions with them. With the aids of some other countries, activists, journalists and social influencers were trained to promote them and attack the opponents. Therefore, the exaggerated news about protests on social media and supporting activities for NLD are intentionally set up. By using social media, they portrayed the image that the whole country supports the NLD and persuaded other people to follow the majority. Such actions have an impact on the NUG, which was basically organized by NLD.

Another thing is that although people had participated in some peaceful protests, most of them have not been supporting the NLD ex-

tremists and supporters since the latter turned their peaceful protests into violent actions. In this case, with the title of “Social Punishment”, the mobs of NLD extremists humiliated and bullied the people, who did not support them. There are plentiful kinds of evidence that they committed such social bullying on social media as well as in real life. Is it acceptable in the international community that a person who did not support a political party became a victim of social bullying? Does it comply with democratic norms and values?

According to the current situation, the international community should take a look at the matters that NUG/PDFs are attacking non-combatant targets and innocent civilians were often killed violently. Ex-MPs from the NLD party and their extremist supporters have organized CRPH, NUG and PDFs. Then, those who do not support them, innocent civilians with different political views and non-combatant civilians were titled “Dalan”, which means “informant” to the SAC government, and they were brutally killed. On 7 September 2021, NUG declared the “D-Day”, and not surprisingly, they instigated the violence across the country.



From 1 February to 27 November, under the pretext of clearing “Dalan”, NUG, PDFs made the accusation on non-combatant innocent civilians and attacked them leaving 1031 violently killed and another 1076 injured. Among them, 13 monks were murdered and 5 were tortured. 38 government staff were killed and another 81 were injured. Administrative staff in many townships and villages were brutally killed. 207 administrative staff were killed and another 155 were injured. Three health staff were killed and another eight were injured. Staffs in the education sector, including teachers, were also not an exception. 12 were killed and 15 were injured. 445 buildings in the education sector such as schools and offices were destroyed. The worst thing is that COVID-19 centres were attacked 33 times. In this case, 13 were killed and 27 were injured. Public hospitals and private clinics were also attacked 25 times. Public infrastructure such as roads and bridges were destroyed 397 times. By doing so, public places were violently attacked and destroyed 4,226 times until now.

State-owned media broadcast the news about attacking and killing of non-combatant targets all the time. At the same time, these cases were also reported with hard evidence to embassies and international counter-terrorist organizations including United Nations. Seeing such evidence, it should not be concluded that NUG, PDFs and NLD extremists were supported by the whole country by neglecting their terrorist acts. The terrorist acts and crimes of those groups are not acceptable whether from the democratic norms or the perspective of human rights or on humanitarian grounds, or international rules such as Geneva Convention. It is undeniable that these acts should be designated as terrorist acts according to the abovementioned international rules and norms.

Also, there are stronger shreds of evidence found recently. Phyto Zeyar Thaw, the NLD member, was arrested together with terrorist weapons, ammunitions, their recorded history of assassinated cases, plans to conduct more violence, and other pieces of evidence. According to those sorts of evidence, it is also undeniable that violent cases across the country were arranged and managed by NUG. Taking opportunities upon the oxygen shortages during COVID-19 third wave, they transported the weapons and ammunition, carrying inside the oxygen cylinders. Some EAOs helped with them. Also, the notebook of Phyto Zeyar Thaw revealed that NUG’s “Hit List” really exists.

Therefore, some countries who assumed that NUG was supported by the majority of the people should not rely only on the fake and fabricated news on social media and the news media who are working on their own interests. The international community is urged to see the reality of the current situation in Myanmar.

So, is it still not the “Terrorism” that school teachers, religious personnel, COVID-19 control and treatment centres were violently attacked and brutally killed? Why terrorist’s acts of the NUG/PDF and extremist NLD supporters are being neglected all the time? Seeing such situations, some people think that prestigious democratic countries, promoting human rights, are encouraging and supporting terrorism and terrorist acts.

According to the theories, there is no universally agreed definition of terrorism. However, some definitions and descriptions of terrorism can be referenced from the United States’ laws and described statements. According to them, there are 72 groups designated as terrorist organizations. 14 groups were removed from that list. The US designated terrorist organizations according to terrorism definition of Foreign Relations Authorization Act – Finacial Years 1988 and Immigration and prescribed terrorist activity in Section 212 of Nationality Act.

The United States defines “terrorism” as “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents. Terrorist acts include threatening, planning and attempting to conduct violence by using any explosive devices directly or indirectly. Therefore, the violent cases happening in Myanmar can be designated as terrorist acts not only with norms and laws of Myanmar but also with the definitions prescribed by more than a 200-year-old democratic country, the US.

The intention of NUG, controlling the public by fear, conducting violence, is not to raise the voices of their opponents. In other words, by using terrorist ways, they have been trying to make unsupported groups become their supporters, as well as portraying the image that there is no unsupported group in the country. Actually, people don’t dare to oppose them but on social media, it is seemingly that majority of the people support them because opposite voices are limited.

Professor Antonio Cassese, the international law expert from Italy, defined that the intent to spread fear among the population which would generally entail the creation of public danger is partially terrorism. According to “The Law of Armed Conflict”, attacking non-combatants is prohibited in any armed conflicts. Prohibiting crimes of violent extremists and protecting non-combatants from violence is totally in line with local laws as well as international laws.

During the time of peaceful protests in Myanmar, security forces did not shoot the protesters, but those peaceful protests are gradually turned into violence, and then, security forces had to control the riots with a minimum level of force as per the prescribed laws. Other countries also exercise the same practice. Even in countries with the highest democracy, such kinds of riots with violence were controlled by using necessary forces. Knowing that NUG/PDFs have been conducting violent acts with extremism, some countries and the international community have a connection with them. It should be aware that such kind of connection can encourage terrorism and enhance the terrorist acts in our society.

Quite the contrary, countries with the highest democracy, standing on humanitarian grounds, are too optimistic about such terrorist acts in Myanmar. And thus, they are seemingly difficult to designate them as terrorists. However, if we observe the situation objectively, we can see the reality and would accept that NUG and PDFs are terrorists. Where you stand determines what you see and what you do not see. For instance, looking at Afghanistan, it was assumed that that country had the world’s deadliest terrorist groups in the past, and was attacked under the topic of “war on terror”. But now, the international community is in contact with them and support them.



### Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 4 December 2021)

**BAY INFERENCE:** According to the observations at (18:30)hrs MST today, the Cyclonic Storm “JAWAD” over the West central Bay of Bengal has moved slightly Northwestwards and centered at about (520) Nautical miles West-Northwest of Coco-Island, (580) Nautical miles West-Southwest of Pathein (Myanmar), (110) Nautical miles East-Southeast of Vishakhapatnam, (165) Nautical miles South-Southwest of Gopalpur, (205)Nautical miles South-Southwest of Puri and (250)Nautical miles South-Southwest of Paradip (India). Weather is cloudy over the North Bay and Westcentral Bay and a few cloud to partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 5 December, 2021:** Rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagaing, Mandalay, and Taninthayi regions and Kachin, Chin and Rakhine states. Degree of certainty is (60%) . Weather will be generally fair in the remaining regions and states.

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35)mph. Wave height will be about (7-9) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Sagaing Region and Kachin, Chin and Rakhine states.

**FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 5 December, 2021:** Generally fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 5 December, 2021:** Generally fair weather.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 5 December, 2021:** Partly cloudy.

Therefore, a change in where you stand changes everything. Illegal and terrorist NUG/PDFs are still conducting violence and organized crimes, killing innocent but unsupported people under the pretext of their political goal.

In conclusion, no matter what the international community does not know about the violent acts of NUG/PDFs or neglecting such violence, Myanmar as a sovereign country has already designated them as terrorist groups according to the Counter-terrorism Law of Myanmar. The assumption that NLD was supported by the majority of the people was left behind. The disqualification of NLD and violent acts of NUG/PDFs have changed public opinion. The reputation of NLD was ruined by PDFs that were supported by NUG, which was also derived from NLD. In spite of emotional NLD members and extremist supporters, the majority of the people want to live peacefully without NLD, NUG and PDFs. Especially, those who saw that many lives were ruined by such extremist groups, and sympathized with the victims, are disgusted by such extremists. Therefore, some countries who assumed that NUG was supported by the majority of the people should not rely only on the fake and fabricated news on social media and the news media who are working on their own interests. The international community is urged to see the reality of the current situation in Myanmar.

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# Life Expectancy at Birth and influential factors in Myanmar

By a medic

CONTINUED FROM  
YESTERDAY

### Life expectancy at birth in neighbouring nations

Singapore has the highest life expectancy at birth of all the Southeast Asian countries in 2021 with its citizens expected to live to an average of 84.1 years, followed by Thailand (77.7), Malaysia (76.3), Brunei (76.3), Viet Nam (75.7), Indonesia (72.3), the Philippines (71.6), Cambodia (70.5), Laos (68.9) and Myanmar (67.8). The neighbouring country like China has a life expectancy at birth of 76.9 years, while India has 69.7 years and Bangladesh has 72.6 years. For these facts, Myanmar has the lowest life expectancy at birth in regional countries.

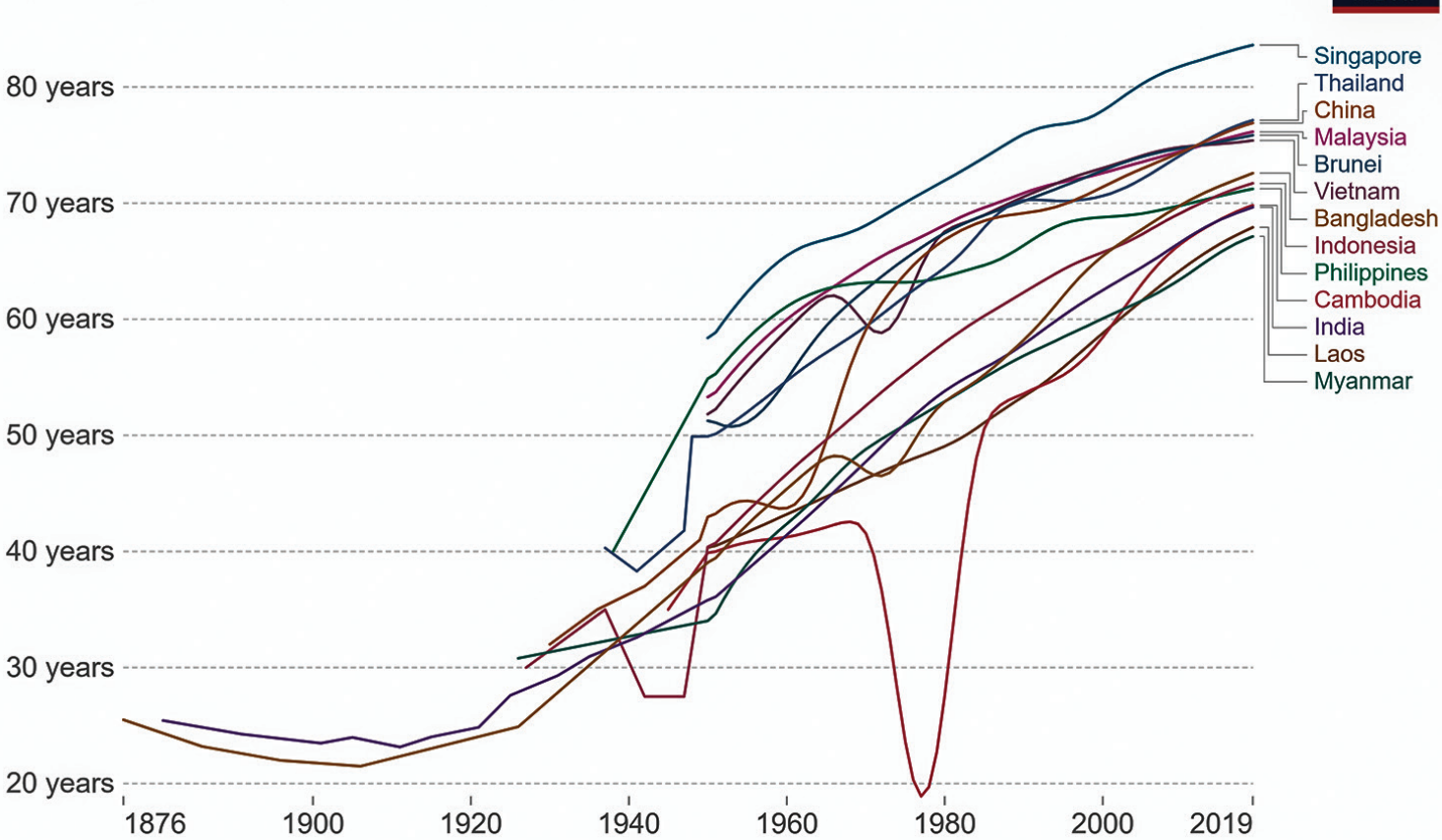
### Things to know regarding life expectancy at birth of Myanmar

The life expectancy at birth of Myanmar is 67.8 years in 2021. The life expectancy at birth of men is 64.7 years while 70.8 years for women.

The life expectancy at birth of Myanmar in 1950 was 33.6 years and it reached 58.5 years in 1995, 60.1 years in 2000, 61.6 years in 2005, 63.5 years in 2010, 65.8 years in 2015 and 67.2 years in 2020.

Another major factor affecting the life expectancy at birth of the country is the healthcare system. Myanmar is one of the countries with a weak healthcare system. Most people rely on the out-of-pocket payment system for their health issues. Only more than 600,000 people out of 55 million of the population have their health insurance. Moreover, the country faces a shortage of health workers seriously. At the same time, the human resources not only the numbers of doctors but also the numbers of nurses, medics and lab experts are also reducing. In the proportion of the doctors and population of Myanmar, there are only 61 doctors per every 100,000 people. According to WHO, there should be 100 doctors per every 100,000 people. To meet such norms, it needs to try hard to get enough ratios of doctors. According to data, Myanmar produced more than 30,000 doctors between 1995 and 2020. Among these

Life expectancy, 1876 to 2019



Source: Riley (2005), Clio Infra (2015), and UN Population Division (2019)  
OurWorldInData.org/life-expectancy • CC BY  
Note: Shown is period life expectancy at birth, the average number of years a newborn would live if the pattern of mortality in the given year were to stay the same throughout its life.

Natural disasters and epidemics also shorten life expectancy. Myanmar had a lower life expectancy due to Cyclone Nargis in 2008. Experts warn that the current global pandemic, COVID-19, could also lower the life expectancy of some countries in the coming years.

numbers, only more than 15,000 people serve duties at health departments until 2020. The high numbers of doctors who do not enter the duties cause a great loss for the country and entire people. The lack of doctors is a direct impact on the healthcare system of the country.

Although the country has a weak healthcare system, the governments tried hard to improve the sector. The health expenditure in 2011 is 1.7 per cent of GDP and it increased up to 2.1 per cent in 2013 and five per cent in 2014. These health

expenditures are especially in maternal and children health issues.

Although it cannot be exactly said that the move to improve the life expectancy at birth is perfect, Myanmar is on the right track.

International support also plays a key role in improving the healthcare system. In such doing, WHO is working together for Myanmar's Health Vision 2030. The World Bank has also provided \$200 million for the Essential Healthcare Services Package in Myanmar. In addition,

international organizations such as Japan International Cooperation Agency-JICA and Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere-CARE have been assisting in the healthcare system, which will affect the country's life expectancy.

Another factor that affects a country's life expectancy is which diseases people in the country are dying for. If we look at the causes of death of Myanmar people, malaria, TB, diarrhoea, and immunodeficiency, are the leading causes of death. Today, 68 per cent of all deaths are due to non-communicable diseases such as high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, heart disease and asthma. They also highlight what diseases Myanmar should control to extend its life expectancy.

Natural disasters and epidemics also shorten life expectancy. Myanmar had a lower life expectancy due to Cyclone Nargis in 2008. Experts warn that the current global pandemic, COVID-19, could also lower the life expectancy of some countries in the coming years.

One of the reasons why Myanmar has the lowest life expectancy in the region is that it has

been mired in internal armed conflicts since independence. Premature deaths and injuries, weaknesses in the country's economy, education and health due to inter-ethnic armed conflicts, the country's life expectancy have not improved as much as it should.

However, despite the armed conflicts, Myanmar's life expectancy has gradually increased. And one of the reasons is that the poverty in the country has been reduced. In terms of poverty, 48.2 per cent of the population was below the poverty line in 2005, but by 2017 it was only 24.8 per cent. At the same time, successive governments have increased spending on the health sector. International organizations and allies have also contributed to alleviating poverty in Myanmar.

For example, the World Bank provided \$200 million in 2017 to stabilize the country's economy, while China provided infrastructures and vocational training courses to relieve rural poverty. This will alleviate poverty and increase the life expectancy of the country. — Translated.

TO BE CONTINUED



# India announces first two cases of Omicron variant

INDIA announced its first two cases of the Omicron Covid variant on Thursday, months after a devastating wave of the virus killed more than 200,000 people around the country.

Top health ministry official Luv Agarwal said two men in southern Karnataka state, aged 66 and 46, had tested positive for the variant.

“As per the protocols all their primary and secondary contacts have been traced and are being tested,” he told a press briefing.

India has yet to impose new blanket international travel bans but on Monday the health ministry ordered all inbound travellers from “countries at-risk” to undergo mandatory post-arrival Covid testing, along with the random testing of other international arrivals.

The nation’s biggest city Mumbai on Wednesday imposed mandatory seven-day quarantines for all passengers arriving from at-risk countries.

Neither of the two identified cases had been in contact with each other and one had no recent travel history, authorities in Karnataka’s capital Bangalore told reporters.



Medical staff pose next to a Rangoli design on the floor of the Ramaiah Hospital in Bangalore, as they celebrate India administering its billionth COVID-19 vaccine dose. **PHOTO: AFP**

Gautam Menon, a professor at India’s Ashoka University who has worked on Covid-19 modelling, said it was likely the Omicron variant entered India before it was first reported in South Africa, “since there were some delays in testing samples”.

Omicron represents a fresh challenge to global efforts to battle the pandemic with several nations already re-imposing restrictions many had hoped were a thing of the past.

It is the latest coronavirus strain to emerge since the start of the pandemic, including the

currently dominant Delta variant, which was first detected in India in October 2020.

More than 200,000 people around the country died in a devastating Covid wave between April and June that overwhelmed hospitals and crematoriums.

It struck after one of the world’s biggest religious gatherings, the Kumbh Mela, which attracted around 25 million Hindu pilgrims.

That gathering, along with large state election rallies, was blamed by experts for fuelling the Delta surge.—AFP ■

# 5 cases of Omicron variant confirmed in New York state: governor

THE state of New York has confirmed five cases of the coronavirus Omicron variant, Governor Kathy Hochul said Thursday, bringing the total number of US detections of the new strain to eight.

“New York State has confirmed five cases of the omicron variant,” Hochul said in a Twitter post aimed at reassuring residents of the nation’s fourth most populous state that the detections were not unexpected.

“Let me be clear: This is not cause for alarm. We knew this variant was coming and we have the tools to stop the

spread,” she said.

“Get your vaccine. Get your booster. Wear your mask.”

It was not immediately clear whether the new cases were in or near New York City — the country’s most populous metropolitan area — and whether they were detected in people who had recently returned from travelling outside the country. Eight cases have so far been confirmed in the United States, with at least one, in Minnesota, involving a person with no recent international travel history, signalling the strain is already circulating inside the country.—AFP ■



A sign for a vaccine site stands in Staten Island on 29 November 2021 in New York City. **PHOTO: SPENCER PLATT/ AFP**

# Germany to introduce stricter COVID-19 restrictions for unvaccinated people

GERMANY announced on Thursday it will introduce stricter rules for unvaccinated people, in order to fight the fourth wave of COVID-19 infections in the country.

The so-called 2G rules, approved by the federal and state governments, will apply to the retail sector, meaning that only vaccinated and recovered people can access stores. However, stores for essential items are to be excluded from this rule.

2G stands for “geimpft” (vaccinated) or “genesen” (recovered).

“The situation in our country is serious,” said acting Chancellor Angela Merkel during a press conference after a meeting with her designated successor Olaf Scholz, and the heads of government from the federal states.

Meetings in public or private spaces with people who are not vaccinated or have not recently recovered from COVID-19 will be limited to one household plus

a maximum of two people from another household.

Indoor clubs and discotheques are to be closed where regional seven-day incidence rates of over 350 new infections per 100,000 inhabitants are reported, the government said.

Merkel stressed that the stricter COVID-19 measures are an “act of national solidarity”, which is required to reduce

infection numbers and relieve the pressure on the country’s health system.

Although Germany’s seven-day incidence rate has stopped climbing for the third day in a row, it still stood at 439.2 on Thursday, according to the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) for infectious diseases.—Xinhua ■



People line up to get inoculated with COVID-19 vaccines at a vaccination station inside a shopping centre in Berlin, Germany, 25 Nov 2021. **PHOTO: XINHUA/SHAN YUQI**

# Dutch Covid surge fuelled by liberal ways, say experts

EVEN before it became a hot-spot for Omicron variant cases, the Netherlands was one of the countries worst hit by the latest wave of Covid-19. Experts say that the spike despite an 85 per cent adult vaccination rate is partly due to very Dutch ideas of personal freedom and social responsibility.

Masks often remain unworn and Covid passes unchecked as the government shies away from enforcing its guidelines. This approach reflects a long-standing reliance on a “social contract” between citizens and authorities to keep this low-lying nation’s head above the waves.

At the start of the pandemic, Prime Minister Mark Rutte announced an “intelligent lockdown” that was more lax than much of Europe.

“We don’t work like that in the Netherlands, where the government says ‘you have to do this, you have to do that,’”

Rutte said in March 2020.

At first the Dutch, used to a highly consensual political system, complied. “We were shoulder to shoulder against the virus,” recalls Mark Bonten, an epidemiologist and government adviser.

## ‘Aversion to rules’

But things have changed since then, with the increasingly unpopular Dutch government caught in a cycle of lifting restrictions too quickly, and then reimposing them.

Cases recently soared to record daily levels of more than 20,000 cases in a country of 17 million people. The Netherlands had the fourth most cases per 100,000 inhabitants in Europe over the past week, according to an AFP database.

Hospital intensive care units have become overwhelmed, operations have been cancelled while the army has been brought in to help.—AFP ■





People walk through the Myeongdong shopping district in Seoul on 27 Aug. **PHOTO: JUNG YEON-JE/AFP**

## S.Korea’s online shopping hits record high in October

SOUTH Korea’s online shopping hit a record monthly high in October amid the continued COVID-19 pandemic, statistical office data showed Friday. Shopping in cyberspace surged 21.7 per cent from a year earlier to 16.9 trillion won (14.3 billion U.S. dollars) in October, according to Statistics Korea, marking the highest since data began to be compiled in 2001. Robust demand remained for

online purchases as people refrained from outside activity amid the lasting pandemic. The online purchase of electronic products and mobile devices soared 36.5 per cent to reach a fresh record high of 2.2 trillion won (1.9 billion U.S. dollars) due to demand for heaters in wintertime and newly launched smartphones. Online demand for travel and transport services and the

culture and leisure services spiked over 30 per cent in October from a year earlier. Mobile shopping through smartphones advanced 28.6 per cent over the year to hit a new high of 12.23 trillion won (10.4 billion U.S. dollars) in October. Mobile shopping accounted for 72.3 per cent of the total online shopping in October, up 3.8 percentage points from a year ago. — Xinhua ■

## Vietnam police smash \$3.8 billion cryptocurrency ring

VIETNAMESE police have smashed a huge cryptocurrency ring worth around \$3.8 billion, state media said Friday, as authorities battle rampant illegal gambling in the country. Fifty-nine people were detained in southern business hub Ho Chi Minh City, accused of luring players through social media to place bets online, according to the city police’s official newspaper. The gambling ring is reportedly the biggest ever uncovered by Vietnamese police.

State media said players were instructed to buy a cryptocurrency wallet and convert their money into one of two digital currencies, Ethereum or USDT — also known as Tether — before placing bets on Swiftonline.live and Nagaclubs.com. To entice new players, the detainees posted pictures on social networks showing off their fancy cars, expensive houses and extravagant parties. To sway the more cautious,

scammers also offered players insurance packages, with the promise of a refund if they did not win after six games. However, during periods when there were a large number of players, the ring leaders crashed the websites in order to steal money from the digital wallets and avoid detection by police. Officers confiscated 55 laptops and desktops, 39 mobile phones and seven luxury cars from the gang in Ho Chi Minh City.—AFP ■



Vietnam’s Ho Chi Minh Stock Exchange has established itself as one of Asia’s leading bourses. **PHOTO: VNA / XINHUA/FILE**

## Italy’s economy projected to grow 6.3 pct this year: ISTAT



A pharmacist wearing a protective respiratory mask tends to a customer in Codogno, southeast of Milan. **PHOTO: AFP**

ITALY’S statistics office on Friday predicted the country’s economy would grow 6.3 per cent this year and a further 4.7 per cent in 2022. The estimates from the National Statistics Institute, or ISTAT, increased from an estimate of 4.7 per cent economic growth this year and 4.4 per cent next year released in June. The increases come de-

spite growing economic uncertainty tied to global supply chain issues and potential impacts from the spread of the highly-mutated omicron coronavirus variant. According to ISTAT, the main drivers of economic growth going forward will be domestic demand for products, which is said to increase by 6.0 per cent this year and 4.4 per

cent next year. Exports are expected to grow much more modestly, which are predicted to grow by 0.3 per cent both this year and next. New economic investments are expected to be a major driver this year, rising 15.7 per cent compared to 2020, though the level of new investments will slow next year, growing by 7.5 per cent. Household spending is also expected to see an increase in both 2021 and 2022, up by 1.8 per cent and 2.2 per cent, respectively. Regarding the economic risks going forward, ISTAT said its modeling “takes into account the effects of the ‘National Recovery and Resilience Plan’” — the more than 200 billion euros (225 billion US dollars) in grants and loans from the European Union — as well as “the absence of significant measures that would limit productive activities due to the health emergency”.—Xinhua ■

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Thailand reaffirms APEC host year priorities

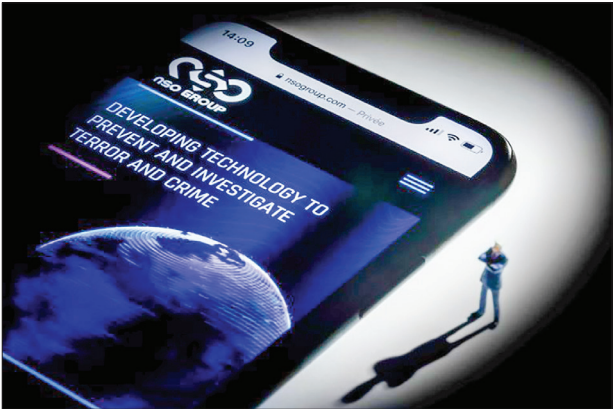
THAILAND has reaffirmed the APEC 2022 priorities under the theme “Open. Connect. Balance” as the APEC Informal Senior Officials’ Meeting concluded on Friday. The meeting, held in Phuket with the participation of APEC senior officials and representatives from 21 member economies, was chaired by Thani Thongphakdi, permanent secretary for foreign affairs of Thailand and APEC 2022 Senior Officials’ Meeting (SOM) chair. Towards post-COVID-19 economic recovery, the meeting voiced strong support for Thailand’s host year priorities, including works on promoting balanced, inclusive and sustainable growth, while open trade and investment and advancing regional economic integration were placed as APEC’s core principles to reach the goal, according to a statement released by Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—Xinhua ■

#### China unveils pilot wealth management products for retirement savings

The first batch of pilot wealth management products aimed at retail investors looking to boost their retirement savings has been unveiled on Friday, according to China’s top banking regulator. Starting on 6 Dec, local individual investors in the pilot cities of Wuhan, Chengdu, Shenzhen and Qingdao could purchase the financial products from the wealth management units of four designated banks, said the China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission. The banks include the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, China Construction Bank, China Merchants Bank and China Everbright Bank.—Xinhua ■



Pegasus maker probes reports its spyware targeted US diplomats



The Israeli spyware maker NSO says it is probing reports its technology was used to target US diplomats in Africa. PHOTO: AFP

THE Israeli spyware maker in the Pegasus surveillance scandal said Friday it was investigating reports the firm's technology was used to target iPhones of some US diplomats in Africa.

Apple has begun alerting people whose phones were hacked by NSO's spyware, which essentially turns handsets into pocket spying devices and sparked controversy this

year after reportedly being used on activists, journalists and politicians.

"On top of the independent investigation, NSO will cooperate with any relevant government authority and present the full information we will have," the firm said in a statement.

NSO said it has not confirmed its tools were used, but opted to "terminate relevant customers'

access to the system" due to the seriousness of the allegations reported by Reuters and the Washington Post.

The Post reported that Apple alerted 11 US diplomats that their iPhones were hacked in recent months, citing people familiar with the notifications who said the attacks focused on officials working in Uganda or east Africa.

NSO Group's spyware has been engulfed in scandal since reports that Pegasus was used by foreign government clients to target the phones of human rights activists, embassy employees and others.

Apple sued the firm last month seeking to block NSO from using the Silicon Valley giant's services to target the over one billion iPhones in circulation.—AFP ■

China-Laos Railway opens, putting Laos on track from landlocked to land-linked

THE China-Laos Railway, a landmark project of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation, started operation on Friday.

Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and Chinese president, and Thongloun Sisoulith, general secretary of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee and Lao president, jointly witnessed the opening of the railway via video link.

The electrified passenger and freight railway runs 1,035 km, including 422 km in Laos, from the city of Kunming, southwest China's Yunnan Province, to Lao capital Vientiane.

On behalf of the CPC, the Chinese government and the Chinese people, Xi extended congratulations on the opening of the China-Laos Railway and hailed the builders of the

two countries.

Calling China-Laos Railway a flagship project of mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries, Xi called on both sides to make persistent efforts, maintain and operate the railway well, develop and construct well the areas along the line, and create a golden line for the benefit of the people of both countries.

Xi said the China-Laos Railway is a landmark

project of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation. In recent years, with the goals of high standard, sustainability and improvement of people's livelihood, China has continuously improved the level of Belt and Road cooperation, achieved mutual benefits and win-win results for participating countries, and opened up new space for the development of the world economy.—Xinhua ■



A train is pictured in Vientiane, Laos, as a Chinese-built railway that connects the Lao capital to the Chinese city of Kunming opens on 3 December 2021. PHOTO: KYODO

NEWS IN BRIEF

French champagne houses expect bumper 2021 sales

CHAMPAGNE sales are expected to clock up a record year as shops and restaurants replenish stocks after months of virus-related restrictions and as retail demand surges, an industry body said Friday.

The outlook for the key Christmas and New Year festive season, however, is clouded by uncertainty over the recently detected Omicron variant of the coronavirus.

Jean-Marie Barillere, co-president of the CIVC champagne industry association and president of the champagne brand group UMP, told AFP that the sector was headed for sales of 315 million bottles this year, representing turnover of 5.5 billion euros (\$6.2 billion).

If confirmed, that would beat the current annual sales record of 5 billion euros, reached in 2019 before Covid struck.

The sales surge comes as severe spring frosts followed by summer rains wreaked havoc on vineyards across France, which are forecast to report harvest losses of up to a third on a year.

But champagne must be aged over a year and producers traditionally keep millions of bottles locked away in their cellars to ensure steady supplies from one year to the next.

Strong exports, especially to English-speaking countries, were a big factor for the bumper year, Barillere said.

"The pandemic has created new consumer habits," he said. "Everything related to entertaining at home is in high demand, including champagne."

But the prospects for traditional events and restaurant dining over Christmas and New Year's depends on Covid developments, and whether the Omicron strand prompts new travel restrictions, curfews or lockdowns.

Dozens of countries have reported Omicron cases and the World Health Organization has said it could take weeks to determine how dangerous the variant really is.—AFP ■

Maersk owner acquires medical diagnostic services provider Unilabs



A container ship operated by the Danish shipping giant Maersk. PHOTO: AFP

A.P. Moller Holding, owner of Danish shipping giant Maersk, announced on Friday the acquisition of Unilabs, a leading European provider of medical diagnostic services, including COVID-19 testing.

The acquisition delivers "specialized specialist knowledge, industrial scale, and excellent procedures, important success criteria in diagnostics," according to Jan T. Nielsen, investment director at A.P. Moller Holding.

Unilabs employs 12,600 people and has over 200 labs globally. One of the biggest European medical

diagnostics firms, it delivers COVID-19 tests to 15 countries, according to a statement from A.P. Moller Holding. Unilabs generated 15 billion Danish kroner (2.2 billion U.S. dollars) in revenues and an operating profit of 4.5 billion Danish kroner between September 2020 and September 2021, it said.

According to the statement, the parties have agreed not to disclose the transaction details. The deal is now awaiting approval by the relevant competition authorities. (1 Danish krone = 0.15 U.S. dollar). —Xinhua ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ALS SUMIRE VOY.NO. (1062W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ALS SUMIRE VOY.NO. (1062W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **5-12-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department  
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:  
**M/S OCEAN NETWORK EXPRESS (S'PORE) PTE LTD**

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NEWS  
IN BRIEFUK's Conservative  
Party beats off  
challenge in by-  
election

BRITISH Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative Party won a by-election Friday in what was seen as a crucial test of the governing party.

With the gap between the Conservatives and main opposition Labour Party narrowing in the wake of sleaze allegations, all eyes were focused on a by-election in suburban London's parliamentary seat of Old Bexley and Sidcup.

Local councillor Louie French became the constituency's new Member of Parliament (MP), succeeding former government minister James Brokenshire, who died of cancer in October aged 53.

French won the by-election with 11,189 votes, with Labour's Daniel Francis coming second with 6,711 votes. French won 51.5 per cent of the votes, compared to the 64.5 per cent won by the Conservatives in 2019.—Xinhua ■

Ecuador must  
guarantee security at  
prisons: UN groups

TWO UN committees on Thursday called on Ecuador to guarantee security in the country's prisons, where more than 300 inmates have died since early 2020 in gang violence.

Independent experts from the Committee against Torture and the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture said in a joint statement they were "appalled by the continuing massive violence in Ecuador's prisons".

"Ecuador has the obligation to ensure security inside its prisons by providing appropriate training to a sufficient number of prison officers and developing strategies to reduce violence among inmates," said Claude Heller, who chairs the Committee against Torture.

On 29 November, Ecuadorian President Guillermo Lasso extended the state of emergency in the country's prisons for another month. The presidential decree provides for the "mobilization" of the police and the army to "reinforce and re-establish order and control" in all the country's prisons.—AFP ■

Francis set for first papal visit to  
Athens in two decades

POPE Francis on Saturday flies into Athens for the first visit by a pontiff in two decades, with the Greek capital under high security amid anti-papal sentiment among Orthodox hardliners.

The pope's two-day trip will see him return on Sunday to the island of Lesbos, which he last visited in 2016 during the early years of the migration crisis.

But his visit to Athens is the first by a pope since John Paul II in 2001, which in turn was the first papal visit to the city since the 1054 Schism between the Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

Francis is seeking to improve historically difficult relations with the Orthodox Church



In Cyprus, Francis condemned "slavery" and "torture" in migrant camps. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

while also highlighting the plight of thousands of refugees and asylum seekers in Greece.

"I ardently long to meet you all, all, not only Catholics, but all of you," he said in a message

before embarking on his trip, which began on Thursday with a two-day visit to Cyprus. "By meeting you, I will quench my thirst at the springs of fraternity," he said.

Francis on Saturday will meet Greek President Katerina Sakellariopoulou, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and the head of the Church of Greece Archbishop Ieronymos. He is then scheduled to see members of Greece's small Catholic community. "The Holy Father's presence in Greece is a boost for us... Catholics in Greece must take advantage of it," Markos Foscolos, parish priest of St Nicholas on the island of Tinos, told reporters this week.—AFP ■

Cambodia announces 8 December as national day of  
mourning for Prince Ranariddh's death

File photo shows Cambodian Prince Norodom Ranariddh (L) alongside Prime Minister Hun Sen (R) in July 2004 in Phnom Penh.

PHOTO: KYODO

CAMBODIA announced 8 December as the national day of mourning for the passing away of Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the country's Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen said in a circular on Friday.

Hun Sen said Prince Ranariddh, chairman of the Supreme Privy Advisory Council to the king, former first prime minister and ex-president of the National Assembly, had greatly contributed to the cause of the nation, religion and monarchy during his life time.

"All ministries, institutions, schools, hospitals, pagodas, civil servants, armed forces and peo-

ple across the country must fly national flags at half-mast on 8 December 2021," he said. "All television and radio stations must suspend performing and broadcasting joyful spectacles on 8 December 2021."

Ranariddh, who was also president of royalist Funcinpec Party and a half-brother of current King Norodom Sihamoni, died in France on 28 November of illness at the age of 77.

The prince's body will be flown to Cambodia from France on 5 December for a traditional funeral, Funcinpec Party's spokesman Nhoeun Raden said on Friday.—Xinhua ■

## Prosecutors appeal dismissal of Philippines ferry disaster case

A lawyer for the families of victims of a 2008 Philippines ferry disaster vowed Saturday to challenge the dismissal of a criminal case against a shipping company executive.

The Princess of the Stars capsized after hitting a reef in the central Philippines during a typhoon in June 2008 — only about 50 of the 850 passengers and crew survived.

State prosecutors had charged Edgar Go, an executive at the ill-fated vessel's owner Sulpicio Lines Inc, with "reckless imprudence resulting in multiple homicide" for allowing it to sail

despite storm warnings.

But a Manila regional trial court dismissed the case for lack of evidence, according to a copy of the ruling dated 18 November seen by AFP.

State prosecutors have appealed the decision, according to a court filing.

Persida Acosta, the country's chief public attorney who represents families of the victims, said Saturday she will file a similar appeal on Monday. "It appears there is no one liable anymore," Acosta told AFP. "It's painful to us."

The ship's captain was also charged over the tragedy, but he



A rigid-hull, inflatable boat from Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham helps search for survivors of the capsized commercial passenger ferry MV Princess of the Stars in June 2008. PHOTO: US NAVY/AFP/FILE

is missing and presumed dead. Sulpicio Lines was later

renamed Philippine Span Asia Carrier Corp.—AFP ■



# Iran nuclear talks adjourn, resume next week

THE talks aimed at re-viving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal adjourned here on Friday after a formal meeting of the P4+1 group (Britain, China, France and Russia plus Germany), the European Union (EU) and Iran, and will resume next week. During the talks that have started since Monday, Iran submitted two draft proposals on Thursday for the 2015 nuclear agreement, from which the United States withdrew in 2018. However, senior diplomats from Britain, France and Germany on Friday expressed “disappointment and concern” after they “thoroughly and carefully” analyzed the changes proposed by Iran to the text negotiated during the previous six negotiating rounds, the last of which was held in June.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said Friday that the ongoing negotiation process is “good.” “Overall negotiation process is good, but slow,” he made the remarks in a telephone conversation with the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell.—Xinhua ■

## OBITUARY

### In Loving Memory of Hasan Behbahany

July 4, 1926 – Nov 21, 2021

Hasan Behbahany passed away peacefully in his home on November 21, 2021 in Lake Oswego, Oregon surrounded by his family. Hasan was born on the 4th of July, a fitting date for someone who lived the American dream. Hasan was the youngest of 13 children, born in Rangoon, Burma during British rule. He met the love of his life Nergis Tamimi in Rangoon, Burma and they married on May 18, 1950. They remained devoted to each other for the entirety of their lives. Nergis passed away in 2014, in love with her beloved Hasan until her final days. Hasan completed an autobiography in 2016 which he dedicated to his mother, but also inscribed the opening page with a very telling note. “Nergis was my strength and inspiration, my heart and my soul, the love of my life. She will be remembered forever. I will miss her as long as I live.” Hasan & Nergis never had children of their own, but they both played a significant role in the lives of all their nephews and nieces while treating them like their own children. He is buried in Portland beside his beloved wife.

# US vows to prevent any Russian invasion of Ukraine

US President Joe Biden said Friday he would make it “very, very difficult” for Russia to launch any invasion of Ukraine, which warned that a large-scale attack may be planned for next month. Washington and Kiev say Moscow has massed troops near Ukraine’s borders and accuse Russia of planning an invasion.

Biden and President Vladimir Putin are due to hold a video call shortly to discuss the rising tensions, both sides confirmed Friday. Biden told reporters in Washington he was putting together “the most comprehensive and meaningful set of initiatives to make it very, very difficult for Mr Putin to go ahead and do what people are worried he may do.” Moscow seized Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 and has since backed separatists fighting Kiev in the east of the country. The conflict has left more than 13,000 dead. “The most likely time to reach readiness for escalation will be the end of January,” Ukrainian Defence Minister Oleksiy Reznikov told parliament in Kiev on Friday. A report in the Washington Post on Friday citing US officials and an intelligence document said Russia was planning a multi-front offensive involving up to 175,000 troops as soon as next year. Reznikov said a “winter training period” had started in Russia and that Moscow had already launched exercises near Ukrainian territory.

He estimated that Russia had around 100,000 troops near Ukraine’s border. Russia denies any military build-up.— AFP ■



A Ukrainian soldier walks along a trench on the front line with Russia-backed separatists not far from Gorlivka, Donetsk region, Ukraine, 26 Nov 2021. **PHOTO: ANATOLII STEPANOV / AFP**

# Peru’s Fujimori can’t be tried over forced sterilizations for now



Activists demonstrated in Lima, Peru for the thousands of women victims of forced sterilizations in the country between 1996 and 2000 under a programme authorized by now-jailed former president Alberto Fujimori. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

A Peruvian judge ruled Friday that former president Alberto Fujimori cannot for now be prosecuted over alleged forced sterilizations that happened during his administration, because the allegation was not included in his extradition request. THE disgraced ex-leader who is serving a 25-year prison sentence over human rights violations and corruption is being investigated over the forced sterilization of hundreds of thousands of poor, mostly indigenous women during his final four years in power. In 2007,

Chile granted extradition of the ex-president, who led Peru from 1990 to 2000. Judge Rafael Martinez in his ruling said Fujimori can only be prosecuted over the sterilizations if authorized by the Chilean Supreme Court, which previously green-lighted his extradition.

Prosecution is prevented at present “as these facts are not included among the crimes for which his extradition was authorized,” Martinez said. Martinez was tasked with deciding whether the 83-year-old Fujimori could be brought to trial by the 1,317 plaintiffs in the sterilization case, which began in 2002 but has been shelved and reopened several times.—AFP ■

# Record drug money bust in Panama: \$10 mn in cash

PANAMANIAN authorities have seized a record haul of drug money – more than \$10 million in cash – in a crackdown on gangs linked to neighbouring Colombia’s embattled Gulf Clan.

It took investigators more than 12 hours to add up the money using a dozen machines, several of which failed under the strain, the prosecutor’s office said. The money was found in three different hiding places in a house in Nueva Providencia in the Caribbean province of Colon. “This is, without a doubt, the largest seizure of drug trafficking money made in the entire history of the country,” prosecutor Javier Caraballo told reporters Thursday.

“The money-counting machines are finding it hard to keep up... some got damaged (from the counting) and had to be replaced.”

The bust was part of a police operation that resulted in the arrest of 57 people this week with suspected links to the Gulf Clan, which has been weakened by the capture in Colombia of its leader and dozens of other members since last month. The clan controlled about a third of cocaine production in Colombia, the world’s largest exporter of the drug.—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.

## AFF Suzuki Cup: Myanmar to play opener against Singapore today

THE 2020 ASEAN Suzuki Cup, organized by the ASEAN Football Federation, will kick off on 5 December (today) and Myanmar will play the opening match against host Singapore at 7 pm Myanmar Standard Time.

Myanmar is falling in Group A with host Singapore, the Philippines, Timor Leste, and Thailand while ASEAN giant Viet Nam is placed in Group B with Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia and Laos.

Group matches will be played twice a day, with Group A matches against Myanmar taking place at the National Stadium and Group B matches at Bishan Stadium. The group matches will be held from 5 to 19 December, and as Team Myanmar is in the tough group, every game is important and they need to advance to the next round.

Myanmar last met Singapore in the opening match of the group stage in the Suzuki Cup in 2014, losing 4-2.



Myanmar keeper (violet) attempts to grab the ball hit by the Singapore striker (red) during their invitational competition in June 2019. **PHOTO: THE STRAITS TIMES**

Next, the two teams met in an invitational competition in June 2019.

The match was played at the

National Stadium in Singapore and the Myanmar team beat Singapore 2-1.

The Myanmar squad arrived

in Singapore on 30 November for the Suzuki Cup tournament and has been training since 1 December. —Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

## Misfiring Kane will score 'many goals' says Spurs boss Conte

TOTTENHAM manager Antonio Conte is certain misfiring striker Harry Kane is primed to end his barren run in the Premier League.

Kane has found the net just once in 12 league games during the current campaign as he struggles to recapture the form that made him the English top-flight's leading scorer last season. The England captain, who has won the Golden Boot in three of the past six years, has looked a shadow of his former self since his failed attempt to force a transfer to champions Manchester City in the close-season.

The 28-year-old has also admitted he felt mentally and physically drained after England's Euro 2020 final defeat against Italy in July. He failed to score in Tottenham's 2-0 win against Brentford on Thursday, missing a golden opportunity in the second half, but Conte is convinced Kane will be back on track soon.

"First of all, I'm sure Harry is happy if we win and he doesn't score because Tottenham is the first thought for us and Harry," Conte said ahead of Sunday's home match against struggling Norwich.

"It's important to have chances to score and we're improving a lot in this aspect. I'm sure Harry is going to score many goals.—AFP ■

## Djokovic to make Australian Open decision 'very soon'



All over: Novak Djokovic celebrates after defeating Marin Cilic. **PHOTO: AFP**

NOVAK Djokovic ended his rollercoaster season with a Davis Cup defeat on Friday and then promised to make a decision on his Australian Open participation "very soon".

The world number one, who captured three of the season's four Grand Slams in 2021 to take him level with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal on 20, is still a doubt for January's Australian Open after organizers insisted only fully-vaccinated players will be allowed into the country.

The 34-year-old has refused to say whether or not he has been vaccinated against coronavirus. "I understand you want answers on where and how I am going to start the new season, but we'll see what the future holds," said Djokovic, a record

nine-time champion in Melbourne.

"I can't give you a date, but obviously the Australian Open is coming soon, so you will know very soon." He added: "I will try to use the next few days to recover, rest and forget about tennis. I am really tired from this season and all this year." Djokovic's dream of adding a second Davis Cup to his 20 Grand Slam titles was shattered when Serbia were defeated by Croatia in the semi-finals in Madrid on Friday. Djokovic and partner Filip Krajcinovic lost 7-5, 6-1 to top-ranked Mate Pavic and Nikola Pietrangeli, the Olympic and Wimbledon champions, in the decisive doubles rubber. Djokovic had earlier defeated Marin Cilic for the 18th time to keep Serbia alive.—AFP ■