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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.

Myanmar receives 30,000 Remdesivir drugs used in COVID-19 treatment from NSIC

A TATMADAW aircraft landed at Nay Pyi Taw Airport, carrying 30,000 Remdesivir drugs donated by the National Strategic Investment Corporation Co. Ltd (NSIC) to the State Administration Council from Hyderabad, India, yesterday evening.

Union Minister for Health and Sports Dr Thet Khaing Win received the donated drugs from the General Manager of NSIC at the airport.

The Remdesivir drugs are used for emergency treatment of COVID-19. It is the most effective medicine to reduce the death toll from the highly contagious COVID-19 virus worldwide. It was developed by Gileat Sciences Inc. in the United States of America and is FDA-approved in the US and Europe.



The MoHS Union Minister is receiving Remdesivir for the treatment of COVID-19 from the donor National Strategic Investment Corporation Co. Ltd (NSIC) at Nay Pyi Taw Airport on 20 July 2021.

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council

Order No 147/2021

12th Waxing of Waso 1383 ME

20 July 2021

WITHDRAWAL OF PROCEEDINGS

1. The State Administration Council has released this order according to Section 419 of the Constitution Law to conduct effective measures against COVID-19, due to longer detention as the courts cannot hear the defendants for COVID-19 health rules, and for the citizens who are prosecuted for certain cases.
2. On 1 February 2021 and afterwards, all criminal cases prosecuted at respective courts with the following offences shall be dropped and the defendants shall be released.
 - (a) Penal Code Section 379, 380 and 379/ Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 380/ Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure;
 - (b) Any cases except for Sections 42 and 43 of the Forest Law;
 - (c) Any cases under the Gambling Law;
 - (d) Any cases under the Excise Law;
 - (e) Any cases under the Habitual Offenders Bond Act;
 - (f) Any cases under Section 16 of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law;
 - (g) Any cases under Section 19 (a) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law (regarding the drugs and psychotropic substances, under Section 26 of that law, the weight limit for the seizure is 10 grams and below or 3 grams, 200 grams and below for 100 grams, below 10 kg of speciosa and below 5 kg of dried speciosa or speciosa powder);
 - (h) Any cases under Section 19 (e) of the Arms Act;
 - (i) Any cases under the Suppression of Prostitution Act;
 - (j) Any cases under the Police Act;
 - (k) Any cases under the Television and Radio Law.

By Order,

Aung Lin Dwe
Lieutenant - General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Health and Sports

Order No 293/2021

12th Waxing of Waso 1383 ME

20 July 2021

THE Ministry of Health and Sports is exercising the rights in Article 21-(b) of the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law to issue this order.

1. The Ministry of Health and Sports is continuously working on prevention measures for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Due to a surge of COVID-19 positive cases and rapid increase of cases in Kachin State and Magway Region, stay-at-home programmes are necessary for the people in some townships in Kachin State and Magway Region.
2. Therefore, people living in the following townships in Kachin State and Magway Region are included in the Stay-at-Home Programme.
 - (a) Kachin State
 - (1) Shwegu Township
 - (2) Phakant Township
 - (3) Mogaung Township
 - (b) Magway Region
 - (1) Pakokku Township
 - (2) Myaing Township
 - (3) Taungdwingyi Township
 - (4) Natmauk Township
 - (5) Salin Township
 - (6) Sinnbaungwe Township
 - (7) Mindon Township
 - (8) Minhla Township
 - (9) Thayet Township
3. All people living in these Stay-at-Home townships are required to adhere to the following rules:
 - (a) Stay at home.
 - (1) Employees under the government departments are not included.
 - (2) Those in the private sector concerning banks and financial services, fuel refilling stations, food businesses and cold warehouses, pharmaceutical and medical equipment businesses, drinking water businesses, and factories producing daily hygiene products are not included.
 - (3) Those in the airline industry who provide services in relief flights/cargo flights and charter flights, ground services, aircraft refuelling, import/export of goods by air, international freight forwarder companies, companies and agencies that provide customs services, aircraft food production and export and aircraft maintenance.
 - (4) Those who work in the private ports to provide services for cargo ships, shipping line resident representative offices, international freight forwarders, companies and agents that provide customs services, container trucking, freight vehicles of export/import goods, shipping companies, inland container depot and dry ports are not included.
 - (5) Those who work in the telecommunication service providers such as post office services, land and mobile telephony services, internet services (excluding the shops that sell telephone and data) and tower and fibre repair services are not included.
 - (b) The respective state/region administration councils shall issue necessary orders and regulations to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the raw material and cut-make-pack (CMP) factories and workplaces.
 - (c) Organizations and companies to operate from home.
 - (d) Only one person per household to go outside to purchase essentials.
 - (e) Only two persons per household may go outside for hospital or clinical visits.
 - (f) Always wear facemasks/masks when going outside.
 - (g) Allow only vehicles transporting working people and permitted vehicles may enter any township.
 - (h) Within the ward, only the driver and one other person are permitted to go shopping and only the driver and two other persons are permitted to go to the hospital.
 - (i) Comply with Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the smooth movement of goods from those townships.
 - (1) If the number of people exceeds the limitations mentioned in Paragraph 3-(d), (e) and (h), or for any other emergency reasons, prior notice should be given to the relevant ward administrator and they, in turn, must only permit the people going from and returning to the ward and not allow people from outside the ward to enter or other people within the ward to leave.
 - (2) Failure to comply with this order will have action taken in accordance with existing laws.
 - (3) This order takes effect as of 4 am on 21-7-2021.

Dr Thet Khaing Win
Union Minister

All must place emphasis on ecosystem restoration

INCLUDING the Covid-19 global pandemic. With the continued outbreak of the pandemic this year, all must place emphasis on ecosystem restoration as a priority to solve the problems of depleting natural resources, environmental pollution and climate change.

(Excerpt from the speech to the State Administration Council meeting made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 6 June 2021)

Myanmar receives 30,000 Remdesivir drugs used in COVID-19 treatment from NSIC



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In addition, Hetero Labs Limited from India has pur-

chased a production licence from Gilead Sciences Inc, to manufacture and distribute

Remdesivir in developing countries. NSIC ordered 30,000 drugs worth 3 billion

kyat from India and donated them to the people of Myanmar through the State Admin-

istration Council.—MNA

MoC facilitates import of COVID-19 devices to be delivered without delay on public holidays

WITH the current rise in the third wave of COVID-19 outbreaks across the country, the urgent need for oxygen, medicines and related items for disease prevention, control and treatment are also on the rise. The Ministry of Commerce is coordinating with relevant ministries for easy and fast importation without delay from international airports, seaports and border trade posts.

The import of medical supplies, COVID-19 devices and Covid-related equipment, which are urgently needed by the people, have not stopped even on public holidays. Yesterday, 72 tonnes of liquid oxygen, 4 oxygen generators, 3,978 oxygen concentrators, 20,000 test kits and 55 tonnes of masks were imported. From 12 to 20 July, 441 tonnes of liquid oxygen, 62 tonnes of oxygen cylinders, 15,561 oxygen concentrators, 134,500 test kits and 420 tonnes of masks were imported.



Imported liquid oxygen tank via the Muse land border.



Imported liquid oxygen tank via the Myawady land border.



Imported oxygen cylinders via the Chinshwehaw land border.



Imported oxygen cylinders via the Tachilek land border.

It has been announced that private companies should mention the name of the contact person, company name and the phone number in China in the application form for the materials and medical supplies to be delivered quickly from the Muse border, and in case of inquiries, responsible contact persons can be found on the Ministry of Commerce's Website commerce.gov.mm. – MNA

MoHS Union Minister discusses COVID-19-related matters with Yangon Region Administration Council members, regions/states health officials

UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr Thet Khaing Win held a coordination meeting for effective COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities via videoconferencing yesterday morning.

During the meeting, the Union Minister discussed plans to establish more COVID-19 treatment centres in the Yangon Region, emergency care for patients, medical treatment, adequate oxygen supply at the private hospitals and efforts of the ministry to provide the needs in Yangon Region promptly.

Then, Yangon Region Administration Council Chairman U Hla Soe and Deputy Minister Dr Aye Tun and Yangon Region Public Health Department Head Dr Tun Min presented their current work plans and the Union Minister instructed the need to arrange medicines



and medical supplies for the patients with mild and moderate COVID-19 including the patients with hypertension and diabetes.

The Union Minister also met the Heads of Public Health of Taninthayi Region, Chin, Rakhine and Kayah states via videoconferencing at noon.

The Union Minister firstly explained the instructions of the Chairman of State Administration Council made at the 3rd coordination meeting for COVID-19 on 18 July. Then, he said if the people follow the orders, instructions and requests of the ministry, the infection rate can decline. Moreover, the

public health officials should cooperate with the respective regions/states Administration Councils. They need to distribute the masks to the public and the ministry will provide other assistance.

The public health awareness programmes and educative programmes should be

conducted not only at night but also in the morning and during the day so that those who are going out and going to work can be more careful.

The Union Minister also highlighted the exact lists of people who want to get COVID-19 vaccine, the registration system for those who receive vaccines, issuance of COVID-19 vaccination record cards, proper medical treatment for emergency patients without any delays, monthly cash assistance of K50,000 for night shift workers including the ones under the contract system, oxygen production rate across the nation and appointment of health supervisor (2), midwives and daily wage workers.

Then, the other health officials coordinated the discussion and the Union Minister instructed the necessary things. — MNA

More medical supplies arrive at Chinshwehaw border checkpoint

MEDICAL supplies from China are being imported from the Myanmar-China border checkpoint in Chinshwehaw border crossing, Laukkai Township, Kokang Self-Administered Zone, northern Shan State for use in the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 disease, officials said.

Yesterday, 2,500 packs of masks and 280 packs of Chinese-made “Lianhua Qingwen Capsules” were transported by two vehicles: one 22-wheeler

and one six-wheeler.

Medical supplies such as 2,500 packs of masks and 280 packs of medicines imported from China through the Chinshwehaw land border were temporarily placed at Shwe Thanlwin Warehouse and Shwe Taw Win Warehouse in Shwe Ku Wa Village, Kunlong Township.

Through these warehouses, the medical products will be sent to Nay Pyi Taw, Lashio, Yangon and Mandalay, officials

said.

From 15 to 20 July, a total of 7,320 40-litre oxygen tanks were imported from China through the Chinshwehaw border crossing.

It is reported that essential medical equipment including 11 home oxygen concentrators; 5,395 packs of masks and 280 boxes of the pill have already arrived at Chinshwehaw land border. —Zin Zin (IPRD)/ GNLM



Imported medical supplies via Chinshwehaw land border.

Thirty oxygen tanks ordered from Thailand arrive in Tachilek



FURTHER 30 oxygen tanks arrived in Tachilek yesterday via the Myanmar-Thailand Friendship Bridge No. 2 in Shan State (East), officials said.

With the supervision of Triangle Region Command, Tactical Commander Colonel Min Min Tun, and officials ordered 30 sets of 40-litre sized oxygen tanks from Thailand and presented them to township elders to meet the oxygen needs in Shan State (East) and Yangon.

The oxygen tanks are be-

ing stored at the District People's Hospital and 10 are being transported to the Shwe Laung Tin Charitable Association in Yangon.

According to Colonel Min Min Tun, 10 oxygen tanks were donated by Shan East (Tachilek) Water Supply Company, while another 10 by Heinleig Group of Companies and 10 further oxygen tanks by Kokang Social Welfare Organization for needy areas. — Yar Say (IPRD)/GNLM

5,860 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 20 July, total figure rises to 240,570

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **240,570** after **5,860 new cases** were reported on 20 July 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, **167,171** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **5,567** after **286** died. —MNA

Statement to appreciate teachers' efforts

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 children 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.

As the COVID-19 infection rate is controlled to a certain extent, the basic education high, middle and primary schools under the Department of Basic Education have reopened across nation for the 2021-2022 academic year starting 1 June.

Those who want to seek good sake of one party, political extremist NLD members and supporters, NUG, CRPH and PDF committed arson attacks at the schools using mines, homemade bombs and grenades to fail the teaching processes, and threatened the teachers in addition to the incitements, social punishment and threats against education staff to join CDM while the officials made preparations for the reopening of schools and during the current teaching period. Their doings left some casualties, and the State Administration Council has expressed its deepest condolences and sympathy to the victims' families.

The SAC also appreciates the concerted efforts of teachers, who understand two virtues, Hiri -- shame at doing evil —and Otappa—fear of the results of doing evil—for teaching the new generations of the country amid such difficulties and challenges.

The security forces will take extraordinary measures to ensure the safety of teachers who are making efforts in the academic sector for the next generations in order to promote the education qualification. The people should keep security awareness and cooperate with the security members in community peace and peaceful learning of children.

*Information Team
State Administration Council*

Tatmadaw provides anti-COVID-19 equipment, oxygen tanks



TATMADAW medical team, healthcare workers and civil society organizations are working together for the COVID-19-positive patients in the military hospitals, public hospitals, healthcare departments and COVID centres since the third wave of COVID-19 was increasing.

In doing so, Tatmadaw members have been donating the disease prevention, control and treatment equipment and oxygen tanks and foods to the hospitals.

From 1 July to yesterday, Commanders from the respec-

tive military commands have donated 3,533 oxygen tanks, 321,762 surgical masks, 1,560 sets of PPE, 689 hand gel bottles, 200 face shields, four buckets of hand wash, 1,200 surgical gloves, 900 hair covers, with petrol, food and cash assistance.

Donors from Yangon Region, Ayeyawady Region and Bago Region provided medical equipment related to the disease, nutritious food and cash assistance for the COVID-19 centres. Certificates of honour for the well-wishers were given by Commanders and respective officials. — MNA

Preparations continue to provide healthcare services to COVID-19 patients



TATMADAW hospitals, military training schools, interrogation and accommodation camps in respective military headquarters are preparing to provide healthcare services to COVID-19 positive patients and those who need to be quarantined, and healthcare services are being provided at the completed sites. In addition, the

Ministry of Health and Sports, in collaboration with department officials, charitable organizations and the public, is preparing for quarantine centres in respective townships.

Yesterday, chairpersons of the respective state/region administration councils and military officials from respective commands inspected the

sites, provided food and cash assistance, and coordinated as necessary.

As of yesterday, a total of 242 people have been quarantined in the Nay Pyi Taw Interrogation Camp; 30 COVID-19 positive patients are being provided with necessary healthcare services in the Ottarathiri station battalion; 505 positive patients in the Hline Township Interrogation and Accommodation Camp in Yangon Region; 70 positive patients in the Ye Mon station battalion; 35 positive patients in the Patheingyi Station Training School respectively and a total of 79 people recovered from the illness were sent back home yesterday.

The military station medical teams and officials are taking care of the patients with necessary healthcare services. They are in good health, it is reported. — MNA

Public Notification

THE Ministry of Health and Sports is striving for the effective prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 and only with the participation of the people can these activities be effective in the short term and the third wave of disease can be overcome with minimal damages. Therefore, the people are kindly requested to follow the following points and cooperate with us.

1. Stay indoors as much as possible; Staying at home protects your family members from the risk of infection, breaking down the disease chain in a short matter of time and resulting in the immediate control of the infection in the region.
2. Do not accept any guest at home as well as do not be a guest at all.
3. If you have to go outside, please wear a mask, wash your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds, stay 6 feet away from others and avoid going to poorly ventilated rooms.
4. Avoid the crowd.
5. If possible, do shopping once a week and avoid buying from sellers who do not wear masks properly.
6. When you return home, be careful not to bring germs home. Dispose of used masks and disposables properly outside the home and avoid close contact with others at home before changing clothes and washing hands.
7. Please systematically participate in the disease prevention, control and treatment activities, as much as possible, and support with manpower, financial assistance and skills.

Ministry of Health and Sports

The Information Team of the State Administration Council replied to the questions raised by the media as follows: -

Q: Currently, the news is spreading like some people disguised as COVID-19 patients arrest five volunteer doctors and the security forces seized the oxygen cylinders and medicines in Dagon Myothit(North) Township. The case draws criticism among the public. Did the case really occur? Would you like to release the true information and why did they make arrests?

A: The BBC Burmese and

Myanmar Now media outlets are broadcasting that the security forces arrested the volunteer doctors and volunteers who are offering medical treatments for COVID-19 patients on the morning of 19 July in Dagon Myothit(North) Township and seized the medical supplies and oxygen cylinders including K3.2 million based on the words of leader U Chan Lay.

That case did not really happen and the CDM doctors and

volunteers were not arrested. We are investigating why they broadcast such fake news stories among the public. Other information also spreads such as they secretly offer medical treatments to COVID-19 patients at their homes at high service charges, and post the proper treatments for the patients so that they can cure themselves via social media. Therefore, the patients lose their lives unnecessarily.

Q: NLD party member U Nyan Win died from COVID-19. Please confirm this news.

A: NLD party member U Nyan Win who is under medical treatment died from his underlying diseases – diabetes and hypertension at Insein prison this morning. There are 375 male and female inmates who were infected across the nation. The officials establish prison hospitals, clinics and COVID-19 positive centres

at the respective prisons and offered medical treatment against COVID-19.

Among them, 152 were discharged from the hospital while 208 are still under treatment. There are only six deaths until the death of U Nyan Win. We freed nine inmates, who were recovered from COVID-19 on their release date. We still provide proper medical treatments to the COVID-19 patients.

Oxygen cylinders supplied to hospitals, COVID centres in regions/states

THE Tatmadaw and donors have donated oxygen cylinders to public hospitals, Tatmadaw hospitals, medical departments and COVID-19 centres in various regions and states to help meet the oxygen needs in the treatment of patients who have been diagnosed with the COVID-19 disease and those who need special care.

Yesterday, Tatmadaw officials from the Nay Pyi Taw Military Regional Military Headquarters donated 47 oxygen cylinders to the General Hospital (1,000-bedded) in Zabuthiri Township and 45 oxygen cylinders to the Public Hospital (300-bedded) in Pobbathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory.

In addition, 120 oxygen cylinders were donated to public hospitals, Tatmadaw hos-



Oxygen cylinders are donated to the 300-bedded Hospital in Nay Pyi Taw.

pitals and COVID-19 centres in northern Shan State. Five regulator; two oxygen pipes, 120 PPEs, 4,800 masks, hand gels,

gloves, medicines and food were donated to Hsenwi Township Hospital in northern Shan State.

Tatmadaw officials and generous donors also donated 100 oxygen cylinders to Dawei Public Hospital; 75 oxygen cylinders to public hospitals in Dala, Twantay, Kawhmu, Kungyangon, Seikkyi/Khanaungto townships in Yangon Region; 70 oxygen cylinders to public hospitals in Kyonemange, Thaboung and Pyapon townships in Ayeyawady Region.

Oxygen cylinders, oxygen concentrators, liquid oxygen and COVID-19 devices imported by the private companies and by the fund of the Healthcare Department and generous donors have reportedly arrived. They will be distributed to the respective regions and states. – MNA

Hidden 35 oxygen cylinders, 13 oxygen concentrators found at Homalin General Hospital (100-bedded)

THE officials inspected the offices and warehouses of CDM doctors at Homalin General Hospital (100-bedded) in Khamti District of Sagaing Region on Saturday.

The inspection team included Homalin Township Administrator U Thein Zaw, Commander of Station Military Hospital Major Pyae Phyo Aung, Project Head U Tin Maung Win, Township Immigration Head U Min Nyunt, Township Agriculture Department Head Daw Su Su Htwe, Superintendent U Kan Sein of Homalin General Hospital (100-bedded), the Town Elders and other officials.

During the inspections,

they found 35 oxygen cylinders — 28 oxygen cylinders (40 litres), one oxygen cylinder (20 litres), six oxygen cylinders (15 litres), and 13 oxygen concentrators from four wards of the hospital.

Currently, the seized oxygen cylinders and concentrators are used well for the patients.

After Tatmadaw took State Power on 1 February, the medicals led by Superintendent Dr Win Naing Tun of Homalin General Hospital closed the hospital and joined CDM starting 6 February.

Meanwhile, the Homalin residents relied on No (19) Military Hospital (100-bedded).

Therefore, the Tatmadaw medicals, including nurses, provided healthcare services to the locals together with the non-

CDM health workers starting from 19 April to date.

The officials found the hidden oxygen-related materials

at the offices and warehouses of hospitals, according to the tip-off. — MNA



Concealed oxygen cylinders and oxygen concentrators are uncovered at Homalin General Hospital on 17 July 2021.

Raw materials import by CMP businesses down by \$531mln as of 9 July

IMPORTS of raw materials by CMP (cut-make-pack) businesses has touched a low of US\$1.18 billion as of 9 July in the current financial year 2020-2021. It reflects a decrease of \$531 million compared with the year-ago period, the Ministry of Commerce stated.

The figures plunged from \$1.7 billion registered in the last FY2019-2020, the Commerce Ministry's data indicated.

Myanmar's garment exports witnessed a decline of over 20 per cent in the past eight months (October-May) of the current financial year 2020-2021 compared with a year-ago period on the back of a slump in demand by the European Union market. The raw materials import by the CMP businesses fell simultaneously, stated the Ministry of Commerce.

Exports of garments manufactured under the cut-make-pack (CMP) system were valued at US\$2.2 billion between 1 October and 28 May in the current FY, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

The figures plunged from \$2.7 billion in the corresponding period of the last FY2019-2020.

The garment industry is facing cancellation of the order and a slump in output, new orders. However, The Swedish fashion retailer H&M is gradually placing orders from Myanmar again after it paused in March. Then, more



Myanmar's manufacturing sector is largely concentrated in garment and textiles produced on the Cutting, Making, and Packing basis. It contributes to the country's GDP to a certain extent.

international fashion retailers such as Primark and Bestseller starts to resume new orders. Additionally, Germany will also continue its support for Myanmar garment businesses so that Myanmar women can continue their livings, Germany Embassy Yangon's Facebook posted. Nonetheless, the COVID-19 infections are spiking in the country, and all the CMP factories are temporarily closed down during the official public holidays (17-25 July).

The garment sector is among the prioritized sectors driving up

exports. The CMP garment industry emerged as a promising one, with preferential trade from Western countries. Nevertheless, we cannot still expect normalcy for now due to the possible disruption in the logistics and supply sector and other serious consequences amid the political instabilities and the COVID-19 impacts, traders stressed.

Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association (MGMA) reported in the June newsletter that 502 factories are actively running the business.

The factories include foreign investment, domestic investment and joint venture businesses. China constitutes a majority of the foreign investment with 267 factories.

Myanmar's manufacturing sector recorded an accelerated downturn in the previous months as political changes and the COVID surge led to factory closures. The layoff is extended, and some workers were forced to return to their hometowns. Turning to prices, higher material costs and unfavourable exchange

rate movements contributed to a sharp increase in cost burdens, the HIS Markit stated.

More than 500 members and over 700 garment factories in Myanmar are listed on the MGMA, with about 600,000 workers. Women account for 95 per cent of workers in the garment industry. However, a third of garment industry workers are out of jobs in difficult times.

Myanmar's manufacturing sector is largely concentrated in garment and textiles produced on the Cutting, Making, and Packing basis. It contributes to the country's GDP to a certain extent.

Myanmar mainly exports CMP garments to markets in Japan and Europe, along with the Republic of Korea, China, and the US.

The export value of CMP garments was only \$850 million in the 2015-2016FY, but it has tripled over the past two FYs. In the 2016-2017FY, about \$2 billion was earned from exports of CMP garments. The figure increased to an estimated \$2.5 billion in the 2017-2018FY and \$2.2 billion in the 2018 mini-budget period (from April to September). It tremendously grew to \$4.6 billion in the 2018-2019FY and \$4.8 billion in the 2019-2020FY, according to the Commerce Ministry. – Htet Myat/KK/GNLM

Onion growers earning less despite price increase

TRANSPORT difficulties disrupt the onion supply chain and the price has risen in the retail market. The growers, however, do not earn much, onion growers stressed.

The price of onions jumped to K500-700 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) in the retail market on the back of strong demand. The transport problem causes low supply and price hikes in the retail market. Nevertheless, the growers are earning less with a large stockpile. They receive only K200-250 per viss, said a grower from Ba Yint Naung wholesale market.

The closure of border posts resulted in the drastic price drop during the COVID-19 pandemic, making the growers suffer loss.

To tackle this problem, the Ministry of Commerce is implementing to set the basis price,

according to the meeting result of the leading group on the protection of the farmer rights and enhancement of their benefits.

The onion growers have been facing extreme losses on a downward trend due to the lack of foreign demand. They cannot cover the cultivation cost as well as afford the harvesting cost for now.

Consequently, the prolonged price declines led some growers in Magway Region to leave their onions unharvested last year as they cannot cover the labour wages and transportation charges.

In early 2020, the onion fetched K1,200-1,300 per viss. Then, the price drastically fell in the COVID-19 crisis and the growers cannot even cover the input cost. At present, the price slightly rose in the retail market, said a trader.

The prices of onions sharply dropped owing to the closure of the western border following the coronavirus impacts. Additionally, the sluggish trade amid the current political conditions and shutdown of the restaurants, hotels, factories and donation events exacerbates the onion market.

Earlier, onions were highly demanded by Bangladesh and India. The trade with Bangladesh and India has been halted to contain the spread of the coronavirus. Having said that, the price remained low. The onion growers, as well as traders, have been experiencing market fallouts due to the COVID-19 impacts last year, said the onion wholesale dealer from Mandalay.

Next, Bangladesh's demand for Myanmar's onions coupled with high demand in the local

market hiked up prices, soaring up to K4,000 per viss on 15 November 2019, according to the Mandalay commodity depot.

The high demand by foreign markets and a remarkable rise in price prompted the growers to expand the onion cultivation in 2020. Unfortunately, the market

is getting worse amidst the COVID-19 negative consequences.

The prices of domestic onions exceeded K3,000 per viss in 2015, 2018, and 2019.

The onions are primarily grown in Mandalay, Magway and Yangon regions, Nay Pyi Taw and Shan State. – Ko Htet/GNLM



The high demand by foreign markets and a remarkable rise in price prompted the growers to expand the onion cultivation in 2020. Unfortunately, the market is getting worse amidst the COVID-19 negative consequences.

Don't be too fearful but take care of the COVID-19 pandemic

THE terrible COVID-19 pandemic has been imposing a threat upon mankind since December 2019. All global people are waiting for their turn when they would be victims of such a pandemic in waves. The disease destroyed not only the economy but also the social and political affairs of the countries in an attempt to amend global history.

We all should take care of the steps of the pandemic without losing sight. We should assess the tactics of the pandemic in real-time. Powerful and well-off countries provide anti-COVID-19 vaccines to the least developed and developing countries. It is a good spirit. Donor countries setting aside diverse political ideas try to save the people from the dreadful mouth of the disease.

We welcome it.

On the other hand, we all need to strive for prevention, control and treatment of the disease to the patients with living-kindness. The relevant ministries should encourage medical professionals to create innovation of new drugs to be able to totally fight against the disease. There are unknown medical professionals in Myanmar. The relevant ministries need to search and organize them to join the COVID-19 prevention measures.

In the world, all the events which happen now had occurred in the past. There is no new event. So, medical professionals should search the history of disease how it was prevented in the past and how medicines were used. Both western and Myanmar traditional medical practitioners should focus on the production of potent drugs to eliminate the pandemic in a short time.

COVID-19 is killing a large number of global people day by day. Its killing is fearful. But we should forget it killing while abiding by restricted health guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports. So, we all should not be fearful of the disease but we should

take care of it. We all the people united cut the infection rate of disease with systematic lifestyle.

Wash your hands. Don't go outside unnecessarily. Wear face masks and face shields. Take sunray and fish for vitamin D. Eat sour meals for vitamin C. Sleep soundly. Drink soups and purified drinking water or milk. So, it is sure you will have high immune to resist the disease well. May all people overcome the pandemic easily!



So, we all should not be fearful of the disease but we should take care of it. We all the people united cut the infection rate of disease with systematic lifestyle.

Covid recovery to drive all-time emissions high: IEA

CARBON emissions are set to hit an all-time high by 2023 as just two per cent of pandemic recovery finance is being spent on clean energy, the International Energy Agency said on Tuesday.

Countries have allocated more than \$16 trillion (14 trillion euros) in fiscal support throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, mostly in the form of emergency financial help for workers and businesses.

The IEA's Sustainable Recovery Tracker found that just \$380 billion of this had been provided for clean energy projects.

If all spending plans were to be realized, the intergovernmental body said, global carbon emissions would hit record levels in 2023 and continue to rise in the following years.

Overall carbon pollution would be 3.5 billion tonnes higher than a scenario in which economies are compliant with the 1.5 degrees Celsius temperature goal of the Paris climate deal, it said.

"Since the Covid-19 crisis



Countries allocated more than \$16 trillion in fiscal support throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, but just \$380 billion of this had been provided for clean energy projects. PHOTO: AFP

erupted, many governments may have talked about the importance of building back better for a cleaner future, but many of them are yet to put their money where their mouth is," said IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol.

The United Nations says that to keep the 1.5 degree Celsius temperature goal in play, emissions must on average fall more than seven per cent annually through to 2030.

Although pandemic lock-

downs and travel restrictions saw carbon pollution fall briefly last year, concentrations of planet-warming gases in Earth's atmosphere are still on the rise.

With record-breaking heatwaves battering North America

and parts of northern Europe submerged in unprecedented flooding, the impacts of climate change are hitting even developed economies harder than ever before.

The IEA said investment measures announced among G20 nations were expected to meet 60 per cent of the spending required to keep the Paris temperature goals within reach.

Among developing nations, that fell to just 20 per cent, as countries hard hit by Covid-19 prioritized emergency health and welfare spending over sustainable investment, the analysis found.

In June, the IEA released its clean investment report, which found that annual green investment must increase more than sevenfold — from less than \$150 billion in 2020 to more than \$1 trillion by 2030 if the world is to reach carbon neutrality by 2050.

New emissions record

Last week, more than 100 developing nations called on rich economies to make good on a decade-old promise to provide \$100

billion annually to countries at the front line of climate change.

Writing ahead of the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow in November, the countries also urged historic polluters to rapidly decarbonise their economies while helping others to do likewise.

Overall, the IEA said that all countries were missing the opportunity to divert private and public funds towards green projects that would provide triple climate, health and economic benefits.

"Not only is clean energy investment still far from what's needed to put the world on a path to reaching net-zero emissions by mid-century, it's not even enough to prevent global emissions from surging to a new record," said Birol.

"Governments need to increase spending and policy action rapidly to meet the commitments they made in Paris in 2015 — including the vital provision of financing by advanced economies to the developing world."

SOURCE: AFP

Fewer women than men will regain work during COVID-19 recovery: ILO

Fewer women will regain jobs lost to the COVID-19 pandemic during the recovery period, than men, according to a new study released on Monday by the UN's labour agency.

IN BUILDING Forward Fairer: Women's rights to work and at work at the core of the COVID-19 recovery, the International Labour Organization (ILO) highlights that between 2019 and 2020, women's employment declined by 4.2 per cent globally, representing 54 million jobs, while men suffered a three per cent decline, or 60 million jobs.

This means that there will be 13 million fewer women in employment this year compared to 2019, but the number of men in work will likely recover to levels seen two years ago.

This means that only 43 per cent of the world's working-age women will be employed in 2021, compared to 69 per cent of their male counterparts.

The ILO paper suggests that women have seen disproportionate job and income losses because they are over-represented in the sectors hit hardest by lockdowns, such as accommodation, food services and manufacturing.

Regional differences

Not all regions have been affected in the same way. For example, the study revealed that women's employment was hit hardest in the Americas, falling by more than nine per cent.

This was followed by the Arab States at just over four per cent, then Asia-Pacific at 3.8 per cent, Europe at 2.5 per cent and Central Asia at 1.9 per cent.

In Africa, men's employment dropped by just 0.1 per cent between 2019 and 2020, while wom-

en's employment decreased by 1.9 per cent.

Mitigation efforts

Throughout the pandemic, women fared considerably better in countries that took measures to prevent them from losing their jobs and allowed them to get back into the workforce as early as possible.

In Chile and Colombia, for example, wage subsidies were applied to new hires, with higher subsidy rates for women.

And Colombia and Senegal were among those nations which created or strengthened support for women entrepreneurs.

Meanwhile, in Mexico and Kenya quotas were established to guarantee that women benefited from public employment pro-

grammes.

Building forward

To address these imbalances, gender-responsive strategies must be at the core of recovery efforts, says the agency.

It is essential to invest in the care economy because the health, social work and education sectors are important job generators, especially for women, according to ILO. Moreover, care leave policies and flexible working arrangements can also encourage a more even division of work at home between women and men.

The current gender gap can also be tackled by working towards universal access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection.

Promoting equal pay for work



A female factory worker works on a production line in Belarus. PHOTO: WORLD BANK

of equal value is also a potentially decisive and important step.

Domestic violence and work-related gender-based violence and harassment has worsened during the pandemic — further undermining women's ability to be in the workforce — and the

report highlights the need to eliminate the scourge immediately.

Promoting women's participation in decision-making bodies, and more effective social dialogue, would also make a major difference, said ILO.

SOURCE: UN

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Transfer and Appointment of Heads of Service Organizations

The State Administration Council has transferred and appointed the following persons as the Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names from the date they assume charge of their duties.

Name	Appointment
1. Dr Nyunt Soe Rector Pyay Technological University Ministry of Science and Technology	Rector Technological University (Sagaing) Ministry of Science and Technology
2. Dr San San Yi Rector Technological University (Taunggyi) Ministry of Science and Technology	Rector Technological University (Meiktila) Ministry of Science and Technology
3. Dr Khin Htike Htike Lwin Rector Technological University (Kyaukse) Ministry of Science and Technology	Rector Technological University (Taunggyi) Ministry of Science and Technology
4. Dr Thin Thu Naing Rector University of Computer Studies (Taunggyi) Ministry of Science and Technology	Rector University of Computer Studies (Kengtung) Ministry of Science and Technology



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 4:00 pm Tuesday 20 July 2021)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 21 July 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Lower Sagaing, Magway Regions and Kachin State, fairly widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Upper Sagaing, Mandalay Regions and Northern Shan State and widespread in the remaining Regions and States with likelihood of regionally heavy falls in Rakhine, Kayin and Mon States and isolated heavy falls in Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Shan State. Degree of certainty is (100%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with rough seas are likely at times Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthyai Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35-40) m.p.h. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (8-11) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthyai Coasts and (6-8) feet in off and along Rakhine Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Continuation of increase of rain in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Rakhine, Kayin, Mon States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21 July 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21 July 2021: Some rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 21 July 2021: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

The Fifth Month of the State Administration Council Government

By Kanaung

Overview

As mandated by the Constitution, the Government led by the State Administration Council has now passed its fifth month in its journey to ensure the rule of law and ultimately, democracy based on truly free and fair elections.

State visit to the Russian Federation

The Chairman of the State Administration Council, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addressed the 9th Moscow International Security Conference “The Asia-Pacific Region in the Context of Global Politics”. The two-day conference, held on 23 and 24 June, provided a platform for discussing issues of international security. In addition, the trip raised awareness in the international community of Myanmar’s international stance and the actions of the government led by the State Administration Council. The trip will strengthen the basis for future cooperation between the two countries.

While in the Russian Federation, the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services attended the consecration ceremony and mounting of the diamond bud, vane, and golden umbrella at the top of the Replica Shwe Dagon Pagoda in Moscow, and also donated the Saddhamma Jotika Ordination Hall on 21 June. The events were organized by the Myanmar Theravada Buddha Vihara in Moscow.

On 21 June, the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and the Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation met and held friendly talks to enhance the existing friendship and cooperation between the two countries’ armed forces. On 22 June, the Commander-in-Chief was welcomed by the honour guard of Russian Defence Minister General Sergey Kuzhugetovich Shoigu, with whom he had a friendly exchange of views.

The Myanmar delegation led by the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services visited Rosoboronexport Company and Ostankino Tower in the Russian Federation on 22 June. On 24 June, the Military University of the Russian Federation awarded an honorary doctorate to the Commander-in-Chief. Inter-



The Myanmar delegation led by State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with the delegation of the Russian Federation led by Russian Defence Minister General Sergey Kuzhugetovich Shoigu in Moscow in June 2021.

views were held with Russia-24 and RIA, where the Russian and international audiences heard his views on Russia-Myanmar military-technical cooperation, current political developments in Myanmar, and COVID-19 disease prevention, control, and treatment.

During the visit to Kazan in the Republic of the Tatarstan, the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services and his delegation met with the President of the Republic of the Tatarstan Mr Rustam Nurgaliyevich Minnikhanov. The delegation toured medical instrument manufacturing companies, shipbuilding factories, the KAMAZ Holding Company, the largest producer of trucks and other vehicles in Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Kazan Helicopter manufacturing facilities, and the Kazan Higher Tank Red Banner Command School. The delegation also attended the Tatarstan traditional Sabantuy summer festival. The delegation then left the Republic of Tatarstan for Novosibirsk, where they visited the Novosibirsk State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, Higher Military Command School, and the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Science on 26 June. During the visit to Russia, a delegation led by the Commander-in-Chief (Navy) General Moe Aung attended the International Naval Defence Exhibition and held talks with Russian counterparts.

Other international affairs

On 5 June, the State Ad-

ministration Council Chairman received the Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Chen Hai in Nay Pyi Taw. The Chairman emphasized that Myanmar was willing to work with ASEAN to enhance domestic stability and that Myanmar sees China as an important neighbor. Ambassador Chen Hai stressed the traditional friendship between China and Myanmar, and China’s support and constructive role for the consensus by ASEAN and Myanmar. The two sides also discussed China-Myanmar relations and joint prevention and control of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On 3 June, Phoenix Television — a Hong Kong media outlet — premiered its earlier interview with the Chairman. The Chairman answered questions on the current political situation, international relations, and socio-economic aspirations for the future of the country.

On 3 June, the Chairman of the State Administration Council received a delegation led by Peter Maurer, Chairman of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to discuss humanitarian issues. On 4 June, the Chairman received Brunei’s Second Foreign Minister Erywan Yusof and ASEAN Secretary-General Lim Jock Hoi. COVID-19 vaccines figured among the topics of discussion.

At the Special ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Dialogue Relations and related meetings held in Chongqing, People’s Republic of China, Union Minister for For-

eign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin discussed regional cooperation and the situation in Myanmar. He also met with senior officials of China and ASEAN. An agreement was reached to implement 22 socio-economic projects worth more than US\$8 million for Myanmar, which will be implemented with the Mekong-Lanchang Cooperation Special Fund.

In June, Union Minister General Mya Tun Oo attended the 15th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting and related meetings, and the 8th ASEAN Plus One Defence Ministers Meeting and related meetings. He also joined the Asia-Pacific Regional Summit on Silk Road Cooperation held on 21 June through video conferencing. In addition, Myanmar and Russia co-chaired the

11th ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus Experts’ Working Group on Counter-Terrorism on 30 June. Myanmar also participated in the discussion of the ASEAN-Russia Security High-Level Security Dialogue on 28 June. The Myanmar Deputy Attorney General chaired the ASEAN Senior Legal Officials Meeting. Myanmar participated at a workshop on disaster management between ASEAN sectoral organizations and related organizations.

On 2 June, the ASEAN Disaster Management Workshop between ASEAN Sectoral Organizations and Related Organizations was held in Jakarta through videoconferencing. A delegation led by Deputy-Attorney-General U San Lwin attend-

ed the workshop.

On 11 June, the coordination meeting of the Citizenship Verification Committee discussed the return to Myanmar from Bangladesh of 72 persons displaced by the unrest in earlier years.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued three press releases on 13, 15 and 19 June, strongly condemning the 11 June statement issued by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) and strongly objecting to the 13 June statement of the G-7 Summit on Myanmar internal politics, noting that both statements were based on biased information from unverified sources. The third press release issued on 19 June stated that Myanmar would continue to work for its own national interests in line with its foreign policy and does not accept any interference in the internal affairs of the country, which would undermine the sovereignty of the country. This was in response to the draft resolution “The Situation in Myanmar” submitted by Liechtenstein to the United Nations General Assembly.

Ongoing efforts to boost the development of States/Regions

On 1 June, the Chairman of the State Administration Council officiated at the unveiling of the new name for the bridge which joins Bilu Kyun island to the mainland. Construction of the bridge had started in 2015, and local people had led protest marches and petitions

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to no avail in 2017 against the then government's name for the bridge "General Aung San" since they had wanted and asked for a local name. Thus, the official changing of the name of the bridge now to "Thanlwin Bridge (Chaungzon)" is a response to the wishes of local ethnic groups. On the same trip to Mon State, the Chairman of the State Administration Council inspected the reopening of operations in the Sittoung paper mill, the development of Mawlamyine Airport and Port, and projects in the agriculture and livestock sectors. He also met with local military personnel, donated some supplies to military hospitals, conducted visits to the Padonma soap factory at Paung, and discussed efforts to enhance public access to the Sports Park near Min village in Mon State.

On 5 June, designated by the United Nations as World Environment Day, the Chairman of the State Administration Council issued a directive to reduce the risk of natural disasters caused by climate change and to support efforts for ecological recovery and rehabilitation.

At the meetings of the State Administration Council (12/2021) and the Management Committee (8/2021, 9/2021), the Council Chairman discussed the state's political, social, education and healthcare sectors and made important decisions for the country, such as changing the country's budget year, prioritizing rural businesses, and reducing taxes.

Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win coordinated with ministry officials with regard to decisions on COVID-19 disease prevention and control at the fourth and fifth Coordination Meeting of the COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee.

On-the-ground inspections of the 2020 election voter lists

The Union Election Commission released the results of field inspections of the voting process and documentation in 28 townships of Mandalay Region (excluding Union Territory) on 1 June. The field inspections revealed that the Regional Chief Minister for Mandalay and the NLD party conspired to break the law in order to win

the election. In June, in a fully transparent process, the Union Election Commission released its findings on voter lists and voting conditions in Kunhing, Mongshu, Maukmai, Mongpan, Namtu, Namsang and Mantong townships in Shan State; Waig-maw and Momauk townships in Kachin State; 28 townships in Bago Region; 9 townships in Chin State; 10 townships in Taninthayi Region; 37 townships in Sagaing Region; 26 townships in Ayeyawady Region and 49 townships in Shan State. The results showed fraud on a massive scale, including vote rigging, premeditated actions, and misappropriations of the commission's authority.

conducted inspection tours in Yangon and Mandalay regions and Kachin State, including to factories producing fireproof bricks, wood finished products and garments.

Agriculture and livestock sector

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation gave a boost to projects for systematic and mechanized farming, including on 105 acres of farmlands owned by 86 farmers in Myothit Township of Magway Region in the first week of June. The activities included the improvement of irrigation management and the construction of access roads.



State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing is posing for the documentary photo with the attendees at the unveiling ceremony to rename the bridge to "Thanlwin Bridge (Chaungzon)".

Measures to stabilize the banking sector and the economy

Arrangements were made in June by the banks and tax authorities to enable company employees to make tax payments through electronic means, such as mobile banking, MPU cards and online tax payment systems. To address the economic slowdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the State Administration Council enacted a Law Amending the 2020 Union Tax Law on 17 June. To facilitate the flow of trade, meetings were held in the first week of June with relevant committee chairpersons, factory owners, wholesalers, purchasers, and retailers of raw materials, with a view to resolving the bottlenecks in the banking sector. The government welcomed two new local investments worth more than K6 billion in Yangon Region on 9 June, which should increase job opportunities for the local population. The Union Ministers of relevant ministries

In June, the government imposed a fourth-month ban on fishing from May to August to develop fishery resources in the long term. Plans are underway to release some 101,207,500 million fish fingerlings into rivers, creeks, and lakes across the nation this rainy season to boost food security and fishery resources.

Planning for the 2022 Agriculture Census has started, and the concerned officials have been holding workshops on census techniques. The Ministry is promoting research on agricultural products, river water pumping, upgrading of drainage channels, waterways, and roads to boost the agriculture and livestock sector. Attention is also being given to preventive measures against natural disasters. The government is working closely with Economic Counselors posted in Myanmar embassies abroad, to promote Myanmar products, especially agricultural products, and increase trade volumes with trade

partner countries.

Health issues

The COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee continued COVID-19 vaccination programs for the Venerable Sayadaws, civil servants and the public as planned. COVID-19 management and control activities were also implemented, including the setting up of quarantine centres, treatment centres, the imposition of Stay-at-Home orders in townships, regions and states as warranted, and movement restrictions within Nay Pyi Taw area in June. Following the widespread civil disobedience movement against the government by medical staff

by terrorist groups to blow up the schools, and the courage of basic education teachers all across the country. The government and local communities, helped by the Tatmadaw soldiers cleaned up the schools, made the necessary repairs, and education authorities opened the schools as scheduled with COVID-19 measures in place. Throughout the month of June, children were in their classes in a learning environment that was being kept safe and peaceful by the security forces who were guarding the schools against any violence, mindful of the threats issued by the National Unity Government (NUG) /People's Defence Force (PDF), and conscious of the murders of civil servants so far by these groups.

The government also extended the university application deadline to 30 June 2021 for those young people who had passed the matriculation examination in 2020. The Ministry of Ethnic Affairs received applications for the positions of Teaching Assistance and Language Teachers for ethnic languages from respective regions and states. The ministry made arrangements on 21 June to send these applications to the Ministry of Education as per the procedures.

Other sectors

The State Administration Council government has been equally active across the country in different sectors, as the following snapshots shows:

- Afforestation: The 2021 monsoon tree planting ceremonies were held across the nation in June. It was announced at the tree planting event attended by the Chairman of the State Administration Council on 18 June that more than 36 million seedlings would be planted in the country this year.
- Buddhist studies: The ceremony to confer religious titles and certificates on the monks who had passed the 73rd Tipitakadhara Tipitaka Kovida Selection Examination was held at Maha Pasana Cave of Kaba Aye Hill in Mayangon Township on 26 June. During the ceremony, Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win presented the titles and certificates to the Venerable Sayadaws.

TO BE CONTINUED

NEWS
IN BRIEFNikkei ends at
6-month low on
COVID economic
recovery concerns

TOKYO stocks ended lower Tuesday for the fifth consecutive trading day, with the Nikkei index closing at a six-month low, as a recent surge in Delta variant coronavirus cases fueled fears of a slowdown in global economic recovery.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average ended down 264.58 points, or 0.96 per cent, from Monday at 27,388.16, the lowest level since 6 Jan. The broader Topix index of all First Section issues on the Tokyo Stock Exchange finished 18.24 points, or 0.96 per cent, lower at 1,888.89.

Decliners were led by mining, real estate and nonferrous metal issues.

The U.S. dollar remained weak in the mid-109 yen range as the currency was sold after the 10-year U.S. Treasury yield slipped to a five-month low at one point overnight, dealers said.—Kyodo

Dutch watchdog
fines Italian drug
company for
surcharge

ITALIAN pharmaceutical Leadiant has been fined almost €20 million for allegedly overcharging for medicine used to treat a rare cholesterol disease, the Dutch consumer watchdog said on Monday. The Authority for Consumers and Markets “established that drug manufacturer Leadiant charged far too high a price for its prescription drug CDCA-Leadiant,” it said in a statement. “As such, Leadiant abused its dominant position,” the Hague-based regulator said. In just over a decade, the medicine’s name changed and its price leapt from €46 for a box of 100 capsules in 2008 to €14,000 in 2019, the ACM said. This represented €153,000 per year for a patient, an amount the authority deemed “excessive” and “unfair”.

“After a small, low-risk investment, Leadiant implemented a huge price increase for a drug that had already existed for years,” ACM board chairman Martijn Snoep said. “We consider this to be a very serious violation,” he said.—AFP

Calling US inflation ‘temporary,’ Biden
pushes more spending

PRESIDENT Joe Biden on Monday sought to tamp down concern about spiralling prices that threaten to dent the US economic recovery, saying the current inflation rise is “temporary” and not a long-term problem.

He also said one of the best ways to keep the American economy on track was for Congress to greenlight additional federal spending in the form of a major bipartisan infrastructure package, which faces a looming deadline this week in the US Senate.

The president made the case that his administration’s vaccination push and his sweeping domestic agenda, which includes the injection of trillions



The pandemic caused horrific damage to the world’s largest economy. PHOTO: AFP

of dollars into the economy, will “take the pressure off of inflation” rather than increasing it.

The global supply chain has faced challenges in getting back

up to speed following the coronavirus pandemic, leading to price spikes on many products.

“Some folks have raised worries that this could be a sign

of persistent inflation, but that’s not our view,” Biden said in a White House speech.

“Our experts believe, and the data shows, that most of the price increases we’ve seen were expected and are expected to be temporary.”

Biden’s effort at reassurance came as US stocks tumbled 2.1 per cent Monday amid resurgent Covid-19 fears and worries about inflation pinching global growth.

Biden stressed that the overall state of the economy is healthy — despite the “predictions of doom and gloom” six months into his administration by Republican critics.—AFP ■

Asia extends global retreat as Delta fears deepen

ASIAN equities extended losses Tuesday following another rough day for global markets as the fast-spreading Covid Delta variant fuels concerns over the expected economic recovery.

Investors have been rattled in recent weeks by data showing the highly transmissible virus surging across the world, forcing some governments to reimpose containment measures.

Even countries with elevated vaccination rates have seen a big increase in new cases, though observers point out that hospitalizations and deaths are being kept down thanks to the jabs. The selling has also been blamed on other factors including lingering



People line up to take body temperature checks at Sanlitun business area in Beijing, capital of China, on Feb. 12, 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA/JU HUANZONG

worries about possible central bank policy tightening as the econ-

omy recovers, profit-taking with markets sitting around record

or multi-year highs, and investors jockeying as the corporate earnings season begins. Bubbling geopolitical tensions were also an influence after the United States accused Beijing of carrying out a massive hack of Microsoft and charged four Chinese nationals, while rallying allies in a rare joint condemnation of “malicious” cyber activity. China has denied the claims as “totally groundless and irresponsible”, and “fabricated” by Washington. “What is likely concerning markets now is that there is also a surge in infections occurring in developed markets with high levels of vaccination,” said National Australia Bank’s Tapas Strickland.—AFP ■

English pubs, clubs and shops rediscover lost freedoms

THIRSTY punters, spendthrift shoppers and jubilant clubbers toasted England’s “freedom day” easing of Covid restrictions on Monday, even as many others saw little to celebrate.



England lifts virtually all of its coronavirus restrictions, setting it at odds with the three other nations of the United Kingdom and sparking concern among scientists. PHOTO: AFP

The end to limits on social mixing came as a relief to the hospitality, retail and events industries after more than a year of meagre takings.

The government says a mass vaccination campaign justifies the move, but a resurgence in virus cases has prompted widespread concern among scientists both at home and abroad.

Nightclubs had been shut since March 2020, and many reopened at the stroke of midnight. For those filling Bar Fibre in the northern city of Leeds in the early hours, the experience was exhilarating.

“This is a special moment, this is freedom,” the DJ an-

nounced as revellers took to the dance floor and the club sprayed showers of confetti.

“People are treating it like a special occasion, a New Year’s Eve type of affair. Freedom Eve is what we’re calling it,” said Bar Fibre owner Terry George, dressed in a black sequined tuxedo. George handed out single-use masks on the dance floor, but wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces is no longer a legal requirement in England, and there were few takers.

A beaming Lorna Feeley, 44, said she was “absolutely ecstatic” to be going out again. “That is my life, my soul, I love dancing.”—AFP ■

China says Washington hack claims 'fabricated', condemns US allies

CHINA on Tuesday said the US had "fabricated" allegations it carried out a massive Microsoft hack, countering that Washington was the "world champion" of cyber attacks while raging at American allies for signing up to a rare joint statement of condemnation.

The United States on Monday accused Beijing of carrying out the March cy-

ber attack on Microsoft Exchange, a top email server for corporations around the world, and charged four Chinese nationals over the "malicious" hack.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the attack was part of a "pattern of irresponsible, disruptive and destabilizing behavior in cyberspace".

China's Ministry of State Security, or MSS,

"has fostered an ecosystem of criminal contract hackers who carry out both state-sponsored activities and cybercrime for their own financial gain", Blinken said in a statement. In a simultaneous announcement, the US Department of Justice said four Chinese nationals had been charged with hacking the computers of dozens of companies, universities

and government bodies in the United States and abroad between 2011 and 2018. President Joe Biden told reporters the United States was still completing an investigation before taking any countermeasures, and drew parallels with the murky but prolific cybercrime attributed by Western officials to Russia.

"The Chinese government, not unlike the



The Microsoft hack, which exploited flaws in the Microsoft Exchange service, affected at least 30,000 US organizations including local governments as well as organizations worldwide. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Russian government, is not doing this themselves, but are protecting those who are doing it, and may be even accommodating them being able to do it," Biden told reporters. —AFP ■

LVMH takes majority stake in Virgil Abloh streetwear label Off-White



Virgil Abloh is the first black American creative director of a top French fashion house. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

FRENCH luxury conglomerate LVMH said Tuesday it intends to take a majority stake in the luxury streetwear label Off-White created

by Virgil Abloh, the first black American creative director of a top French fashion house.

French luxury conglomerate LVMH said

Tuesday it intends to take a majority stake in the luxury streetwear label Off-White created by Virgil Abloh, the first black American creative director of a top French fashion house.

LVMH will take a 60 per cent stake in Off-White for an undisclosed sum, according to a statement.

Abloh will retain 40 per cent and remain creative director for the men's collections of LVMH's Louis Vuitton fashion house. The Italian group New Guards, which currently owns a majority of Off-White, will remain a

partner to the brand via a licencing agreement after the deal, which is subject to regulatory approvals, is finalised.

The deal marks an expansion of Abloh's collaboration with LVMH, the world's top luxury group, and he said he envisaged potential partnerships with its non-fashion brands as well as starting new ones of his own.

"For nearly a decade, we've been building Off-White to be a brand designed to empower our generation and challenge the status quo," Abloh said in a statement.—AFP ■

Ben & Jerry's to stop ice cream sales in occupied Palestinian territories

AMERICAN ice cream-maker Ben & Jerry's announced on Monday they would stop selling their ice cream in the occupied Palestinian territories, saying its sale "is inconsistent with our values."

In a statement, the Unilever subsidiary said they "hear and recognize the concerns shared with us by our fans and trusted partners," without elaborating. More than 600,000 Israeli settlers live in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, where tensions often flare up between settlers and the Palestin-

ian population. The settlements in the occupied territories are considered illegal by the UN and the international community.

"We have a longstanding partnership with our licensee, who manufactures Ben & Jerry's ice cream in Israel and distributes it in the region," the company said, adding that its licence won't be renewed when it expires at the end of 2022.

The company said its products will continue to be sold in Israel "through a different arrangement."

Israeli political figures met the announcement with ire, with Prime Minis-



Ben & Jerry's decision to stop selling its ice cream in the occupied Palestinian territories drew the ire of Israeli political leaders. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

ter Naftali Bennett saying in a statement that "there are lots of ice cream, but we have only one state. Ben & Jerry's decided to brand itself as an anti-

rael ice cream."

He called it "a morally wrong decision and I believe it will also turn out to be a business mistake."—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Amazon magnate Bezos ready to ride his own rocket to space

THE wealthiest man on the planet Jeff Bezos will ride his own rocket to outer space on Tuesday, a key moment for a fledgling industry seeking to make the final frontier accessible to elite tourists.

Blue Origin has planned its first crewed mission, an 11-minute hop from west Texas to beyond the Karman line and back again, to coincide with the 52nd anniversary of the first Moon landing.

Virgin Galactic founder Richard Branson made the voyage on July 11, narrowly beating the Amazon magnate in their battle of the billionaires.

But Bezos, like Branson, insists it wasn't a contest.

"There's one person who was the first person in space — his name was Yuri Gagarin — and that happened a long time ago," he told the TODAY show on NBC on Monday, referencing the Soviet cosmonaut's 1961 milestone.

"This isn't a competition, this is about building a road to space so that future generations can do incredible things in space," he added.—AFP ■

EasyJet hikes capacity to 60% of pre-Covid level

BRITISH airline EasyJet said Tuesday that it will operate 60 per cent of its pre-pandemic flights in the key summer season, thanks to easing travel restrictions, solid demand and speedy vaccinations.

The carrier revealed it will ramp up capacity in its fourth quarter, or July through September, after operating at 17 per cent of its 2019 level in the three months to June.

"In order to capitalize on the opening-up of travel in continental Europe and the easing of restrictions for the fully vaccinated in the UK, EasyJet continues to pivot capacity towards popular routes where we see rising customer demand," EasyJet said.

"EasyJet will emerge from the pandemic transformed," added the group, which is based in Luton north of London.

Global aviation was ravaged by the deadly Covid pandemic, which sparked a collapse in demand and grounded flights worldwide, resulting in massive losses across the sector.

However, the industry has been boosted by the lifting of many international travel restrictions in recent months, despite the emergence of the fast-spreading Delta variant.

EasyJet added on Tuesday that its losses narrowed in its third quarter.—AFP ■

Show of 'solidarity' in Cyprus ghost town before Erdogan visit



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his wife Emine during a previous visit to Varosha on November 15, 2020. **PHOTO: TURKISH PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SERVICE/AFP/FILE**

AHEAD of a visit Tuesday by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to the Cypriot ghost town of Varosha, activists from both sides of the divided island made an emotional call for unity.

Their voices echoing off abandoned and dilapidated buildings, some 50 Greek and Turkish Cypriots held hands last Friday to form a human chain symbolizing solidarity and their desire for reconciliation.

Erdogan's controversial visit will mark 47 years since Turkey's invasion of northern Cyprus split the Mediterranean island and left

Varosha, a former playground for the rich and famous, a fenced-off no-man's land. "We're in front of our houses which were looted 47 years ago," said Nikos Karoullas, a Greek Cypriot in his sixties, during a visit to the area adjacent to the UN-patrolled Green Line.

"Our houses are unreachable. But we say: the Turkish Cypriots are our friends, we will fight for a reunified country." The former resident of Varosha said he had originally only wanted to meet up with some friends and show them his childhood home town, where bougainvillea now

shoots through caved-in roofs.

But then he found that Cypriots from both sides had turned up for a brief show of solidarity with those who had fled and lost everything decades ago. On July 20, 1974, Turkish troops invaded northern Cyprus in response to a coup aimed at attaching the country to Greece. The island has since been divided between the Republic of Cyprus, a Greek Cypriot-majority state and European Union member, and the self-declared Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), recognised only by Ankara.—AFP ■

Ethiopia hits second-year target for filling Nile mega-dam

ETHIOPIA has attained its second-year target for filling a mega-dam on the Blue Nile River that has stoked tensions with downstream countries Egypt and Sudan, an official told AFP on Monday.

"The first filling already was done last year. The second one is already done today. So today or tomorrow, second filling will be announced," said the official, adding there is now enough water stored to begin producing energy.

The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam -- GERD -- has

been a source of dispute ever since Ethiopia broke ground on the project in 2011.

Egypt and Sudan view the dam as a threat because of their dependence on Nile waters, while Ethiopia deems it essential for its electrification and development.

Talks held under the auspices of the African Union have failed to yield a three-way agreement on the dam's filling and operations, and Cairo and Khartoum have demanded Addis Ababa cease filling the massive reservoir until such a deal is

reached. But Ethiopian officials have argued that filling is a natural part of the dam's construction process and cannot be stopped.

The UN Security Council met earlier this month to discuss the project, although Ethiopia later slammed the session as an "unhelpful" distraction from the AU-led process.

Reservoir-filling began last year, with Ethiopia announcing in July 2020 it had hit its target of 4.9 billion cubic metres.

The goal for this year's rainy season was to add 13.5 billion cubic metres. There is now enough



The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, pictured in a satellite image last July by Maxar Technologies /Satellite image ©2020 Maxar Technologies. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

water to install and operate the dam's first two turbines, which would allow the project to start producing energy for the first

time, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to brief the media.—AFP ■

International community calls for 'urgent end' to Taliban offensive



Afghanistan has seen a deadly surge in fighting in recent months. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

MORE than a dozen diplomatic missions in Afghanistan on Monday called for "an urgent end" to the Taliban's ruthless military offensive, saying it was at odds with claims they want a negotiated settlement to end the conflict.

The statement -- signed by

the US, EU, and over a dozen other missions in Kabul -- follows another round of inconclusive talks in Qatar over the weekend between the Afghan government and the Taliban that many hoped would kickstart the ailing peace process.

"The Taliban's offensive is in direct contradiction to their claim to support a negotiated settlement," it read.

"It has resulted in loss of innocent Afghan lives, including through continued targeted killings, displacement of the civilian population, looting and burning of buildings, destruction of vital infrastructure, and damage to communication networks."

For months, the two sides have been meeting on and off in the Qatari capital, but have achieved little, if any, notable success -- with the discussions appearing to have lost momentum as the militants made enormous battlefield gains.

A joint statement released late Sunday said little more than they had agreed on the need to reach a "just solution", and to meet again "next week".—AFP ■

Sponsor Toyota says no Olympic ads during Tokyo Games

TOKYO 2020 sponsor Toyota won't run any Olympic TV ads during the Games or send executives to the opening ceremony, an official told AFP on Monday, as the coronavirus-hit event struggles for public support.

The world's biggest automaker is a major sponsor of Tokyo 2020, which has faced persistent opposition in Japan and will take place mostly without spectators as Covid-19 cases rise in the capital.

"Toyota officials will not attend the opening ceremony, and the chief reason behind it is there will be no spectators," Toyota spokeswoman Shiori Hashimoto told AFP.

Fewer than 1,000 Olympic officials and VIPs including sponsors will be allowed to

watch the opening ceremony on Friday, according to Japanese media.

Hashimoto denied reports by multiple local media outlets that Toyota had cancelled plans to air TV adverts related to the Olympics in Japan, however.

"There was never a plan to air Olympics-related commercials for promotional purposes in Japan in the first place," she said. Around 60 Japanese companies have ploughed a record \$3.3 billion into Tokyo 2020, while top sponsors like Toyota account for \$500 million more.

Their hopes of a marketing bonanza have been tempered by the spectator ban, although they can still expect exposure from international broadcasters.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fujimori says will recognize Peru vote count

PERU presidential election candidate Keiko Fujimori -- who had alleged fraud in the vote count -- said Monday she would accept the result as officials prepared to announce the winner after reviewing complaints.

The country's elections jury said it would soon announce the winner of the June 6 presidential elections.

According to the count, leftist rural school teacher Pedro Castillo had received 50.12 per cent of the ballots cast more than a month ago -- some 44,000 more than his rightwing rival Fujimori.

Fujimori, who faces an imminent corruption trial unless she becomes president, challenged thousands of votes before the elections jury or JNE.

But she told a press conference Monday that she would accept the results "because it is required by the law and the constitution that I have sworn to defend." --AFP ■

New generation of Chilean candidates show desire for moderation

THE election of former student leader Gabriel Boric and rightwing independent Sebastian Sichel in presidential primaries shows Chileans are opting for gradual change towards a more moderate politics, say analysts.

Sunday's primaries delivered a chastening blow to the most traditional candidates from the left and right wing coalitions that took part, as well as the opinion polls.

Congressman Boric, who at 35 only just meets the minimum age to stand for the presidency, convincingly defeated Communist Party candidate Daniel Jadue in the left-wing coalition's primary. Sichel, who at 43 was the youngest of four right-wing candidates, left in his wake the ultra-conservative Joaquin Lavín, who was seeking a third presidential candidacy, as well as former ministers in the government of conservative President Sebastian Piñera, Mario Desbordes and Ignacio Briones. --AFP ■

Leftist Pedro Castillo declared Peru's next president

LEFTIST school teacher Pedro Castillo was proclaimed Peru's president-elect Monday, six weeks after a polarizing vote of which the results were delayed by claims of electoral fraud from his right-wing rival, Keiko Fujimori. The 51-year-old trade unionist's victory leaves Fujimori facing an imminent corruption trial. "On behalf of my family

I would like to salute the electoral authorities... and also to salute the political parties that have taken part in this democratic celebration," Castillo told supporters gathered at the headquarters of his Peru Libre (Free Peru) party in Lima.

"Dear compatriots, I bring here an open heart for each and every one of you," he declared from

the balcony after Jorge Luis Salas, head of the JNE elections jury, announced his victory in a brief virtual ceremony.

In a gesture to Fujimori, 46, the president-elect urged her to help "take the country forward" and said he held "no resentment" despite the many attacks he had fielded in recent weeks. --AFP ■

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ကျန်ရစ်သူမိသားစု

Colombia deploys police, soldiers for fresh demos



A soldier tries to calm demonstrators down in the framework of a new protest against the government of Colombian President Ivan Duque, in Cali, Colombia, on May 28, 2021. PHOTO: LUIS ROBAYO /AFP

COLOMBIA will deploy thousands of police and soldiers in anticipation of demonstrations planned for Tuesday, officials said, as protesters seek to resume an anti-government

campaign that has been met with deadly force. Defense Minister Diego Molano warned the government would not tolerate "vandalism, nor violence, nor

roadblocks" as the Bogota city council said more than 6,000 police and 2,700 soldiers will be deployed to control 35 events planned for the capital.

"Tomorrow there will be a series of peaceful demonstrations... but the intelligence we have suggests there will be infiltration by some dissident groups" of the now disbanded left-wing guerilla force the FARC, or from the ELN, which has not laid down its weapons, Molano said at a public event in Bogota.

He said the factions aimed to "finance the vandalistic activities and violence and obstruction."

Officials said at least 35 people have been arrested in recent days for allegedly

planning attacks against the armed forces, and several cities and towns have introduced night-time curfews and banned public alcohol consumption. Colombia was rocked by weeks of protests that broke out late April in opposition to a proposed tax hike that morphed into a mass movement against the right-wing administration of President Ivan Duque.

The demonstrators demanded an end to police repression, as well as more supportive public policies to alleviate the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has plunged more than 40 per cent of the country's 50 million inhabitants into poverty. -- AFP ■

Italian former far-left extremist arrested in France

FRENCH police arrested another former far-left extremist from Italy's Red Brigades on Monday, three months after the detention of nine other suspected ex-members of the violent group from the 1970s and 80s. Maurizio di Marzio, a restaurant owner in Paris, had been sought in April when police swooped on former Red Brigades figures who were wanted in Italy for serious crimes including kidnappings.

The arrests were approved by President Emmanuel Macron and reversed French policy, which since the 1980s had been to offer the one-time Marxist-Leninists safe haven provided they renounced violence.

Di Marzio, who has not served his full prison sentence in Italy over an attempted kidnap-

ping of a senior security official, went on the run in April because an arrest warrant for him was expected to expire in Italy in May.

But a court in Rome ruled on July 8 that the warrant was still active, meaning French police began searching for him, sources close to the case told AFP. Macron's approval for the arrests in April was seen as a gesture of goodwill towards Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi and a bid to remove a long-standing irritant in Franco-Italian ties.

Italian politicians had long criticised France's policy of providing a safe haven for people considered to be terrorists from an era known as the "Years of Lead" - a reference to the number of bullets fired at the time.

Di Marzio has served six



French police arrested another former far-left extremist from Italy's Red Brigades on Monday, three months after the detention of nine other suspected ex-members of the violent group from the 1970s and 80s. PHOTO: AFP

years of a 14-year prison sentence over the attempted kidnapping of a senior police officer in Rome in 1982 who was left with

serious injuries. He was arrested in France in 1994 but was never extradited. --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.

AFC Awards Ceremony 2021 cancelled amid pandemic surge

WITH close supervision of the Qatar Football Association (QFA), the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Executive Committee, has recently set a decision to cancel the AFC Annual Awards 2021 to be held in Doha, Qatar.

“With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to severely impact the lives and livelihoods across the globe and in Asia, the AFC and QFA acknowledged that

staging such an occasion would be inappropriate particularly during a time in which millions of lives have been lost including those who have dedicated their lives to the game in Asia and beyond,” the Asian Football Confederation officials said.

“For the second successive year, the AFC Executive Committee agreed to cancel the event which was scheduled for November 2021 and decided that

the QFA will remain as the host of the 2022 edition of the AFC Annual Awards, which will now be moved to January 2023,” the AFC officials stated.

The AFC Annual Awards are awards given by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) to the most outstanding performers of the Asian football season. The awards are presented at the end of each year at a special gala. — GNLM

Real Madrid's Brahim Diaz rejoins AC Milan on two-year loan



Real Madrid's Spain midfielder Brahim Diaz has signed a two-year loan deal with AC Milan, both clubs announced on Monday. **PHOTO: AFP**

REAL MADRID'S Spain midfielder Brahim Diaz has signed a two-year loan deal with AC

Milan, both clubs announced on Monday.

“AC Milan are delighted to

announce the signing of Brahim Abdelkader Diaz from Real Madrid on a temporary basis for two years,” the Serie A runners-up confirmed.

“The contract ties the football player to the Rossoneri Club until 30 June 2023.”

Diaz spent three seasons with Manchester City before joining Madrid in June 2019 for 17 million euros (\$20 million).

He scored two goals in 21 games in Madrid before joining Milan last season on loan, scoring seven goals in 39 appearances for the northern Italian outfit.

The 21-year-old takes over the number 10 jersey from Hakan Calhanoglu who has joined Serie A champions Inter as a free agent. — AFP ■



The Olympic motto has been changed for the first time. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

'Faster, Higher, Stronger - Together': Olympic motto gets Covid-era makeover

THE Olympic motto “Faster, Higher, Stronger” was updated to “Faster, Higher, Stronger - Together” on Tuesday to reflect solidarity across the world at the time of Covid-19. The International Olympic Committee approved the change at its session ahead of the Tokyo Olympics, which were postponed last year and were in danger of cancellation over the pandemic. “We see everywhere the collaborative effort bringing faster and better solutions than working in silos,” said IOC president Thomas Bach as the proposal received unanimous backing. — AFP ■

Six Polish swimmers return from Japan due to error

SIX Polish swimmers have had to return from Japan even before the start of the Olympics after the Polish Swimming Federation (PZP) sent too many athletes because of an administrative error.

The swimmers returned to Poland on Sunday, threatening legal action and calling for the head of the PZP to resign over the incident. The swimming team sent to Japan numbered 23 people.

“I would like to express my great regret, sadness and bitterness at the situation,” PZP director Pawel Slominski said in a statement. Slominski admitted the mistake but said it had been motivated by a desire to “allow as many athletes and coaches as possible to take part”. — AFP ■