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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. VII, No. 222, 10th Waxing of Tazaungmon 1382 ME

www.gnlnm.com.mm, www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

Tuesday, 24 November 2020

State Counsellor reports on measures against COVID-19 crisis

LAST week, there was a slight increase in COVID-19 infections among the people. This is of course, as we have expected. For the coming one or two weeks, I think it will be like this. However, I believe that we will be able to contain the infection spread. That's why I want all of you to abide by the rules and regulations. The Ministry of Health and Sports have been saying this repeatedly. Please wear masks and face shields as much as possible. Please stay home if possible, especially in the coming one or two weeks. We are working hard to relax the restrictions.

I want to relax the restrictions as we are able to contain the situation to a certain degree. This is because we wish to relieve the stress being experienced by the people. Another thing is for businesses to resume operations again. Just as I mentioned last week we intend to broadcast TV programmes designed to educate the people about business and certain small business projects that they could start; we will show how these projects could be done. The programmes will



begin this week. There will be one programme on Wednesday and one programme on Thursday. The one on Wednesday will be educational. The one on Thursday will be partly educational and about how things are being done and also how they could be done.

As I explain to you about these programmes, there is one

This is because we wish to relieve the stress being experienced by the people. Another thing is for businesses to resume operations again.

thing I want to request all of you. That is, I want you to read newspapers if possible; especially government newspapers. This is not because I wish to sell newspapers. If we can increase the sales, that is good. The reason why I am saying this is because some of the people do not get to read the announcements and notifications issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports and other government departments thoroughly. I mean in detail and with real focus. I have noticed that these people do not know what these notifications intend to say. Is this because when they read on the phones they have not read the entire notification; or did they miss the TV broadcasts. I don't know. I have noticed that some people do not understand thoroughly the rules and regulations as well as the advice given in these notifications.

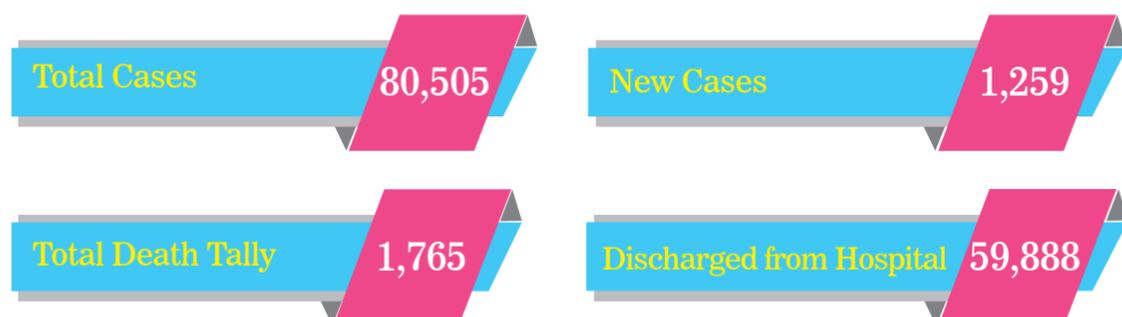
So, when you read the newspapers, all the notifications are in the newspapers. I want you to read the newspapers because they contain all the official notifications, all the orders issued by various departments and then

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1,259 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 23 November, total figure rises to 80,505

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rise to 80,505 after 1,259 new cases were reported on 23 November according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these 80,505 confirmed cases, 1,765 died, 59,888 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Updated at 8 pm, 23 November 2020



Daily death toll until 8 pm 23-11-2020

26

Ministry of Health and Sports

Supreme Court of the Union to pass judgements via videoconferencing

The Supreme Court of the Union will pass judgements on cases concerning crimes, civil suits and writs via videoconferencing on 1,2,3,4,7,8,10 and 11 December. The list of cases can be viewed on its website www.unionsupremecourt.gov.mm and its Facebook page of Public Relations www.facebook.com/ousc.publicrelations seven days ahead.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

Announcement on postponement of recollecting loan, interest for Nov, Dec from microfinance organizations

In accordance with the guidance of National-Level Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19, microfinance organizations in Yangon Region, Bago Region and Rakhine State which are primarily impacted by COVID-19 will postpone recollecting of their loans and interests to be paid by their members in November and December to the end of April 2021.

The members will have to repay the loans and interests in instalments between May and October 2021. The Myanmar Economic Bank will help microfinance organizations to prevent their losses by providing zero-interest loans for one year.

*Financial Regulatory Department
Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry*

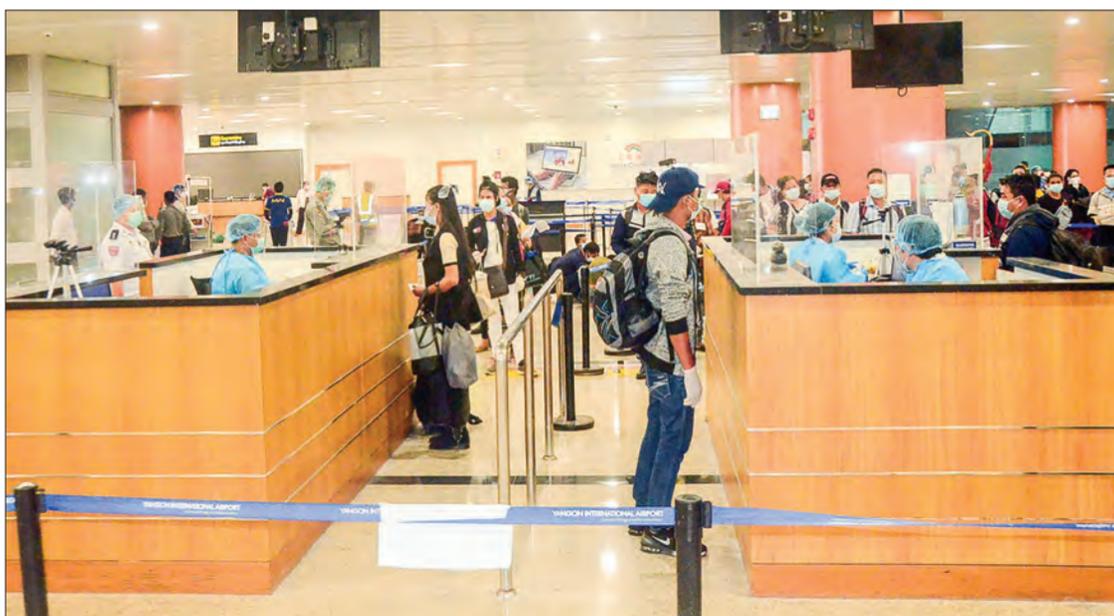
Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Attorney-General Office Press Release

9th Waxing of Tazaungmon, 1382 ME
(23 November 2020)

Press Release on Final Report of Independent Commission of Enquiry

1. The President's Office has formed the Independent Commission of Enquiry (ICOE) on 30 July 2018 to investigate the allegation of human rights violation in Rakhine State during armed clashes between Myanmar Tatmadaw and ARSA terrorist groups in 2016-2017. Regarding the Final Report submitted by the ICOE, the President's Office instructed the Union Attorney-General Office on 21-1-2020 to conduct an investigation into any criminal acts and prosecution if concrete evidence was found, and to carry out further enquiry and prosecution on the destruction of property, looting and other criminal acts committed by civilians during the armed clashes.
2. The President's Office also issued Notification 19/2020 dated 24-1-2020 to form the Criminal Investigation and Prosecution Body. The report of commission said that there is a total of 139 cases for prosecution—87 cases in colluding with ARSA, 23 cases of border guard police forces and 29 cases committed by local ethnic people in 13 incidents.
3. The report of ICOE also said that the accomplices with ARSA committed 87 criminal cases, including murder, arson attacks and destruction of property. Among them, lawsuits have been filed against 67 cases, and 20 cases remain. The report included that the border guard police forces committed 23 crimes, such as murder, arson attack and destruction of property. Lawsuits have been filed against these cases. The report concluded 29 cases of murder, arson attack and destruction of property committed by the local ethnic people. Among them, lawsuits have been filed against 20 cases, and 9 cases remain.
4. Regarding the recommendations in the ICOE report, the Criminal Investigation and Prosecution Body has submitted its first report concerning the criminal cases on 1-5-2020 and the second report on 1-11-2020 to the President's Office.
5. A mechanism to address complaints in relation to the attacks in northern Rakhine State has been set up, and its activities will be released to the public.

Union Attorney-General Office



Myanmar returnees from Malaysia are seen at the Yangon International Airport on 23 November 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

33rd relief flight brings 170 Myanmar citizens back home from Malaysia

THE 33rd relief flight of Myanmar Airways International organized by the Myanmar Embassy in Kuala Lumpur landed in Yangon yesterday afternoon with 170 citizens stranded in Malaysia due to suspension of international flights.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Yangon Region government arranged 7-day quarantine at

specific places or designated hotels, followed by the 7-day home quarantine for them. Under the directives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Myanmar Embassy in Kuala Lumpur is closely working with relevant organizations in Malaysia to bring Myanmar citizens with no national verification, and those from the detention centres after their national identity has been scrutinized.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

We are planning to provide loans to small businesses that need loans

I understand that getting small loans is a necessity for our grassroots people. So, we are planning to provide loans to small businesses that need loans. Within two or three weeks, we hope to be able to present to the public what plans will be carried out. We are doing our best for the business sector. I believe that the general public will participate and cooperate in this effort.

(Excerpt from State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's report on COVID-19 situation amid containment measures, on 17 November 2020)



State Counsellor reports on measures against COVID-19 crisis

FROM PAGE-1

special notifications relating to health. Also, the instructions are issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports. Some people may think that these things can be read on phones or from Facebook. However, sometimes what you can see there may not be complete so reading newspapers is much easier on the eyes. That's why I want you all to read newspapers.

Another reason I want you to read newspapers is that lately, a great number of articles and news items about the Centenary Celebrations of Yangon University have appeared in the newspapers. I mean in the government newspapers. Some other journals might also contain similar articles. Also, a while ago, there were articles about 100 years of the Film Industry. These articles are very interesting and give you much of general knowledge. At this time during the COVID period when you cannot go out of the house, by reading articles like, this you can learn a lot about Myanmar history. 100 years of the Film Industry is not only about movies. It contains information about the fine arts of our country. It also contains interviews of our great performers and artists as well as articles about them. The same about Yangon University; some people might say I am not interested because I have never studied at Yangon University. Don't think like this. It is not only about Yangon University.

When you read these articles, you can learn a lot about the education system of our country and the history of education. Now you have the time to read articles like this when you have to stay at home.

Another thing is that it is also important to know about the history of our own country. The future requirements of a country would be understood better only if we know the history of a country. A wide range of advantages and disadvantages of the country could be known by learning its history. Weakness in teaching would be a reason. Some people are not interested in history as it is regarded as a subject to be learnt by heart. They could see only historic records on years of incidents and the reigns of kings. That is how they view it. This is not true. History is concerned not only with our country but also the world and mankind. History tells us how human beings overcame various challenges and how cul-

ture changed in successive times to be able to compare the differences between the present and the past. We can get ideas and philosophies from history how to build our best future. Therefore, I

want to make a suggestion to read government newspapers as much as possible. These papers are not expensive. I am not urging you to support the Ministry of Information. However, giving support when the situation warrants it is not a wrong thing to do. I have also said that we will relax restrictions as much as possible as the situation begins to improve. The plans can be read in the newspapers. Regarding the economic situation, not economic analysis but news about development projects of respective regions and states in the economic sector can be read in the newspapers. In addition to gaining general knowledge, you can learn about the economic situations, requirements and opportunities of the country in the newspapers.

Although the updated reports on COVID-19 diseases can be viewed on smartphones; you can also read these reports in the newspapers. Paper newspapers

newspapers which are reporting that the rate of the pandemic has not dropped yet in the world, and these countries are trying to find ways on how to handle the increasing rate day by day.

Moreover, reports and conclusions of the World Health Organization, other research or-

gанизations and experts can be read in the newspapers. These reports remind us to be vigilant against the threat of COVID-19. At the same time, we do not need to get upset about it. If we compare our situation with that of other countries, I believe our country has been able to put the disease under control to a certain degree. The main reason for being able to do this is because of people's participation. The truth remains unchanged. The disease could not be controlled without public participation. I think the disease could not be controlled due to the lack of public participation in some countries. I don't want to comment on their situations and their systems. However, I conclude that our country can control the disease thanks to our people. Actually, some countries have better control measures against the

pandemic. We need to see this. It has shown that we can do better than our present situations. As mentioned above, there are certain restrictions which we can relax. This is because of economic reasons as well as to relieve the stress of our people. We will do our best to improve the situa-

... you can also read these reports in the newspapers. Paper newspapers are easier on the eyes.

The future requirements of a country would be understood better only if we know the history of a country.

are easier on the eyes. The confirmed cases and the death toll can be found in the newspapers. The global situations of COVID-19, rules and regulations and economic impacts can be seen in the

tion as soon as possible to create more opportunities for work in the transport sector and to conduct business. Another thing is that our Union Government will make regular reports to the people on special plans for Christmas and New Year soon. The rate of infection spread of COVID-19 is increasing in other cities, mainly in Yangon and Mandalay with high population densities. It has become cooler in Nay Pyi Taw. The lower temperature seems to have increased the rate of infection. Therefore, I would like to request people who live in cold climates, especially elderly persons and those with underlying diseases to be vigilant. All of you, please try to be in good health and good spirits.—MNA

(Translated by Kyaw Myaing and Aung Khin)

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Ministries discuss centennial celebration of Yangon University online



Union Minister Dr Pe Myint (L) participates in the online meeting over preparation for a virtual ceremony to mark 100th anniversary of the University of Yangon on 23 November 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

THE Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Education and the Yangon Region Government, yesterday morning, jointly held a virtual meeting over preparation for a virtual ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of the University of Yangon.

The virtual meeting was attended by Union Minister for Information Dr Pe Myint, Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein, Deputy Minister for Education U Win Maw Tun, Yangon Mayor U Maung Maung Soe, Yangon Region Minister for Social Affairs U Naing Ngan Lin, other government officials, Rectors' Committee Chairperson Dr Zaw Wai Soe (Rector of University of Medicine 1) and Rector of the University of Yangon Dr Phoe Kaung.

During the meeting, Union Minister Dr Pe Myint said that the Ministry of Information is making significant efforts to help the Ministry of Education prepare well for the ceremony marking the centennial of the University of Yangon.

He said that the Ministry of Information is contributing to many programmes marking the centennial of the University of Yangon. Myanmar Radio and Television (MRTV) has broadcast TV programmes marking the centenary of the University of Yangon. Similarly, the newspapers published by the News and Periodicals Enterprise are featuring articles and interviews

to mark the 100th anniversary of the University of Yangon. He added that the Information and Public Relations Department has also organized exhibitions and contests celebrating the 100th anniversary.

MRTV also broadcasts songs featuring the university every week. It also produced and broadcast Traditional Ah-nyeint featuring the university.

The ceremony marking the centennial of the University of Yangon will be held only in the virtual mode because of COVID-19 pandemic. It will be held on 1 December this year in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Sports.

Union Minister Dr Pe Myint said that the Information and Public Relations Department held a photo contest, a cartoon contest, an art contest, and creative writing contests including an article contest, a poetry contest, and a short story competition. The Information and Public Relations Department will present awards to winners of the photo contest. The Ministry of Education will present awards to winners of the remaining contests.

He said that there are further programmes that the Ministry of Information will contribute to.

Union Minister for Education Dr Myo Thein Gyi said that the 100th anniversary of the University of Yangon was planned to celebrate grandly, but only virtual celebrations will be made

because of COVID-19. He also highlighted the assistance given by the Ministry of Information in preparation for the virtual celebrations.

The Union Minister for Education said that there are about 100 programmes for the centenary celebration of the University of Yangon. He noted that 17 Steering Committees and Working Committees had been formed for the successful implementation of the ceremony marking the centenary of the University of Yangon.

Sports competitions and some exhibitions marking the centenary were held in December 2019 and January, February and March this year, according to Dr Myo Thein Gyi. After COVID-19 pandemic began in Myanmar in this year's March, other programmes marking the centenary have been implemented in a virtual format.

The award ceremonies of the centenary celebration will include a video of experts' reading research papers on the 100th anniversary of the University of Yangon. The Organizing Committee for Research Paper Reading has been chaired by Rector Dr Zaw Wai Soe.

The Union Minister for Education said that the centenary celebration will be broadcast live on MRTV Facebook Page. He called on the authorities of the University of Yangon to arrange that the centenary celebration can also be broadcast on the

He expressed thanks to all the stakeholders who have been involved in the preparations for the ceremony. He pledged that the regional government would provide necessary assistance for all the matters related to the centenary celebration.

U Ye Naing, Director-General of the MRTV, explained the activities of the Information Working Committee, and Dr Thein Win, Director-General of the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education, presented the arrangements for the centenary celebration.



Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi joins the online meeting over preparation for centennial celebration of Yangon University on 23 November 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**



Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein participates in the online meeting over preparation for centennial celebration of Yangon University on 23 November 2020. **PHOTO: MNA**

Facebook Page of the University of Yangon.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Phyo Min Thein said that under the supervision of the State Counsellor, the Union Government had prepared well for the ceremony to be held in Yangon.

The participants made discussions and suggestions for the centenary celebration, and Union Minister Dr Myo Thein Gyi delivered the closing speech of the meeting.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

COVID-19 Call Centre opens daily

In efforts to speed up the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID-19 disease, the call centre (phone number 2019) is established by four communications operators and the Blue Ocean Company with the coordination of the Medical Research Department of the Health and Sports Ministry and Post and Telecommunications Department from 9 am to 5 pm daily at the Medical Research Department in Yangon.

Over 43 staff from the Medical Research Department and 17 volunteers from the Myanmar Medical Association totally 60 workers have been working at the centre since 8th April.—MNA

MoHS holds talks on 'Mask and Face Shield Campaign'

UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe yesterday morning participated in the virtual meeting on review of Region/State Mask and Face Shield Campaigns via videoconferencing.

During the meeting, the Union Minister said as follows.

* The meeting is aimed at sharing experiences encountered during the Region/State Mask and Face Shield Campaigns.

* Only if the COVID-19 pandemic is effectively controlled, businesses, the education sector, and social sector will be restored to normal, and that public cooperation is important.

* Ministry of Health and Sports regularly announces new findings on COVID-19 disease: such as the ways COVID-19 is transmitted and control strategies.

* If the public campaign is not implemented properly, it will be very difficult to control the COVID-19 pandemic.

* Even if the world gets effective COVID-19 vaccines, it may take long to launch a nationwide vaccination campaign in our country. The general public must continue adhering to the COVID-19 measures due to various factors such as virus mutations, and the existence of asymptomatic patients.

* For successful public campaign, officials of Region/State Public Health and Medical Services Departments must provide 100 per cent professional support to the campaign supervised by regional governments and regional ministers for social affairs.

* Departments/organizations must exchange information, analyze information, and establish procedures on the situations.

* Organizing working committees, preparing for relevant checklists and distribution to the officials. For any special cases related to the outbreak, relevant Region/State Public Health and Medical Services Departments should immediately notify the central-level department.

* In accordance with the rules of the Region/State Mask and Face Shield Campaigns, buyers must wear masks, and they should buy from the sellers who wear masks and face shields to prevent the spread of the disease.

* At the beginning of the public campaign, the Ministry must make great efforts and efficiently use available resources.

* It would be more effective if those who failed to adhere



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe speaks at the virtual meeting on review of Region/State Mask and Face Shield Campaigns on 23 November 2020. PHOTO: MNA

to the COVID-19 prevention rules, such as not wearing masks, are ordered to work as volunteers in health awareness activities.

* All banks must provide free masks to all visitors, and all bank officials and staff members must wear masks and face shields.

* Region/State Public Health and Medical Services Departments, and District and Township level officials must consult with each other at least once every three days.

* Region/State Public Health and Medical Services Departments must regularly review the current situations on the outbreak and must submit the information to the central level once a week. The central level department will be able to provide necessary assistance to the regional departments immediately.

* The Mask and Face Shield Campaign was aimed at promoting COVID-19 awareness of all individuals, and it will take some time. The campaign period will last for about two to three months.

Deputy Director-General Dr Tun Myint, Yangon Region Public Health and Medical Services Department

* He explained the distribution of health awareness pamphlets at the markets. Prohibiting any person who fails to wear a mask from entering the market. Shoppers are also required to wear masks. Campaigners will give the sellers masks and face shields. Media are conducting interviews with buyers and sellers to raise COVID-19 awareness.

* Those who fail to follow the rules must be ordered to volunteer in awareness-raising activities as punitive actions.

* Cooperation among relevant ministries. Markets need to have trash cans and hand washbasins. Campaign officials,

market officials and Yangon City Development Committee are working together to provide enough water to the markets.

* Singers and performers will also help the Mask and Face Shield Campaigns. He said that campaign officials would educate people about face shield cleaning techniques.

Yangon Region Minister for Social Affairs U Naing Ngan Lin said:

* The Yangon Region government's efforts in the Mask and Face Shield Campaign. Although the general public is aware of the disease prevention rules, some of them fail to adhere to the rules.

* Hluttaw representatives will provide assist once to the campaign in townships.

U Myo Thit, Mandalay Region Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation said:

* Each regional minister is assigned to work for the campaign in districts and townships.

* Activities of township-level COVID-19 committees.

* He made a suggestion that masks should be burnt after use.

Daw Nyunt Nyunt Htay, Bago Region Minister for Social Affairs said:

* Bago Region government is cooperating with the regional Public Health and Medical Services Department.

Dr Chan Tha, Rakhine State Minister for Social Affairs

* The COVID-19 response efforts are led by the regional government. The Rakhine State government has obtained professional advice from health officials and assigned responsibilities to relevant departments.

Dr Htein Lin, Mon State Minister for Social Affairs

* Each regional minister is supervising COVID-19 response efforts in townships.

* Cooperation with governmental departments, Myanmar Red Cross Society, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, and other organizations.

U Saw Bo Bo Wai Maung, Kayin State Minister for Social Affairs

* The public campaign is being carried out in crowded areas and markets.

* He also explained the situations in border checkpoints and the resumption of Myanmar-Thai border trade.

U Pau Lun Min Thang, Chin State Minister for Social Affairs

* He explained the outbreak in the Chin State and the situations in the border crossings. He said that the regional government, the General Administration Department, and charitable organizations are working together in the COVID-19 response efforts.

After that, officials from Region/State Public Health and Medical Services Department under the Ministry of Health and Sports discussed:

* Implementations of Mask and Face Shield Campaign at markets, bus stations and crowded places; availability of masks and face shields; distribution to people in various townships and hospitals; health awareness campaigns by using hand-held loudspeakers;

* They said that people know that wearing a mask and face shield can effectively prevent the COVID-19, but some of them fail to wear them.

* Additional need for masks, face shields, hand-held loudspeakers, and Rapid Antigen Diagnosis Test Kits.

* Plan to carry out the public campaign in crowded areas; future plans.

* Advices on taking actions against those who fail to adhere to the COVID-19 related

instructions.

Deputy Minister for Health and Sports Dr Mya Lay Sein said:

* More masks, hand-held loudspeakers, and Rapid Antigen Diagnosis Test Kits will be distributed to the Region/State Public Health and Medical Services Departments.

* Situations related to using Rapid Antigen Diagnosis Test Kits and the results should be submitted to the central department on a regular basis.

Permanent Secretary Dr Thet Khaing Win:

* He said that the campaign is an important project for the country, and called on all stakeholders to work together and share their information with the relevant regional ministers for social affairs and regional governments.

The Union Minister delivered a closing speech:

* Thanks to all health officials and workers (in all Regions/States) working for the Mask and Face Shield Campaigns, governmental departments, and all relevant organizations.

* As in the Rakhine State, it is good that the COVID-19 response efforts are led by regional government.

* It is good that the COVID-19 response efforts in the Mandalay Region and Mon State are supervised by regional governments and regional ministers.

* It is good that Hluttaw representatives are providing assistance in the COVID-19 response efforts in townships in the Yangon Region.

* This public campaign must be carried out simultaneously in Regions/States.

* Authorities must monitor entry and exit points in Regions/States. COVID-19 surveillance activities in the areas adjacent to highways must be further strengthened.

* The Ministry of Health and Sports is making greater efforts to control the spread of COVID-19 as much as it can.

* The Ministry of Health and Sports alone cannot effectively control the spread of COVID-19. So, regional governments and relevant departments need to effectively cooperate in the COVID-19 response efforts. And if the citizens themselves are aware of the COVID-19 related guidelines and adhere to them, the COVID-19 response efforts will be successful. —MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

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Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

National COVID committee receives donations of cash, medical supplies



Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe (R) accepts the donations presented by Union Minister U Win Khaing (L) in Nay Pyi Taw on 23 November 2020. PHOTO: MNA

UNION Minister for Health and Sports Dr Myint Htwe, in his capacity as the Secretary (2) of National-Level Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19, received cash and medical supplies yesterday.

At the donation ceremony, Union Minister for Electricity and Energy U Win Khaing explained the US\$100,000 donation of Thai-based petroleum and natural gas company PTTEP for COVID-19 containment measures, the donation of cash and relief supplies worth about \$900,000 by the companies in the joint venture with the MoEE to date, reduction of electricity bill during COVID-19 crisis and regular electricity supplies to public

hospitals and medical service centres with the patients of this disease.

Union Minister Dr Myint Htwe expressed thanks for the donation in advance and explained control measures against the pandemic in the country.

The donation items included \$100,000 from the PTTEP International (Yangon) Branch and Andaman Transportation Ltd., 480 bottles of Remdesivir 100 mg injection from the AyarMED Myanmar Co.Ltd, and the portable X-ray machines and medical supplies worth about K140,296,000 from the DKSH Myanmar Ltd.—MNA

(Translated by Aung Khin)

MSWRR holds talks on IDPs resettlement activities in Kachin

THE Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement yesterday afternoon held a coordination meeting on drafting guidelines for the Technical Coordinating Committee on implementation of resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Kachin State. The meeting held at the ministry's office also aims to ensure sectoral coordination with UN agencies in the process.

During the meeting, Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye said that the resettlement activities for IDPs in the Kachin State are being carried out in accordance with the National Strategy on Resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Closure of IDP Camps. He said that the process aims to keep the IDPs safe and to make their lives independent.

He added that the Kachin State Working Committee had formed nine sub-committees for the process. He said that governmental departments, local civil society organizations, international non-governmental organizations, the citizens and UN agencies also need to cooperate in the process.

He said that the process is aimed to ensure humanitarian assistance, healthcare service, education, vocational development, social integration, infrastructures, the rule of law and freedom of movement for the IDPs.

He said that high priorities would be given to ethnic issues and internal peace in Myanmar's future political process. Myanmar will closely work with UN Agencies, according to the Union Minister.



Union Minister Dr Win Myat Aye discusses IDPs resettlement activities in Kachin State on 23 November 2020. PHOTO: MNA

UN Core Groups—UNRCO, UNDP, UNOCHA, UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO, UNFPA, FAO, ILO, IOM, UN-Habitat, UN Women and WFP—will provide technical assistance and support to the resettlement activities, according to the Union Minister.

Deputy Minister, Permanent Secretary, Directors-General,

and Directors made discussions and suggestions for the process.

The guidelines for the Technical Coordinating Committee will provide effective technical assistance to the government for coordinating the resettlement activities.—MNA

(Translated by Maung Maung Swe)

Ayeyarwady Test & Care Centre expands services in Yangon

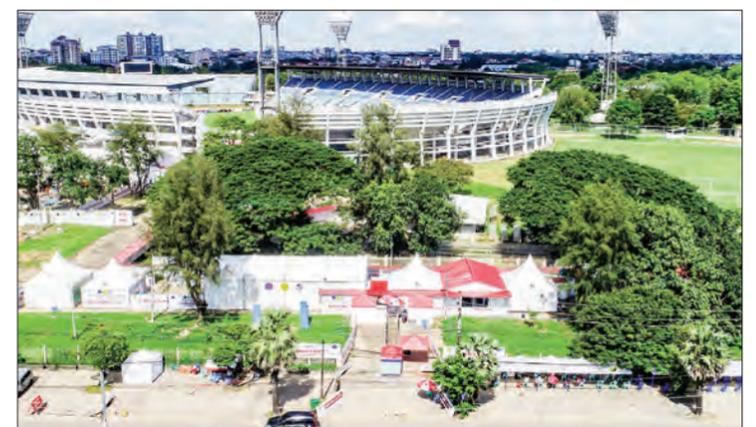
THE Ayeyarwady Test & Care Centre has expanded medical services for patients from Bahan, Mayangon and Sangyaung townships of Yangon to be able to conduct tests for patients with COVID-19 symptoms commencing 24 November. The centre has already established the test units for doctors, health workers, members of Myanmar Red Cross Society, volunteers and the locals in Thingangyun, Mingalar Taungyunt, Yankin, Tamway and South Okkalapa townships.

The centre has tested over 11,000 persons with suspected

symptoms, and the confirmed cases were taken to the treatment centres.

Those who want to receive the tests at Ayeyarwady Test & Care Centre can submit their applications via <https://bit.ly/36UvI5s> in advance and date and time for the test will be sent to the applicants together with QR Code and patient ID via SMS of the mobile phone.

The applicants need to bring their staff identity card or national scrutiny card together with them while coming to the Ayeyarwady Test & Care Centre on



An aerial view shows the Ayeyarwady Test & Care Centre in Yangon. PHOTO: KO MOE

Waizayantar Road in Thingangyun Township. Detailed informa-

tion is available on the hotline: 014705555.—Ye Yint Shine

Myanmar to ship seedless watermelon to Dubai

By Nyein Nyein

MYANMAR will start exporting seedless watermelon to Dubai market in early December, said U Naing Win, chair of Myanmar Watermelon and Muskmelon Producers and Exporters Association.

For the first time, 25 tonnes of Myanmar's seedless watermelon will be shipped on 6 December, he continued.

"Traders from Dubai, UAE ordered 25 tonnes of seedless watermelon. The melons are scheduled to ship on 6 December. It will take about 17 days to reach Dubai. If they like our melon, they will purchase the melons the whole year," he said.

"Myanmar has a plan to expand its market to Hong Kong SAR, UAE and Qatar", the association stated.

The seedless watermelon is grown in Sagaing, Mandalay and Bago regions. The harvest sea-



Local growers face declining prices of watermelon in Natogyi-Myingyan market. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

son is from November to May. At the present time, the melons are primarily sent to China through the land border.

The COVID-19 impacts trigger difficulties in watermelon and muskmelon exports to China in the previous financial year.

The growers and traders suffer a loss due to the drop in prices.

Myanmar yearly exports over 800,000 tonnes of watermelon and about 150,000 tonnes of muskmelons to China, the association stated.

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

External trade falls by \$1.4 bln as of 13 November

MYANMAR'S external trade between 1 October and 13 November in the current financial year 2020-2021 touched a low of US\$3.08 billion, a sharp drop of \$1.4 billion compared with the corresponding period of the FY2019-2020, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

During the same period in the previous FY, trade stood at \$4.486 billion, according to data released by the ministry.

As of 13 November 2020, Myanmar's export was worth \$1.3 billion, which plunged from \$2.34 billion registered a year-ago period. Meanwhile, the country's import was valued \$1.76 billion, showing a decrease of \$382.3 million compared with the last FY.

The decrease in Myanmar's foreign trade was attributed to the drop in exports and imports in the current FY amid the COVID-19 crisis.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, animal products, minerals, forest products, and finished industrial goods, while it imports capital goods, raw indus-

trial materials, and consumer goods.

The country's export sector relies more on the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. The government is trying to reduce the trade deficit by screening luxury import items and boosting exports.

Myanmar's foreign trade has shown a 10-per-cent increase, year over year, under the incumbent government. Myanmar has already surpassed the total trade value target of \$34 billion for the last FY, said an official from the ministry.

Last FY2019-2020, Myanmar's external trade reflected an increase of \$1.5 billion compared with the FY2018-2019 as it increased from over \$35 billion to \$36.6 billion.

Under the National Planning Law for the Financial Year 2020-2021, Myanmar intends to reach an export target at US\$16 billion and import at \$18 billion.

—Ko Htet
(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

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Myanmar imports over \$1 bln worth iron/steel materials last FY

THE value of Myanmar's iron and steel imports for the construction sector is valued over US\$1.19 billion in the past financial year 2019-2020 ended in September, according to the statistics of the Ministry of Commerce.

Additionally, \$586.25 million worth iron and steel products are also imported during the October-September period.

At present, Myanmar's steel demand is estimated about 2.5 million tonnes per year, and 92 per cent of which are imported. The demand is likely to grow up to 5.4 million tonnes per year in 2030, according to MSA.

If Myanmar can fulfil the requirements of local steel consumption and focus on import substitution, the steel industry will strategically contribute to the nation's interest. Steel consumption includes in calculating economy growth index, said Chairman U Sit Taing Aung of the Myanmar Steel Association (MSA).



Fabricating a factory chimney. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Therefore 11 executive members of MSA established MSA Public Company Limited, and they are making efforts to set up iron and steel industrial zone, to reduce the outflow

of US dollar, effectuating the development of steel industry and assisting in the country's infrastructure building.

Studies for implementation of iron and steel industrial

zone project are underway in Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions, and Rakhine and Mon states. The project is slated to commence within three to five year after completing studies,

he continued.

The government needs to support the steel sector by granting tax relief and land rights, controlling illegal import, making anti-dumping law come into the effort and formulating steel policy, according to the MSA.

"Steel industry is pivotal in industrial infrastructure building. This project needs to be implemented for prospects of the country's economy," he stressed.

The MSA will move forward to the development of industry standards which are compatible with the country and the emergence of steel library and steel laboratory. The association will cooperate with the international organizations to grow the steel sector, he added.

China is the leading supplier for Myanmar's steel market. Iron and steel are also imported from India and the Republic of Korea. —GNLM

(Translated by Ei Myat Mon)

With all hands on deck, closure of IDP camps, resettlement of IDPs are possible

STEPS are being taken to shut down the IDP camps in Kachin State in accordance with the tasks prescribed in the National Strategy for the closure of nationwide IDP camps and resettlement of IDPs.

The national strategy envisages that all displaced people at IDP camps return home safely and with dignity and rebuild their lives without depending on others.

Kachin State work committee on resettlement of IDPs and closure of IDP camps has carried out its tasks through its nine sub-committees since its formation to bring about socioeconomic development and rehabilitate displaced people from the IDP camps in Kachin State.

The national strategy envisages that all displaced people at IDP camps return home safely and with dignity and rebuild their lives without depending on others.

The IDPs in Kachin State have been suffering the consequences of conflicts which have also delayed their socio-economic development.

To make the closure of Kachin State's IDP camps and resettlement of IDPs a success, all hands from the government departments and committees, local residents, UN agencies, civil society organizations, associate organizations, and residents of the IDP camp should be on deck.

The officials concerned are advised to discuss the national strategy, policies and tasks with the IDPs and local ethnic organizations to ensure they clearly understand the government's policy, which is committed to ensuring that displaced people are able to rebuild their lives with safety and dignity, without depending upon others.



New Southern Policy Plus will be a valuable support for the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan: ROK Ambassador Mr Lee Sang-hwa

The following is an exclusive interview with Mr Lee Sang-hwa, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Myanmar.

By GNLM

Q. In 2nd week of November, ASEAN-related summit was held. At the ASEAN-ROK summit, Korean government disclosed "New Southern Policy Plus." Could you elaborate on the meaning for this?

A: The New Southern Policy Plus is an upgraded version of the New Southern Policy launched in November 2017. We've implemented the policy for three years, and now we've taken its breadth and significance to the next level.

We will increase cooperation in seven key sectors:

- comprehensive cooperation in the health sector in the post-COVID era
- education and human resource development
- culture and creative industries
- win-win partnership in investment and trade
- rural community and smart city development
- joint cooperation in ICT-driven future industries
- strengthened cooperation in non-traditional security areas



Mr Lee Sang-hwa, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Myanmar. PHOTO: KYAW ZEYA

as one of the Mekong members do you expect?

The ROK-Mekong meeting held in Busan last November was the first time national leaders convened and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was able to attend as well.

The strategic partnership

valuable economic partner.

Q. Excellency, you mentioned that the New Southern Policy Plus highlights comprehensive cooperation in the health sector in the post-COVID era. What will be the status of Korean-Myanmar ties and how can the two countries work together to miti-

for Health and Sports.

We've formed the trade and industrial cooperation joint committee in September through online meetings despite COVID. Four ministry departments from Myanmar participated and discussed trade, investment, industrial and energy sectors. The New Southern Policy Plus will provide support on matters like this.

Q. As you explained, New Southern Policy Plus includes win-win

We will increase cooperation in seven key sectors:

- comprehensive cooperation in the health sector in the post-COVID era
- education and human resource development
- culture and creative industries
- win-win partnership in investment and trade
- rural community and smart city development
- joint cooperation in ICT-driven future industries
- strengthened cooperation in non-traditional security areas

partnership in investment and trade. Could you please brief us about the latest development of the Korea-Myanmar Industrial Complex (KMIC)? How about the prospects for SMEs from the ROK making investment in Myanmar?

A: COVID-19 is alerting us to reform global support systems. KMIC has the best chance of moving factories abroad post-pandemic, and the Myanmar government is aiming for that period to increase cooperation with KMIC.

We will select initial projects in December and we are in discussion with the Ministry of Construction to hold the stake-driving ceremony then as well. The Korean government aims to create a green, smart industrial zone with KMIC. We expect 150 to 200 businesses to come in, especially the technologically apt and competitive MSMEs from ROK.

Q. Mekong-ROK relationship was elevated to the 'Strategic Partnership'. Add to this, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which both Myanmar and Korea participated, was signed on 15th November. Any prospect for boosting bilateral trade between the two countries after this.

A: The RCEP is a win-win incentive for everyone as the participants being ROK, China, Japan, ASEAN, Australia, New Zealand of the 15 nations hold 30% of the global economy.

ROK was able to elevate relations with the Mekong through the New Southern Policy Plus, and we feel being able to sign the RCEP will have a positive synergy for bilateral economic cooperation.

We hope to swiftly complete

The Myanmar government continuously declared "People are the key" during the general election to overcome COVID-19 and encourage democracy. Freedom of speech is integral for a democratic system, peace and economic development. I believe this is the reason this election is an important milestone in Myanmar's democratic process. I am delighted on behalf of the government and people of Myanmar.

Q. Despite the global pandemic, Myanmar has a strong commitment and held a free and fair election according to the guidelines of COVID-19 prevention. Please share your impression on preparations and arrangements for holding Myanmar's multiparty democracy general elections 2020?

A: I would like to congratulate the successful election despite the unforeseen challenges caused by COVID-19. I'm glad the disease hasn't disappointed the people who are looking forward to democratic development.

Our embassy monitored two of the polling stations in Yangon, and we saw the peaceful voting process carried out since the morning while following health guidelines. It was a wonderful sight. We saw the bright future for Myanmar's democracy.

The government of the Republic of Korea shared their know-how and experience of their election in April with the Union Election Commission and Ministry of Health and Sports through a video conference on how they dealt with COVID-19 to ensure a safe and fair election. We acknowledge the UEC and Ministry of Health and Sports have done exceptionally in this regard.



The scale model of Yangon-Dala bridge, the Myanmar-Korea Friendship infrastructure.

President's Office continues announcement of illegal drug arrests, seizures action on tip-offs

THE Office of the President has issued Press Release 41/2020 yesterday, publicly announcing the Ministry of Home Affairs' arrests and seizures in the fight against illicit drug trafficking up till 21 November.

The ministry made the arrests, acting on information, sent to the Drug Activity Special Complaint Department of the Office of the President as of 21 November. The full text of the press release will be reported in the 25 November issue of *The Global New Light of Myanmar*.—GNLM

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"Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!"

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 23 November, 2020)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30)hrs M.S.T today, the depression over Southwest Bay of Bengal is centered at about (280) Nautical miles East-Southeast of Puducherry and about (300) Nautical miles Southeast of Chennai (India). Weather is partly cloud over the Andaman sea and North Bay and cloudy elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 24 November, 2020: Light Rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Taninthayi Region and Kachin, Kayin, Mon States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be generally fair in Lower Sagaing, Mandalay Regions and Eastern Shan State and partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight increase of night temperatures in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady Regions and Rakhine, Kayah States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 November, 2020: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 November, 2020: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 November, 2020: Generally fair weather.

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TIKTOK-LIKE FEED CALLED SPOTLIGHT

Snapchat challenges TikTok with curated video feed

SAN FRANCISCO (United States) — Snapchat on Monday unveiled a new curated short-form video feed in a stepped up challenge to social media rivals like TikTok.

The new format called Spotlight will allow Snapchatters to see content from influencers and other members of the network popular with young smartphone users.

Spotlight is aimed at broadening the connections among Snapchat users by enabling anyone to create a video that gets distributed on the platform.

It aims to encourage more users to create short-form video “snaps” which can be embellished with filters and augmented reality effects.

“We designed Spotlight to entertain our community while living up to Snapchat values, with our community’s well being as a top priority,” said a statement from Snapchat parent firm Snap Inc. announcing the new service.

Spotlight is being launched in the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, and France, and in other markets later.

It marks the latest challenge to the wildly successful TikTok, which is facing pressure from the Trump administration, which wants to ban the app or forces its sale to American investors due to alleged national security concerns about its Chinese connections.

Others using similar short-form videos include Facebook-owned Instagram’s Reels and startups like Triller.—AFP ■



A picture taken on October 1, 2019 in Lille shows the logos of mobile apps Snapchat and Instagram displayed on a tablet. **PHOTO: AFP**

WE ARE PEOPLE OF PRINCIPLE AND READY TO DIE...

Tigray leader tells Ethiopian PM his people ‘ready to die’

ADDIS ABABA (Ethiopia) — The leader of Ethiopia’s dissident Tigray region said Monday that his people were “ready to die” defending their homeland, rejecting Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed’s ultimatum that they surrender within 72 hours.

Abiy launched a military campaign against the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) on November 4, accusing it of attacking two federal military camps in the northern region, as well as defying and seeking to destabilise his government.

The federal army says its forces are within 60 kilometres (37 miles) of Mekele, the Tigrayan capital and seat of the TPLF, ahead of a threatened all-out bombardment of the city of half a million people.

Abiy — last year’s Nobel Peace Prize winner — on Sunday called on the TPLF to surrender peacefully within three days, saying they were “at a point of no return”.

But the TPLF’s leader Debretsion Gebremichael said Abiy was trying to cover for setbacks his army had suffered against Tigrayan forces, and was issuing threats to buy time.

“He doesn’t understand who we are. We are people of principle and ready to die in defence of our right to administer our region,” Debretsion told AFP via WhatsApp.—AFP ■

MALAYSIA IS BATTLING A RESURGENT OUTBREAK OF COVID-19

World’s top surgical glove maker shuts factories due to coronavirus



(FILES) In this file photo taken on August 26, 2020, a worker inspects disposable gloves at the Top Glove factory in Shah Alam on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur. **PHOTO: AFP**

KUALA LUMPUR (Malaysia) — A Malaysian company that is the world’s biggest manufacturer of surgical gloves will close over half of its factories after a surge in coronavirus cases among workers, authorities said Monday.

Top Glove has seen a huge jump in demand since the start of the pandemic as countries scrambled to stock up on protective equipment, pushing up both its profits and share price.

But there has been a cluster of virus outbreaks among Top Glove employees — many of whom are low-paid migrant workers — at factories in an industrial area near the capital, Kuala Lumpur.

More than 1,000 cases were

recorded Monday, prompting the government to order the plants to close.

“Based on advice from the ministry of health, it was agreed at a special meeting today to shut down 28 Top Glove factories... in stages to allow the workers to undergo tests and quarantine,” said Defence Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob.

Top Glove said in a statement it would “cooperate fully with the relevant authorities to implement the temporary stoppage”, and plant closures had begun.

About 5,700 workers have already been screened and the rest will also undergo tests, it said. Top Glove did not say how the closures would affect its abil-

ity to meet orders.

The company operates 47 factories — 41 in Malaysia — and many of its workers are from Nepal and live in crowded dormitory complexes.

The company can produce more than 70 billion gloves a year and is a major global supplier.

Malaysia is battling a resurgent outbreak of the coronavirus which has infected more than 56,000 people and killed 337.

The country’s glove manufacturers — and other industries — have long been accused of mistreating migrant workers, and the United States in July banned the import of gloves from two Top Glove subsidiaries over concerns about forced labour.—AFP ■

HER NEWBORN BABY DIED SOON AFTER SHE GAVE BIRTH

‘IS bride’ security threat, UK government tells court

LONDON (United Kingdom) — A woman who joined the Islamic State in Syria would pose “a clear and present threat” to national security if she was allowed to return to Britain to appeal a decision to revoke her citizenship, the UK government told the Supreme Court on Monday.

The government has asked the country’s highest court to decide if Shamima Begum, 20, can come back to pursue an in-person appeal of the 2019 decision to strip her of British citizenship.

The Court of Appeal ruled in

her favour in July, but the government immediately appealed, insisting she remains “aligned” with the Islamic State group.

“The exposure of the public to an increased risk of terrorism is not justifiable or appropriate in this case on fairness grounds,” James Eadie, a lawyer acting for the interior ministry, told a five-judge panel.

“What we submit is that those who travelled (to Syria)... pose a clear and present threat specifically on return.”

Begum was 15 when she and two other schoolgirls from

Bethnal Green, east London, left home to join the jihadist group on February 17, 2015.

She claims she married a Dutch convert soon after arriving in IS-held territory. She was discovered, nine months pregnant, in a Syrian refugee camp in February last year.

Her newborn baby died soon after she gave birth. Two of her other children also died under IS rule.

Then-home secretary, Sajid Javid, last year annulled Begum’s British citizenship on national security grounds.—AFP ■

OXFORD UNIVERSITY VACCINE

AstraZeneca/Oxford say Covid vaccine shows 70-90% efficacy

LONDON (United Kingdom) — British drugs group AstraZeneca and the University of Oxford on Monday said their jointly-developed vaccine against Covid-19 has shown “an average efficacy of 70 per cent” in trials.

“This vaccine’s efficacy and safety confirm that it will be highly effective against Covid-19 and will have an immediate impact on this public health emergency,” AstraZeneca chief executive Pascal Soriot said in a statement.

The results ranged between 62 and 90 per cent efficacy depending on the vaccine dosage.

The 70-per cent average is lower compared with the efficacy of coronavirus vaccines trialed by rivals Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna which have come in above 90 per cent. Monday’s statement said “positive high-level results from an interim analysis of clinical trials of AZD1222 in the UK and Brazil showed the vaccine was highly effective in preventing Covid-19... and no hospitalizations or severe cases of the disease were reported in participants.”

It added: “One dosing regimen (n=2,741) showed vaccine efficacy of 90 per cent when AZD1222 was given as a half dose,



An illustration picture shows vials with Covid-19 Vaccine stickers attached and syringes, with the logo of the University of Oxford and its partner British pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca, on 17 November 2020. PHOTO: AFP

followed by a full dose at least one month apart.”

The pair said that regimen n=8,895 showed 62 per cent efficacy when given as two full doses at least one month apart.

“The combined analysis from both dosing regimens (n=11,636) resulted in an average efficacy of

70 per cent.”

AstraZeneca said it would “immediately prepare regulatory submission of the data to authorities around the world that have a framework in place for conditional or early approval”.

It added that it would seek emergency-use listing from the

World Health Organization to accelerate vaccine availability in low-income countries. AstraZeneca said it is looking at a capacity of up to three billion doses of the vaccine in 2021 pending regulatory approval. It said the vaccine can be stored, transported and handled “at normal refrigerated conditions” of between two and eight degrees Celsius (36-66 degrees Fahrenheit) for at least six months.

erated conditions” of between two and eight degrees Celsius (36-66 degrees Fahrenheit) for at least six months.

‘Save many lives’

More than 23,000 adults are currently being assessed in the trials, with the number expected to rise to up to 60,000, the statement said.

“Clinical trials are also being conducted in the US, Japan, Russia, South Africa, Kenya and Latin America with planned trials in other European and Asian countries,” it added.

Oxford professor Andrew Pollard said the latest findings show “an effective vaccine that will save many lives”.

“Excitingly, we’ve found that one of our dosing regimens may be around 90 per cent effective and if this dosing regime is used, more people could be vaccinated with planned vaccine supply.

“Today’s announcement is only possible thanks to the many volunteers in our trial, and the hard working and talented team of researchers based around the world,” added Pollard, who is chief investigator of the Oxford Vaccine Trial.—AFP ■

VACCINE COULD BECOME AVAILABLE IN DECEMBER

EU regulator could approve Covid vaccines ‘late 2020, early 2021’

THE HAGUE (Netherlands) — Europe’s medicines regulator said Monday that it could approve the first coronavirus vaccines late this year or early next, as it evaluates the most promising candidates.

The clarification came after EU Commission president Ursula von der Leyen said last week that the watchdog could give the green light for vaccines tested by Pfizer-BioNTech and by Moderna before the end of December.

“It is difficult to predict timelines for the authorization of vaccines precisely at this stage, as the data are still coming in and the rolling reviews are currently ongoing,” the European Medicines Agency said in an emailed statement to AFP.

“Depending on how the evaluation progresses, EMA could indeed be in a position to conclude evaluation for the most advanced candidates towards the end of this year or

the beginning of next.”

The Amsterdam-based EMA is carrying out “rolling reviews” designed to speed up vaccine approval times on three candidates: Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, and Oxford University-AstraZeneca.

US giant Pfizer and Germany’s BioNTech has already sent data to the EMA after the companies said clinical trials showed their experimental vaccine is 95 per cent effective.

US-based Moderna meanwhile says its vaccine is 94.5 per cent effective, and Oxford and AstraZeneca said Monday that theirs showed 70 per cent effectiveness, rising to 90 per cent depending on the type of dosage.

Several European countries have already unveiled strategies to roll out coronavirus vaccines to large parts of their populations as soon as they are approved by the EMA. —AFP ■

UPDATED CORONAVIRUS NEWS

Coronavirus: Latest global developments

PARIS (France) — Here are the latest developments in the coronavirus crisis:

Toronto lockdown

Canada’s biggest city closes restaurants and shops for one month, except for takeaway or click and collect services. Private indoor gatherings are also banned though schools will remain open.

Russian drinkers die

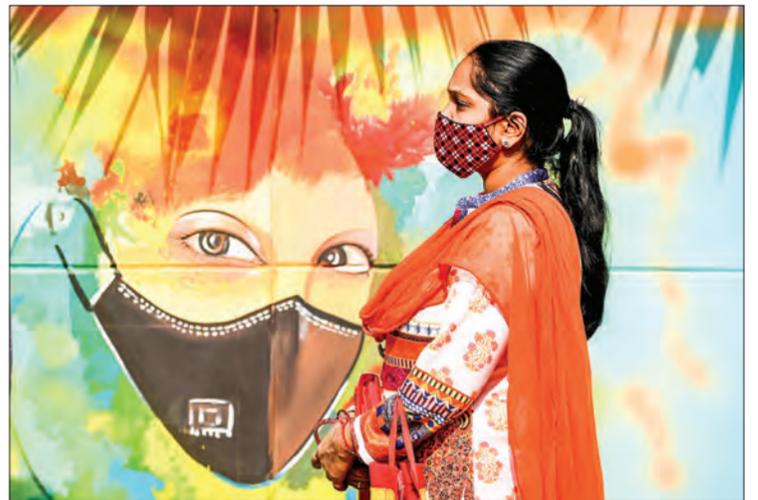
Seven people in Russia’s Far East republic of Yakutia die and two are in a coma after drinking diluted hand sanitiser. Drinking cheap alcohol substitutes is not uncommon in Russia’s poorer regions.

Liverpool shows way

British PM Boris Johnson is set to announce a major testing programme in high risk regions after England’s first city-wide testing in Liverpool led to a “substantial fall” in cases.

Smashing excuse

A man in northwest France



A woman wearing a facemask as a preventive measure against the Covid-19 coronavirus walks past a mural in New Delhi on November 23, 2020. PHOTO: AFP

is fined after breaking lockdown with the written explanation that he was going out to “smash a guy’s face in”. “He had the written form with his real name and the time he had left home -- 10:15 pm,” said police, “But we told him that the reason for going out was not valid.”

Eurozone battered

Forecasts predict the Euro-

zone’s economy will contract by a historic 7.4 per cent in 2020 and expect a recovery of just 3.7 per cent in 2021.

China airport test

Staff at Shanghai’s biggest international airport face mass testing and vaccinations for high-risk workers after a small outbreak in the city linked to several cargo handlers.—AFP ■

LET NATURE RESTORE ITSELF...

Concrete jungle threatens mangroves on Pakistan island

KARACHI (Pakistan) — A short boat ride from the shores of Karachi, mangrove trees sprout along the quiet inlets of an uninhabited island that environmentalists say provides vital coastal protection to Pakistan's largest city.

But the calm of Bundle Island, home to a few camels, is at risk, with Prime Minister Imran Khan determined to turn it into an enormous real-estate project to ease pressure on the expanding megacity home to 20 million people.

The \$50-billion housing development has pitted regional leaders against the central government, with local activists and lawmakers accusing the prime minister of reneging on pro-environment promises.

"Let nature restore itself and (do) not dream of these big, grand cities," said Mahera Omar, an environmental film-maker from Karachi who enjoys kayaking around Bundle and meandering through the island's mangroves.

"We are all very tired of our concrete jungle. We all want to



This photograph taken on 29 April 2014, shows Pakistani boatmen travelling on a boat loaded with chopped mangroves along a tributary close to the Arabian Sea in Karachi. **PHOTO: AFP**

get away, out into the open," she added.

Coastal mangroves act as a natural barrier, soaking up wave energy and limiting the extent of flooding.

"These islands form a barrier against storm surges and tsunamis. Their preservation is vital for the preservation of Karachi," Arif Belgaumi, an architect and town planner, told AFP.

The city is already prone to inundation and suffered catastrophic flooding during this year's record monsoon when filthy, chest-deep water filled the streets. —AFP ■

SEVERAL COUNTRIES
VOW TO FOCUS ON
CLIMATE-FRIENDLY
TECHNOLOGIES

Greenhouse gas levels at new high, despite Covid-19 measures

GENEVA (Switzerland) — Greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, the main driver of climate change, hit record highs last year and have continued climbing in 2020 despite measures to halt the Covid-19 pandemic, the UN said Monday.

World Meteorological Organization (WMO) chief Petteri Taalas meanwhile welcomed several countries' vows to focus on climate-friendly technologies as they seek to revive their economies after the coronavirus crisis.

Speaking to journalists, he also voiced optimism at US president-elect Joe Biden's pledge to return his country to the Paris climate accord, saying he hoped it "might have the domino effect (and) motivate also some other countries."

But the United Nations agency dashed notions that the lockdowns and other measures to rein in the pandemic could by themselves repair some of the damage of ever-growing greenhouse gas emissions in recent decades.

While emissions have shrunk this year, the WMO warned this had not curbed record concentrations of the greenhouse gases that are trapping heat in the atmosphere, raising temperatures, causing sea levels to rise and driving more extreme weather.

"The lockdown-related fall in emissions is just a tiny blip on the long-term graph," Taalas said. —AFP ■

CLIMATE-FRIENDLY TRANSPORT TRANSITION IS POSSIBLE

Germany steams ahead with new hydrogen-powered train



The first hydrogen-powered train, by French train maker Alstom, arrives at the station in Bremervoerde, Germany, as it enters service on 16 September 2018. **PHOTO: AFP**

BERLIN (Germany) — Germany will trial a new hydrogen-powered train, its state-owned rail

company said Monday, signalling a transition away from gas-guzzling diesel engines as it aims for

a carbon-neutral future.

DEVELOPED with German industrial giant Siemens, Deutsche Bahn said it will build a newly developed train and a "gas station" for 2024 that will for the first time fuel hydrogen trains in just 15 minutes -- as fast as conventional diesel engines.

"The fact that we... will refuel the train as quickly as a diesel train shows that the climate-friendly transport transition is possible," said Sabina Jeschke, a member of Deutsche Bahn's board. The national rail company intends to reduce carbon emissions to zero by 2050, meaning 1,300 diesel units will have to be replaced.

"We have to bring fossil fuel consumption to zero... Then we

will not run a single vehicle with conventional diesel," Jeschke added. Around 39 per cent of the German network has no overhead power lines, where trains require their own onboard fuel -- such as diesel -- to run.

A one-year trial run of the renewable-energy powered train is planned in the Tuebingen area of southern Germany, based on a range of 600 kilometres (around 400 miles).

The Siemens train will save around 330 tonnes of CO2 a year, Deutsche Bahn said, and have a top speed of 160 kilometres an hour (100 mph).

Siemens remains well behind its perennial French rival Alstom when it comes to hydrogen trains. —AFP ■

IT IS GOOD NEWS THAT AIR QUALITY IS IMPROVING...

European air quality improves but still detrimental to health: report

COPENHAGEN (Denmark) — Air quality has improved significantly across Europe over the past 10 years, but pollution still contributes to significant numbers of premature deaths, the European Environment Agency

(EEA) said Monday.

According to a new EEA study, European urban areas especially suffer health impacts including fatal respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.

In 2018, 34 per cent of urban

inhabitants of the 27 EU countries and the UK were breathing ground-level ozone particles at concentrations above EU health target levels.

And 15 per cent were breathing so called PM10 par-

ticles (particulate matter with a diameter of 10 micrometres or less) at levels above the EU daily limit.

European criteria are also less strict than the guidelines issued by the World Health Or-

ganization (WHO).

Some 99 per cent of European city dwellers were exposed to ozone levels above the WHO's recommended threshold, and 48 per cent when it comes to PM10 particles. —AFP ■

LIVE ONLINE SERVICE

China says no 'money worship' in online shopping, live shows

BEIJING (China) — Online live shows and livestream e-commerce platforms must not promote “bad habits” such as showing off wealth or “money worship” according to rules published Monday by Beijing, in the latest sign of tightening in China’s massive livestream industry.

Live shows have grown increasingly popular in China in recent years, with the livestream shopping sector already worth nearly \$70 billion by some estimates.

But in recent months Beijing has clamped down on platforms for “chaotic” content -- ranging from revealing clothing on female stars to “vulgar hot



This photo taken on 27 October 2020 shows employees preparing items for the upcoming “Double Eleven” Online Shopping Festival day at the Rhino Smart Manufacturing Factory, Alibaba’s new manufacturing platform, in Hangzhou, in eastern China’s Zhejiang province. PHOTO: AFP

dances” -- reprimanding platforms such as Nasdaq-listed Bilibili and By-

tedance-owned iXigua. And the fresh guidelines, released by Chi-

na’s National Radio and Television Administration (NRTA) on Monday,

are designed to halt the spread of “vulgar” habits.

“It is necessary to take effective measures so as not to provide unlawful and unethical artistes with the opportunity of public appearances... to prevent the spread of bad habits such as wealth-flaunting and money worship,” said the notice.

Anchors of shows will also need to undergo real-name verification -- potentially involving facial recognition -- and there will be stricter rules on those who send them rewards, which can often be turned into cash.

The reward function for minors will be blocked.

Repeat offenders could see themselves re-

moved from recommendations to users or in serious cases, anchors may be reported to the authorities and blacklisted, while broadcast channels may be shut down.

Platforms will also need to inform authorities if celebrities or “overseas personnel” are starting broadcast channels, said the notice, which comes as many Chinese agencies are now training foreign hosts in China and recruiting influencers abroad.

The radio and television administration added that e-commerce platforms are not to broadcast commentary or other programmes unrelated to the sale of goods.

— AFP ■

TRAVEL SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Japan mulls temporary exit of Sapporo, Osaka from travel subsidy programme

TOKYO — Japan is preparing to suspend its “Go To Travel” subsidy programme to areas including popular tourist destination cities Sapporo and Osaka, given the high number of novel coronavirus cases there, government sources said Monday.

The move came after Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said Saturday that accepting new bookings for trips to areas, where infections are fast spreading, will be halted but did not specify where and the timeframe for it.

The policy change came after a government panel of medical experts proposed reviewing the campaign, and at a time the country was in a three-day holiday, with many people nationwide enjoying the autumn season at sightseeing spots.

Hokkaido Gov. Naomichi Suzuki on Monday said he wants to have Sapporo, the capital of the country’s northernmost main island of Hokkaido, considered for temporary withdrawal from the travel subsidy campaign.

He also asked the

central government to compensate businesses affected by the suspension as well as those who cancel pre-booked trips to areas subject to the suspension.

Osaka Gov. Hirofumi Yoshimura said on a television programme Monday that he wants the central government to include the city of Osaka in the suspension from this Friday, adding it will be “more effective” in preventing the virus spread if the city is subjected to such suspension.

The central government is thinking of temporarily withdrawing specific cities from the travel subsidy programme and not

implement it on a prefectural basis, in a bid to ease the impact a suspension would have on regional economies, the sources said. Earlier in the day, the National Governors’ Association met and urged the central government to be more area-specific, as the situation is not the same for all areas within a prefecture.

The “Go To Travel” programme, which was launched in late July, effectively covers about half of domestic travellers’ expenses to support the tourism industry, which has been hit hard by the pandemic.

After the suspension

is decided, the government is also planning not to apply the subsidy for pre-booked trips and to shoulder cancellation fees, the sources said.

As for outgoing trips made by residents in the areas subject to suspension, the government is considering allowing them to still enjoy the subsidy, to keep domestic tourism afloat. Hokkaido has recently seen a spike in new daily infections, which topped 300 for the first time last Friday. On Monday, the new cases in the island prefecture surpassed 200, topping that level for six days in a row. Osaka Prefecture has also been seeing a rise in cases, having reported on Sunday a record 490 new cases.

Japan reported more than 2,000 new cases of the coronavirus for a fifth straight day on Sunday.

On Monday, the nationwide tally surpassed 1,500 new cases. Meanwhile, the number of people who have fallen seriously ill after contracting the virus hit 331, a record high, according to the health ministry.— AFP ■



People walk in the Susukino entertainment district of Sapporo, northern Japan, on Nov. 23, 2020, amid continued worries over the novel coronavirus. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

VIRUS AND BUSINESS

UK business activity shrinks on new virus curbs: data

LONDON (United Kingdom) — Britain’s private sector economic activity shrank in November to a four-month low on fresh coronavirus restrictions, a key survey showed Monday, sparking talk of a double dip recession.

The composite purchasing managers’ index (PMI) sank to 47.4 points in November, compilers IHS Markit and the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) said in a statement.

The shift below 50 --

indicating contraction -- compared with a reading of 52.1 in October.

The decline coincided with fresh closures of hospitality, leisure and much of the retail sector across the UK.

“A double-dip (recession) is indicated by the November survey data, with lockdown measures once again causing business activity to collapse across large swathes of the economy,” said IHS Markit chief business economist Chris Williamson.— AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY. NO. (205 W/E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY. NO. (205 W/E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 23-11-2020 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of HPT where it will lie at the consignee’s risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

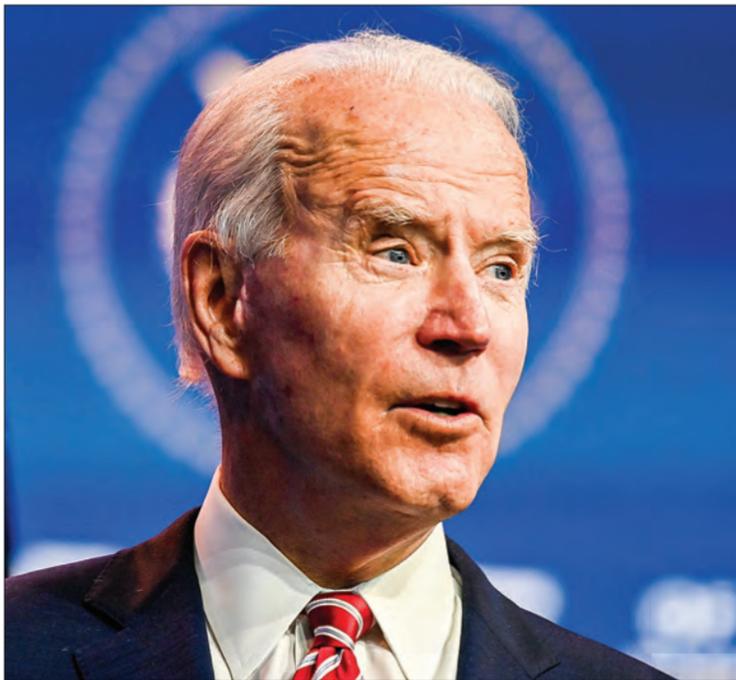
Shipping Agency Department
Myanmar Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA SHIPPING

FIRST STEP OF FORMING NEW CABINET

Biden to start naming cabinet picks Tuesday as Trump resists



(FILES) In this file photo US President-elect Joe Biden speaks during a press conference at The Queen in Wilmington, Delaware on 16 November 2020. PHOTO: AFP

WASHINGTON (United States) — US President-elect Joe Biden will name his first cabinet picks on Tuesday, his chief of staff said, even as Donald Trump clung to unsubstantiated claims of fraud despite growing dissent from within his own party.

Biden has pushed ahead

with preparations to assume the presidency on January 20, regardless of Trump's bid to undo the results of the November vote.

"You are going to see the first of the president-elect's cabinet picks on Tuesday," Biden's chief of staff, Ron Klain, told ABC's "This Week" on Sunday.

Several US news organizations, including Bloomberg and The New York Times, reported that the president-elect will nominate seasoned diplomat and long-time aide Antony Blinken as secretary of state.

Biden also said last week he had already decided his pick for the key position of Treasury Secretary.

US media also widely reported he will name Linda Thomas-Greenfield, who served as assistant secretary of state for Africa under President Barack Obama, as his UN ambassador.

A growing number of Republicans have either recognized Biden's victory or at least urged the General Services Administration — the usually low-profile agency that manages the federal bureaucracy — to release federal funds for the Biden transition.

With Trump refusing to acknowledge the election outcome, Biden and his top aides have been denied briefings on sensitive domestic and foreign policy issues — most urgently the coronavirus pandemic battering the country.

Former New Jersey gover-

nor Chris Christie, who in 2016 advised the Trump transition, said on ABC that the president's legal team was a "national embarrassment."

Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, another prominent Republican, told CNN that Trump was making the country look like a "banana republic," later tweeting the president should "stop golfing and concede."

Trump has golfed on every weekend day since the election, though he took part virtually in the conference of the G20 leading economies this weekend — skipping a Saturday session on the pandemic.

And even Representative Devin Nunes, an ardent Trump loyalist, conceded backhandedly on Fox News that Biden had "run a successful campaign from a basement."

'Without merit'

Trump again tweeted on Sunday about "massive numbers of fraudulent ballots," a claim dismissed by a long list of judges in several states.

Appearances by Trump's

personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani have drawn mockery, as have claims by another former member of his legal team, Sidney Powell.

Powell has alleged baseless conspiracy theories involving a possible hack of the election, earning her widespread derision but also praise from some of Trump's most ardent supporters.

Giuliani announced Sunday that Powell had been dropped from the team.

Trump's latest legal setback came Saturday, when Pennsylvania judge Matthew Brann threw out the president's fraud claims in a scathing judgment.

Pennsylvania was a must-win state, and flipped to Biden after backing Trump in 2016.

Brann's ruling paved the way for Pennsylvania to certify Biden's victory in the state.

Biden won the state-by-state Electoral College votes that ultimately decide who takes the White House by 306 to 232.

The Electoral College is due to formally vote on December 14, with state certifications to take place beforehand.—AFP ■

ISRAEL-SAUDI ARABIA RELATIONS

Israeli PM held secret talks in Saudi with Pompeo, crown prince: media

JERUSALEM — Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held secret talks in Saudi Arabia Sunday with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, several media said, in the first reported trip by an Israeli premier to the kingdom.

The meeting, reported Monday by Israeli public broadcaster Kan and other outlets, comes weeks after the Jewish state reached historic deals to normalise ties with two Saudi allies, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.

Those deals, known as the Abraham Accords, were brokered by the administration of US President Donald Trump, who leaves office in less than two months.

There has been widespread speculation, within Israel and the United States, that Washington may push for other Arab states to join the Abraham Accords before President-elect Joe Biden is sworn in.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who was in Israel last

week, was also at the reported talks, according to Kan's diplomatic correspondent.

Pompeo has confirmed he was in Neom on the Red Sea as part of a Middle East Tour and met with Prince Mohammed, who is widely known by his initials MBS.

Publicly, Saudi Arabia has said it would stick to the decades-old Arab League position of not having ties with Israel until the Jewish state's conflict with the Palestinians is resolved.

The Palestinians have condemned the Abraham Accords as "a stab in the back", urging Arab states to hold firm until Israel ends its occupation of Palestinian territory and agrees to the creation of a Palestinian state.

But experts have said that Biden's upcoming inauguration may have created urgency in Riyadh, which has dealt discreetly with Israel over a joint desire to contain common foe Iran.—AFP ■

TRIAL ACCUSED OF CORRUPTION

France ex-president Sarkozy goes on trial for corruption

PARIS (France) — France's former president Nicolas Sarkozy went on trial Monday on charges of corruption, becoming the first French ex-head of state to stand as an accused in the dock and risking a humiliating end to a career tainted by legal woes.

Sarkozy, who has vowed to vigorously contest the accusations of bribery, was himself present in court in Paris but did not make any statement to reporters, an AFP correspondent said.

Only one other president, Sarkozy's political mentor Jacques Chirac, has faced trial after leaving office — but because of ill health, Chirac never appeared in court for his conviction in a fake-jobs scandal.

The bribery inquiry also saw Sarkozy become the first ex-president taken into police custody for questioning after it was launched six years ago.

He fought furiously to have the case thrown out, denouncing "a scandal that will go down in history."

"I am not a crook," the 65-year-old, whose combative



Former French president Nicolas Sarkozy (C) arrives for the opening hearing of his trial for attempted bribery of a judge, on November 23, 2020 at Paris' courthouse. PHOTO: AFP

style made him one of France's most popular politicians, told BFM TV this month.

Prosecutors say Sarkozy promised a judge a plush job in Monaco in exchange for inside information on a separate inquiry into claims he had accepted illicit payments from L'Oreal heiress Liliane Bettencourt during his 2007 presidential campaign.

Part of the evidence comes from wiretaps of phone conver-

sations between Sarkozy and his longtime lawyer Thierry Herzog, authorised as part of a third probe into suspected Libyan financing of Sarkozy's 2007 campaign.

That inquiry is still going on, though Sarkozy caught a break this month when his main accuser retracted a central claim of having delivered millions of euros in cash from Libyan dictator MoamerKadhafi.—AFP ■

FUTURE OF AFGHANS DEPENDS ON OUTCOME OF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

World must not turn away from Afghanistan: UN



(FILES) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi gestures as he addresses a press conference during the Global Refugee Forum in Geneva on 17 December 2019. **PHOTO: AFP**

GENEVA (Switzerland) — The international community must continue aiding Afghanistan or face the risk of “disastrous consequences”, UN refugee chief Filippo Grandi urged ahead of

a donors conference starting Monday.

Grandi’s appeal also comes after his visit to the Asian nation that is struggling with growing violence, a US pullout and flagging peace talks.

Grandi said the future of millions of Afghans depends on the outcome of peace negotiations and on the international community’s commitment to develop the country, including at the two-day donors conference in Geneva.

“Failure on either account would see Afghanistan slide backwards with disastrous consequences, including further displacement possibly on a large scale,” Grandi warned in a statement.

He said the nearly 300,000 Afghans who have been displaced

inside the country because of conflict this year remain in “acute need” of humanitarian support.

The same goes for the nearly three million previously displaced and the nine million people who have lost their livelihoods due to the Covid-19 crisis.

Grandi also said it was urgent to conclude peace negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban, which are fighting to topple it and retake the power they lost during the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.

The peace talks are flagging and a withdrawal of some of the US forces that the Trump administration announced this week are further weakening the Kabul government. —AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Wong, Chow and Lam: Three young Hong Kong activists facing jail

HONG KONG (China) — Three prominent Hong Kong activists are facing jail after pleading guilty on Monday to inciting an “illegal assembly” outside the city’s main police station during last year’s huge pro-democracy protests.

Joshua Wong, Agnes Chow and Ivan Lam have spent years campaigning for democracy, becoming activists when they were just teens. —AFP ■

S. Korea picks ex-lawmaker Kang Chang Il as new envoy to Japan

SEOUL — South Korea will appoint as next ambassador to Japan Kang Chang Il, a former lawmaker who headed a Japan-linked cross-party parliamentarians’ group, an official at the presidential office said Monday.

Kang’s pick reflects President Moon Jae In’s “intention to improve” bilateral ties, the official said. Relations between the two countries have soured over historical and trade issues. —Kyodo News ■

Hong Kong, Singapore travel bubble popped by virus spike

HONG KONG — A planned travel bubble between Hong Kong and Singapore was scrapped a day before its launch on Saturday after the southern Chinese city announced a sudden spike in coronavirus cases.

The decision is both a blow to the two cities’ battered tourist industries but also for other countries who had been hoping the scheme might be a model to replicate during the pandemic. —AFP ■

IF SUCCESSFUL, THE PROBE IS EXPECTED TO LAND ON THE MOON IN NOVEMBER

China prepares moon probe to bring back lunar rocks

BEIJING (China) — China is preparing to launch an unmanned spacecraft to bring back lunar rocks, the first attempt by any nation to retrieve samples from the moon in four decades.

Beijing is pouring billions into its military-run space programme, with hopes of having a crewed space station by 2022 and of eventually sending humans to the moon.

The Chang’e-5 probe, named after the mythical Chinese moon goddess, aims to shovel up lunar rocks and soil to help scientists learn about the moon’s origins, formation and volcanic activity on its surface.

The mission is set to take off from the Wenchang Space Center in the southern island province of Hainan, according to official Xinhua news agency. No date was provided.

The original mission, planned for 2017, was delayed due to an engine failure in China’s Long March 5 launch rocket.

If successful, China will be only the third country to have retrieved samples from the moon, following the United States and the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s.

The Chinese probe will collect two kilograms (4.5 pounds) of surface material in a previously unexplored area known as Oceanus Procellarum — or “Ocean of Storms” — which consist of a vast lava plain, according

to the science journal Nature.

If successfully launched, the probe is expected to land on the moon in late November and collect material during one lunar day — equivalent to around 14 Earth days.

The samples will be returned to Earth in a capsule programmed to land in Inner Mongolia in early December, according to US space agency NASA.

The mission is technically challenging and involves several innovations not seen during

previous attempts at collecting moon rocks, said Jonathan McDowell, an astronomer at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

“The US never did a robotic sample return. The Soviet one was very limited and could only land at certain restricted spots,” McDowell told AFP.

“China’s system will be the most flexible and capable robotic sample return system yet.”

A Chinese lunar rover landed on the far side of the moon in January 2019, in a global first

that boosted Beijing’s ambitions to become a space superpower.

It was the second Chinese probe to land on the moon, following the Yutu (“Jade Rabbit”) rover mission in 2013.

The latest Chang’e-5 probe is among a slew of ambitious targets set by Beijing, which include creating a super-powerful rocket capable of delivering payloads heavier than those NASA and private rocket firm SpaceX can handle, a moon base, a permanently crewed space station, and a Mars rover. —AFP ■



This picture released on 11 January 2019 by the China National Space Administration (CNSA) via CNS shows the Yutu-2 moon rover, taken by the Chang’e-4 lunar probe on the far side of the moon. **PHOTO: AFP**



Ayeyawady United's Victor joins Zimbabwe National Team

AYEYAWADY United's expatriate defender Victor Kamhuka was recently selected as a national player for his national football team of Zimbabwe, according to a statement with the Ayeyawady United this month.

The 30-year-old defender assisted Ay-

Ayeyawady United's expatriate defender Victor Kamhuka was recently selected by Zimbabwe National Football Team. **PHOTO: AUFC**

eyawady United to secure third place position in the 2020 season of Myanmar National League.

Being a 6 feet 3 inches-tall player, Victor is good in tackling, defending, passing and heading.

Victor started his career in 2013. On 1 July 2013, Victor Kamkuka joined Dynamos Harare Football Club, a first-division club in Zimbabwe as a defender and spent there till 2017.

Next, in August 2017, Victor moved to Indian League Pathachakra and

scored three goals for the team.

Victor joined Nepali club Manang Marshyangdiin 2018, and then the defender moved to Bhawanipore FC of Nepal in 2019.

Victor joined Ayeyawady United in 2020 season of Myanmar National League, and he made 18 appearances and assisted the team with his defending skills.

Ayeyawady United officials have expressed congratulatory message on their official page for

Victor in his future.

"Congratulations to Ayeyawady United's Central Defender Victor for being selected for the Zimbabwe National Football Team and we wished you success with your national team", AUFC officials stated.

The Ayeyawady United Football Club (No 42) jersey wearer Victor Kamhuka is now taking No 8 for his national team and also previously participating in the team's training section.—Lynn Thit (Tgi) ■

All Blacks out to silence 'haters' in Pumas rematch

SYDNEY (Australia)—Lock Patrick Tuipulotu said Monday the All Blacks want a win against Argentina this weekend to silence the "haters" who targeted coach Ian Foster after their shock loss to Los Pumas.

Tuipulotu said the players owed Foster a strong performance in Saturday's Tri Nations clash after the coach bore the brunt of criticism for the 25-15 defeat on November 14, which followed a loss to Australia the previous week.

"The coach is the face of the squad and is always going to get the blame if we lose two in a row," the Auckland Blues tight forward told a conference call.

"It's on us to get a result and perform well so that when he's in

the firing line it's for good stuff, from a good win.

"It is what it is in this day and age — you're going to get a lot of haters, as we call them."

Foster is enduring a difficult start to his tenure after taking the top job this year, with Argentina's maiden win over the All Blacks consigning the New Zealanders to back-to-back losses for the first time since 2011.

The three-time world champions have notoriously demanding fans and some have called for Foster's axing after only five matches in charge.

All Blacks skipper Sam Cane last week labelled the critics "brutal" and suggested they were ignorant about rugby.—AFP ■

Four years on, Pogba still struggling to fit in at Man Utd

LONDON (United Kingdom)—Manchester United's inability to turn huge financial resources into a fully functioning team is personified by Paul Pogba's struggle to justify a place in Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's far from outstanding side.

Not for the first time, Pogba spoke of his frustrations at club level on international duty for France last week, where he again shone as the World Cup winners booked their place in the final four of the Nations League.

Brought back to United for a then world record £89 million (\$118 million) fee in 2016, Pogba's second spell at Old Trafford has been one of fits and starts, without ever living up to expectations for long spells.

Repeatedly leaving Pogba out was one of the factors that led to Jose Mourinho's dismissal as United boss in December 2018.

But nearly two years on, another manager, Solskjaer, has reached the same conclusion.

Pogba has started just one of United's last five Premier League games, in which he gave away the match-winning penalty in a 1-0 defeat



Manchester United's French midfielder Paul Pogba reacts at the end of the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Arsenal at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, on 1 November 2020. **PHOTO: AFP**

to Arsenal.

In three of the four league games Solskjaer has picked Pogba from the start, United have lost at Old Trafford, including a 6-1 humiliation by Tottenham in which the 27-year-old was guilty of conceding another spot-kick.

Where Pogba once had the star power and price tag to justify his place, he is no longer even United's most influential midfielder.

Bruno Fernandes took his tally to 19 goals in 34 appearances since joining in January from Sporting Lisbon with the winner in an uninspiring 1-0 victory over West Brom on Saturday.

Pogba missed that clash due to a slight injury, but Solskjaer expects him to be fit for Tuesday's visit of Istanbul Basaksehir in the Champions League.

Other than a handful of promising performances when the Premier League returned from a three-month shutdown due to coronavirus in June, Solskjaer has yet to find a way to match Fernandes and Pogba in the same midfield without being overrun.

The two started the first three league games of this season together when they conceded 11 goals to Crystal Palace, Brighton and Spurs.—AFP ■



New Zealand's Patrick Tuipulotu attends the captain's run training session at Leichhardt Oval in Sydney on 30 October 2020 in Sydney, ahead of the third Bledisloe Cup rugby union match between Australia and New Zealand. **PHOTO: AFP**