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State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing sends Message of Greetings on Peasants Day

Esteemed peasants,

Today is a historic day, which honours the peasants all over the country. Peasants, I wish you all health and happiness and auspiciousness on this significant day and also pray for success in your agricultural undertakings.

Agricultural products not only serve as the backbone of the food industry but also as the main source of income for millions of rural people. As agriculture is shaping the development models of the economy, social affairs and environment, its growth has been realized as the main task of the State.

Peasants are the food-providers and benefactors of the country as their hard work helps ensure daily food supplies for the people, generate employment opportunities and earn foreign exchange income from export. So, the State is providing assistance directly to them in accord with the Law of Protection of the Farmer Rights and Enhancement of their Benefits. The State has already provided the farmers with K23.68 billion as emergency aid for crop damages caused by natural disasters. As for ensuring fair prices for farmers in the market, the State has been fixing and announcing the basic reference price for paddy since 2017-2018. Apart from extending the scope of this scheme, the State is also pushing for the broader emergence of the mutually beneficial contract farming system that will provide the supply source and ready market for farmers. Afterwards, procedures for the system will follow.

Esteemed peasants,

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI) is cooperating with the relevant ministries in distributing advanced technology for the availability of quality strains, water, anti-pest measures, and smooth transport for the agricultural products to reach local and foreign markets in order to produce crops, meat and fish of high quality.

The MOALI is the main body for the development of the agriculture sector, and apart from distributing pedigree strains and technology to enable farmers to raise or cultivate or produce quality crops and farm animals, it is also helping farmers to apply good agricultural practices (GAP), good animal husbandry practices (GAHP) and good aquaculture practices (GAQP). Moreover, it is also issuing Myanmar's GAP Protocols and Guidelines in an extensive way.

Esteemed peasants,

Various kinds of natural disasters, including droughts, floods, hailstones, forest fires, storms, landslides triggered by climate change are harming the socio-economy of the majority of farmers. The relevant bodies are joining hands in the work of conserving natural resources and the natural environment and alleviating the effects of climate change, which is included in Myanmar Sustainable

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State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivers address at Council meeting



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing presides over the fourth meeting 4/2021 of the Council in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered an address at the meeting 4/2021 of the State Administration Council at his office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Also present at the meeting were Vice-Chairman of the Coun-

cil Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Council members General Mya Tun Oo, Admiral Tin Aung San, General Maung Maung Kyaw, Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun, Mahn Nyein Maung, U Thein Nyunt, U Khin Maung Swe, Daw Aye Nu Sein, Jeng Phang

Naw Taung, U Moun Har, U Sai Lone Hsaing and Saw Daniel, Secretary Lt-Gen Aung Lin Dway, Joint Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo, and Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Soe Htut.

In his address, the Senior General said the State Administration Council has been discharging the duties of the State

for a month now. The nation was peaceful during the first week of its administration, but riots and protests have been occurring since the second week. Those demonstrations are caused by the persons who are disgruntled by the action taken against the vote-rigging amidst the COVID-19 prevention and contain-

ment restrictions. The Myanmar Police Force is controlling the situation by using minimum force and through the least harmful means. The MPF is doing its work in accordance with democracy practices and the measures it is taking are even softer than the ones in other countries.

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Honouring the Peasants Day

State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing sends Message of Greetings on Peasants Day

FROM PAGE-1

Development Plan (2018-2030). In addition, forests must be protected and preserved, and soil degradation must be mitigated. Scientific agricultural methods must be introduced for sustainable crop cultivation and soil improvement.

Myanmar now has a total sown acreage of 29.59 million acres, but thanks to the double cropping and mixed cropping farmers are conducting season-wise, the actual planted acreage of the country exceeds 48 million acres. Systematic land preparation and the use of quality and high-yield strains by the farmers will increase crop yield and will ensure enough supply for the daily consumption of the country’s growing population. As regards the land-use programmes, the government will encourage effective animal husbandry and fish farming, and through these programmes, there will be an increase in family income and surplus food supply for the nation. So, farmers are urged to use the land effectively.

A global drop in agricultural production this year is forecast because of climate change. So, long-term programmes have been laid down to select crops, crop patterns and agro methods that can withstand the changing weather conditions, and they are being implemented with the involvement of local and foreign partners. Every country is paying serious attention to overcome the danger of food shortages and strengthen the disaster response qualifications in the face of natural disaster triggered by climate change. Myanmar is also encouraging the task of storing reserved seeds, taking preparatory measures and setting up agricultural rehabilitation plans through government-private cooperation.

Water is the main requirement for the development of agricultural production. The country is supplying water from dams and other water distribution systems to grow 2.4 million acres of irrigated monsoon paddy, summer paddy and other crops. It is also dredging the silted streams and creeks and digging drainage canals in the whole country to mitigate the flood risk. It can now save three million acres from floods by implementing 4,519 such works.

The monsoon period is shrinking during the previous years, and the volume of water stored at the dams is also falling, alongside the decrease in the annual rainfall. Hence, irrigation facilities are being renovated, and irrigation systems improved to prevent the loss of irrigation water. Moreover, water utilization groups have been formed with the participation of farmers to reduce water losses and to effective use of water. Till now, 8,188 groups have been set up in 13 regions and states with the involvement of 238,750 farmers. As farmers can take part in the management

affairs of the groups, they should pay special attention to effectively irrigating the crops and reducing the loss of water.

In addition, paddy, which needs a lot of water, must be replaced with value-added crops that have a ready market in changing the country’s crop patterns as a priority programme. Water should be used effectively as the entire world is facing a drop in rainfall due to global weather changes and the volume of water flowing into the dams is less than that in the previous years. The State will extend the technological disseminating programmes by establishing model plots where crops suitable for the respective places are planted. Only then will the farmers be able to change the crops patterns and select the ones that have a ready market, and that can fetch higher prices.

Esteemed peasants,

Myanmar is now facing natural disasters caused by climate change and coronavirus infection. The country is exerting utmost efforts to alleviate their impacts on the economy, health, education and social sector of the people to the possible degree. It is now trying to support and promote the programmes to continuously develop the socio-economy of the rural people, to narrow the socio-economic gap between rural and urban, to effectively use all human resources and financial resources with the involvement of the people for rural development, to improve the capacity of the rural people, to set up social groups that have the competence for disaster response undertakings and to encourage the local participation in the rural development tasks in accord with the existing Rural Development Law.

Agricultural cooperative societies will be set up with the collective force of farmers who only have small plots. The cooperative sector will enable the participation of farmers in all the steps of the procedure from seeding to marketing through transparent means and will guarantee employment opportunities and benefits for them.

It is time accelerated efforts for the socio-economic and multiple sector development including the agricultural sector should be made with the united force of peasants who are carrying out the agricultural and livestock breeding undertakings with goodwill and sincerity. So, I would earnestly urge all to join hands in overcoming all challenges, obstacles and hardships in the long-term interest of the entire people, including farmers of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and for peace, tranquillity and progress of the nation.

Statement of Union Election Commission 1 March 2021

1. The Union Election Commission inspected the casting of votes related to the multiparty general election held on 8 November 2020 in Myeik Township of Taninthayi Region.
2. According to the findings under inspection, the previous election commission released 226,798 eligible voters in Myeik Township of Taninthayi Region. The list of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population in November 2020 showed 143,563 eligible voters who had turned 18. The voter lists mentioned that there were 38,519 citizens, associate citizens, nationalized citizens and non-identity voters, 1,548 persons repeated on the voter lists more than three times and 21,276 persons repeated on the voter lists two times.
3. The inspection findings were as follows:-

Findings on scrutinized voting list						
Sr.	Township and number of polling stations	List of township sub-commission	List from immigration department	Those involved in voting list without citizenship scrutiny card	Those involved in voter list more than three times holding one CSC	Those involved in voter list two times holding one CSC
1	227 polling stations in Myeik Township of Taninthayi Region	226,798	143,563	38,519	1,548	21,276

Union Election Commission

Press Release

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on a regular basis, transfers its personnel, those assigned at the Myanmar missions abroad are called back after the completion of their tour of duties while those who have served at the headquarters, for a certain period are posted to the Myanmar missions abroad.

With regard to the transfer orders issued yesterday by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, some people with the aim of taking political advantages on surrounding the current situations of Myanmar, have misused this routine transfer order to demoralize and to sow disunity among the Foreign Ministry’s personnel serving at home and abroad, and to mislead the public by disseminating fabricated and fake news on social media including the Facebook.

Such rotational transfers of personnel are only a regular task performed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nay Pyi Taw
Dated, 1 March 2021

Reopening of schools

Vaccination programme for COVID-19, import permits for the private pharmaceutical companies, and reopening of schools.

(Excerpt from the speech to the management committee meeting of the State Administration Council made by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 26 February 2021)

State Administration Council Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivers address at Council meeting

FROM PAGE-1

New ward and village administrators have been appointed as the term of the old ones had expired. But there are acts against the appointment of the ward and village administrators. The government wishes to appoint only the persons who win the majority respect and who are free from party politics to a possible degree. Rejections against these appointments have appeared under the influence of party politics. Democracy tolerates whether it is pro or against a topic. Full democracies always accept appointments or assignments done in accord with the rule and law. As the township administrators are immediate superiors of the village administrators, they also should be free from political influence. Arrangements are being made to ensure this.

The State Administration Council has adopted five future programmes. Production must be boosted to improve the economic sector. The region, state, district and township councils must encourage regional production. Agriculture can be less affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, and it is a business that earns money easily. So, local farmers need to be encouraged to work hard on agricultural undertakings. Political, social and economic objectives have also been adopted. The social objectives include an objective such as enhancement of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation. To contribute towards public health, nationwide outdoors sports and games

must be held again. Myanmar's traditional martial art should be among national sports. It is a kind of self-defence sport without the need for spare part equipment in training. Therefore, traditional sports should also be encouraged.

Action is being taken against the civil servants participating in the CDM. Some have taken their salaries without going to work, citing various reasons. Respective ministries will take action after systematic inspections. There are illegal contents and photos depicting those wearing indecent clothes contrary to Myanmar culture circulating, especially in social media. Such acts intend to harm the morality of people, so legal actions are necessary.

According to the findings from some ministries overspending of the COVID-19 prevention and control, State funds and public-donated cash were found to have been spent for other purposes. The amount is billions of kyats. Relevant bodies are trying to expose embezzlement cases, the Senior General said.

Next, Council Vice-Chairman Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Council members U Thein Nyunt, Mahn Nyein Maung, U Khin Maung Swe, Jeng Phang Naw Taung, Daw Aye Nu Sein, Saw Daniel and U Sai Lone Hsaing and Union Minister Lt-Gen Soe Htut reported on illegal inflow of foreign money to associations, action to be taken against support of manpower and money behind riots and protests, taking of action against the Commit-

tee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw as it is an illegal organization, monetary support from foreign organizations, the need for the Union Election Commission to check and publicize the voter lists as quickly as possible, necessary help and measures for reoperation of factories, export of

...boosting of electricity generation, amending and supplementing of the political parties registration law, election law and Hluttaw laws, conducting of agricultural census, construction of village production roads, sale of farm products from local farmers at correct prices, exposition of corruption cases under the previous government, illegal granting of leave of absence by officials at some people's hospitals to doctors and health workers

agricultural and livestock products, reassessment of Myanmar diplomats serving in the international community, boosting of electricity generation, amending and supplementing of the political parties registration law, election law and Hluttaw laws, conducting of agricultural census, construction of village production roads, sale of farm products from local farmers at correct prices, exposition of corruption cases under the previous government, illegal granting of leave of absence by officials at some people's hospitals to doctors and health workers, exposition

of local organizers and advisers outside the country encouraging civil servants to participate in the CDM, protests and lawless acts in regions and states, measures being taken by security forces to ensure community peace and the rule of law, mine clearance work in displaced areas and continued

Concerning the reports, the Senior General said operations of some organizations are being scrutinized whether they are running their operations in accordance with rules and regulation or whether the foreign finance and assistance they received are legal or illegal. Action is being taken against the Committee Representing the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, which is illegally carrying out activities while the new Union Election Committee is launching an investigation into vote-rigging. Domestic tourism, hotels, fac-

tories and workshops have been allowed to resume their operations in accordance with COVID-19 prevention rules and regulations. Relevant ministries have been instructed to take action against physicians, specialists and staff who are taking part in the CDM. It is important to take measures not to develop staff housings, special economic zones and industrial zones on agricultural land, to prevent the use of agricultural land for other purposes and to push for rural development.

Efforts must be exerted to develop Myanmar sports into ones that are systemic and meet international standards and to support athletes in respective states and regions to participate in international events. All border crossings have been opened for the development of trade. Measures must be taken to enable internally displaced persons to return to their native places and to arrange their secure social- economic lives. Efforts will be continued to make to vaccinate people against COVID-19. It is found that riots and protests are being incited on social media, and authorities are exercising restraint as peacefully as possible. Efforts were made to repatriate Myanmar nationals detained in Malaysia, and a total of 1,086 Myanmar nationals from Malaysia were brought back by Tatmadaw vessels. Measures are being taken to bring back those who are still left in Malaysia. The repatriation of Myanmar nationals who were abroad is one of the achievements of the council.—MNA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (95/2021)
3rd Waning of Tabodwe 1382 ME
1 March 2021

Appointment of Chief Justices of State High Court

The State Administration Council has appointed the following persons as Chief Justices of State High Courts shown against each of their High Courts, as per Section 419 of the State Constitution.

1. U Nyi Nyi Soe

2. U Thein Ko Ko

Mon State High Court

Kayin State High Court

By order

Sd/ Aung Lin Dway

Lieutenant-General

Secretary

State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (96/2021)
3rd Waning of Tabodwe 1382 ME
1 March 2021

Appointment of Judges of Region/State High Court

The State Administration Council has appointed the following persons as Judges of Region/State High Courts shown against each of their High Courts, as per Section 419 of the State Constitution.

1. Daw Nyo Mi San

2. Daw Khin Sein Win

3. U Kyaw Swar Nyein

4. U Win Myaing

Mon State High Court

Kayin State High Court

Yangon Region High Court

AyeyawadyRegion High Court

By order

Sd/ Aung Lin Dway

Lieutenant-General

Secretary

State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No. (97/2021)
3th Waning of Tabodwe 1382 ME
1 March 2021

Appointment and Duty Assignment of Deputy Minister

U Aung Tun Khine is appointed by the State Administration Council as Deputy Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, in accordance with the right to exercise the powers under Section 419 of the State Constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

By Order

Sd/

Aung Lin Dway

Lieutenant-General

Secretary

State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No (98/2021)
3rd Waning of Tabodwe 1382 ME
1 March 2021

Appointment of Yangon City Development Committee Members

The State Administration Council has appointed the following persons as Yangon City Development Committee Members, as per Section 419 of the State Constitution.

1. Dr Zaw Win

2. Dr Ngwe San

3. U Aung Naing

By order

Sd/ Aung Lin Dway

Lieutenant-General

Secretary

State Administration Council

State Administration Council prepares for religious titles conferring

THE Ministry of Religious Affairs hosted the coordination meeting of the Steering Committee and the Working Committee for Religious Titles Conferring Ceremony to be chaired by the State Administration Council of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar yesterday morning in Nay Pyi Taw.

Union Minister for Religious Affairs U Ko Ko, in his capacity as Chairman of the Steering Committee, said a total of 30 Sayadaws would be conferred Abhidhaja Maharat-

ta Guru and Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Zawtika titles which are the highest religious titles, with a national level ceremony in the Sasana Maha Beikman within the Uppatasanti Pagoda compound, on 27 March in Nay Pyi Taw.

There are 699 monks, 60 nuns and 145 people who will be conferred the religious titles in 2021, and it would be difficult to place them in a group ceremony according to the social distancing rule of the COVID-19 disease. Apart from the 30

sayadaws who will be conferred the highest religious titles, the rest will be conferred their titles by the Region/State Administration Councils in accordance with the COVID-19 prevention standards at designated places at the same time.

Nay Pyi Taw Council's Religious Titles Conferring Ceremony will be held after the national level Religious Titles Conferring Ceremony in the afternoon of 28 March in Nay Pyi Taw.

A total of 22 foreign monks, two nuns and one person will

not be invited as in the previous year but will be conferred with national titles through the relevant embassies, and a total of 125 people with Sasana Nughaha titles will be conferred in accordance with the guidelines of the Office of the State Administration Council only when the COVID-19 outbreak is under control.

The Union Minister stressed to carefully carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Steering Committee, Working Committee and Sub-Com-

mittee for Religious Titles Conferring Ceremony.

Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the Ceremony, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Religious Affairs discussed the preparation and further plans for the successful holding of the ceremony, and the chairmen of the respective committees explained the responsibilities of each committee for the successful holding of the ceremony and the Union Minister coordinated the meeting.—MNA

Public information

YANGON Administration Council is working with relevant departments to help the businesses in the region. People are informed to contact the following phone numbers to get assistance for their small and medium-scaled businesses and investments which are facing some delays and working to do new businesses.

Phone numbers: 01 830 1975, 01830 2175

Yangon Region Administration Council

Ceremony for conveying 3rd, 5th sections of altar for Bhumi Phassa Mudra sitting Buddha image held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE Buddha statues and pieces of the altar for Bhumi Phassa Mudra sitting Buddha image to be built in Nay Pyi Taw are being carried from See Mee Khon jetty to Nay Pyi Taw by Modular Trailer. The 3rd and 5th sections of the altar were conveyed for public obeisance from See Mee Khon jetty on 23 January for the 3rd time and arrived at the designed place yesterday afternoon.

Dekkhnathiri Sangha Nayaka Chairman Nyaung Kone Sayadaw Baddanta Pandita and other venerable monks attended the ceremony

for conveying the 3rd and 5th sections of the altar of Bhumi Phassa Mudra sitting Buddha image and Quartermaster-General Lt-Gen Kyaw Swar Lin, Lt-Gen Kan Myint Than of Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services office (Army) and other invited guests attended the ceremony.

First, the Sayadaws led by Nyaung Kone Sayadaw opened the ceremony by reciting Namo Tassa 3 times and then, the donors and guests recited Buddha sermons and paid obeisance.

Then, Township

Sangha Nayaka Chairman Sayadaw, Sayadaw Badhanta Khema Nanda of Yan Aung Myay Tawra Myo Taw Wun Monastery of Dekkhnathiri township, military officials and donors sprinkled the incense spray to 3rd and 5th sections of the altar of Bhumi Phassa Mudra sitting Buddha image.

Then, the parts of the altar were carried to the designated place.

The weights of the 3rd and 5th sections of the altar were 477 tonnes, respectively, and the remaining parts will be carried as planned.—MNA

Announcement of illegal organizations

1. The Labour Organization Law was enacted in 2011 and enforced on 9 March 2012.
2. The employees have to register for forming the workers' organizations for labour affairs in accordance with the stipulations of Section 9, 10, 11 and 12.
3. The registered workers' organizations can serve in accordance with the stipulations of Labour Organization Law.
4. Currently, the following organizations are not registered in line with the law and identified as illegal organizations-
 - (a) All Burma Federation of Trade Union
 - (b) Let's Help Each Other
 - (c) Future Light Centre
 - (d) Action Labour Right
 - (e) All Myanmar Trade Union's Network
 - (f) Agriculture Freedom of Myanmar
 - (g) Association for Labour Development (ALD)
 - (h) Federation of Garment Workers Myanmar
 - (i) Freedom and Labour Action Group
 - (j) Labour Power Group
 - (k) We Generation Network
 - (l) Yaung Chi Oo Workers Association
 - (m) Solidarity Trade Union of Myanmar (STUM)
 - (n) Cooperation Committee of Trade Unions (CCTU)
 - (o) All Myanmar Oil Workers' Union
 - (p) Industrial Women Workers Organization (IWWO)
5. Therefore, these organizations are not the legal ones, and their activities also do not conform to the law. If they keep run, effective action will be taken in accordance with the existing law.

Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population

Another lawsuit filed against former union minister Dr Win Myat Aye

FORMER Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Win Myat Aye is being taken legal action for failing to come to clarify the suspicious statistics and office work of the Ministry, and the matter regarding the purchase of the COVID-19 vaccine using the general surplus funds of the Ministry.

It is announced to report to the nearest police and call to the telephone numbers issued in each state, region and Nay

Pyi Taw if there is any news related to him and those who hide him will be also taken action in accordance with the law.

The former union minister is also facing a lawsuit allegedly incited and directed civilian disobedience movement to his staff members under the Ministry, and the Myanmar Police Force has filed a case under Section 505 (A) of the Penal Code and an arrest is being made on 21 February 2021.—MNA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry Announcement No (4/2021)

3rd Waning of Tabodwe 1382 ME
1 March 2021

1. The government has been conducting relief measures on taxation to help ease the pain for businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and made an exemption for the 2 per cent advance income tax on exports from 1.4.2020 to 28.2.2021.
2. There are still socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the exemption for the 2 per cent advance income tax on exports will be extended to 31 March 2021 according to the permission of the State Administration Council.

Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry

Mandalay Region Administration Council holds meeting with district, township councils

MANDALAY Region Administration Council held a meeting with members of the Mandalay District-, township-level administration councils yesterday afternoon at the regional office.

At the meeting, Chairman of the Mandalay Region Administration Council U Maung Ko detailed the five future plans and nine objectives of the State Administration Council.

He also urged the attendees to work hard in the period they took responsibility to achieve progress in their respective districts and townships.

He also called on the mem-

bers of the district- and township-level councils to make efforts for community peace in their respective areas as it can lead to the peace of the country.

He also urged the departmental officials who are members of the district- and township-level administration councils to abide by the civil service rules and regulations. Townselders who are also members of the councils are also obliged to work hard for their own areas with goodwill and to work for the propagation of Sasana.

Following his speech, Col



Mandalay Region Administration Council Chairman U Maung Ko presides over the meeting with district and township-level administration councils yesterday.

Kyaw Kyaw Min, a member of the Mandalay Region Administration Council, also made remarks on administration and

those present at the meeting reported on undertakings and requirements.

The meeting concluded

with closing remarks by the Mandalay Region Administration Council Chairman U Maung Ko.—MNA

Tatmadaw provides health care to returnees from Malaysia

WITH the instruction of Chairman of the State Administration Council, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, a total of 1,086 Myanmar nationals returned back from Malaysia by the naval vessels on 27 February. Tatmadaw medical specialists and doctors have been providing necessary medical care while they are at the COVID-19 quarantine centre in Hline Township, Yangon Region and officials from Yangon Region Military Headquarters also encouraged and coordinated then as necessary.—MNA

Request to Public

1. Democracy practices have granted the public for freedom of speech, practices and living. Such freedoms should not harm others. Diverse views of others should be understood, but should not be disturbed or harassed. However, with the reason of human rights, some persons are now under pressured, harassed and threatened in breaching the laws. Undisciplined acts could lead to tarnish the image of democracy.

2. For preventing destructive actions against stability of the state, safety of the public and rule of law, it is also required to proper actions in line with the law.

3. All the people who favour justice, freedom, equality and safety are requested to oppose breaching the laws and prevent such actions for the benefit of country and people.

Request to health workers

1. It is appreciated for the strenuous efforts of the medical doctors, nurses, medical experts and other health works at the respective departments under the Ministry of Health and Sports at the front-line in the fight against prevention, containment and treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

2. As the vaccination programme of COVID-19 is being conducted for the public and the real-time healthcare services are required for the people, all the staff members at the respective departments under the Ministry of Health and Sports are strongly urged to return to their duties with taking the well-being of patients into consideration.

Ministry of Health and Sports
8 February 2021

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

Coordination Meeting on signing MoUs of Quick Impact Projects to be implemented with grant assistance of Government of the Republic of India

THE Coordination Meeting on signing MoUs of Quick Impact Projects to be implemented with the grant assistance of the Government of the Republic of India, led by U Than Aung Kyaw, Deputy Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, was held in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

At the meeting, Deputy Minister discussed the signing process of MoUs for quick implementation of the five QIP projects such as Construction of Bailey Bridge, Construction of Town Hall, Electrification of Rural Villages by Small Wind

Energy, Departmental E-Library Project and Water Supply Using Solar Power in Drought affected Villages of Central Dry Zone. The senior officials from respective ministries also discussed on signing MoUs for their specific projects.

The meeting was attended by the senior officials from Ministry of Border Affairs, Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry, Ministry of Natural Resource and Environmental Conservation, Ministry of Education, Union Attorney-General Office and Foreign Economic Relations Department.—MNA



Deputy Minister U Than Aung Kyaw chairs the coordination meeting on signing MoUs of QIPs aided by India in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

20 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 1 March, total figure rises to 141,916

Total Cases

141,916

New Cases

20

Total Death Tally

3,199

Discharged from Hospital

131,487

Updated at 8 pm, 1 March 2021

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 141,916 after 20 new cases were reported on 1 March 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, 3,199 died, 131,487 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Ministry of Health and Sports

China grant licences to more Myanmar companies for rice export this year

CHINA Customs granted licences to more Myanmar companies on 26 February 2021 to legally export the rice to China through the Muse land border, said U Min Thein, vice-president of Muse Rice Wholesale Centre.

The authorized companies for rice export to China have increased this year as against last year. However, the permitted volume of rice for exports has not been confirmed yet, he added.

“They gave the go-ahead to Myanmar companies for legitimate rice exports on 26 February. The number of authorized companies this year is reportedly three times higher than last year’s company list. Consequently, the rice quota will also rise,” U Min Thein guessed.

China’s rice import permit for 2020 expired on 31 December 2020. The rice trade was suspended. Myanmar traders can now start rice exports under new licences.

Nevertheless, the closure of the private banks disrupted the

transaction problem in the rice trade, U Min Thein continued.

“The traders rely on the banks for transactions. The majority of the banks are closed down for now. So, the trade falls by half as against a year-ago period,” he stressed.

Myanmar shipped more than 720,000 tonnes of rice and broken rice to foreign countries between 1 October and 15 January of the current financial year, earning over US\$275 million, Myanmar Rice Federation stated. Weather changes affected irrigation water resource availability in agriculture.

As a result of this, Myanmar set the rice export target at only 2 million tonnes in the current FY as summer paddy growing acreage drops, said U Ye Min Aung, chairman of the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

Myanmar generated over \$800 million from rice exports in the previous FY2019-2020 ended 30 September, with an estimated volume of over 2.5 million tonnes. —NN/GNLM



A farmer works on a field as they harvest paddy in Kangyidauk, Ayeyawady Region. PHOTO: GNLM/FILE

Fog causes delay for Pansodan-Dala ferry service



Starting from 9 February 2021, the Dala ferry daily ran 35 rounds between 5:30 am and 7 pm. It plied the routes for 22 rounds between 6 am and 7 pm on weekends. At present, there are about 6,000-7,000 commuters.

FOG forced the Pansodan-Dala ferry operators to reschedule the service for the morning of 1 March 2021. The service resumed when the fog started to clear.

“It is usual that fog halts service every year. The operators did not run until the fog clears for the safety of passengers. Additionally, the poor visibility in fog can cause collision accidents with the motor vessels in the river. The Inland Water Transport (Delta Division) ensures smooth and sound transport,” said U Hla Win Naing, the IWT Delta Division’s assistant general

manager.

The ferry operated its service at 5, 6, 6:30 and 7 am. The service was delayed during the rounds at 7:20, 7:40 and 8 am owing to fog. The operators waited for the right time and resumed the service at 8:20 am.

Starting from 9 February 2021, the Dala ferry daily ran 35 rounds between 5:30 am and 7 pm. It plied the routes for 22 rounds between 6 am and 7 pm on weekends. At present, there are about 6,000-7,000 commuters.

Before the pandemic, the ferry service run 46 times a

day. Yangon Pansodan-Dala ferries were earlier packed with nearly 30,000 daily commuters.

The Pansodan-Dala ferry is the only transport option for the local people in southern Yangon -- Dala, Twantay, Kawhmu, Kungyangon townships to link with commercial hub Yangon. Three ferry boats named Cherry 1, 2 and 3, contributed by Japan earlier, ran 46 times a day for approximately 30,000 commuters. It is one of the crowded places in the city, generating revenues. —Naing Lin Kyaw (IPRD)/GNLM

Foreigners hold over 13% of FMI shares in equity market as of Feb-end

FOREIGN investors have purchased 4,458,136 shares of First Myanmar Investment (FMI) on the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) as of February-end 2021, holding 13.46 per cent of shares, according to statistics released by the exchange.

The upper limit for foreign shareholding amount is at 14 per cent, with 4,635,357 shares. The foreign investors exceeded the buy order limit, and consequently, the status of buy order acceptance has been suspended.

The Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar (SECM) has allowed foreigners to invest in the local equity market from 20 March 2020. The foreign shareholding amount stood at 4,502,760 shares of four listed companies on the exchange as of February-end.

At present, shares of six listed com-

panies — First Myanmar Investment (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB), First Private Bank (FPB), TMH Telecom Public Co. Ltd, and Ever Flow River Group Public Co., Ltd (EFR) — are available for local investors for trading. Of them, FMI, MTSH, TMH and EFR accepted foreign shareholding, and FPB permits block trade only. The foreign shareholding ratio of the companies on the exchange, except FMI, is less than one per cent.

As of February-end, foreigners hold over 4,458,060 shares of FMI, over 32,054 shares of MTSH, 5,445 shares of TMH and 7,125 shares of EFR.

The SECM, under the Ministry of Planning and Finance, issued a notice on 12 July 2019, announcing that foreigners would be allowed to invest in shares listed

on the YSX.

After opening bank and securities accounts, an investor can send buying/selling orders under the stock trading rules stipulated in the Trading Business Regulations, the SECM notified.

U Thet Htun Oo, senior executive manager of the Yangon Stock Exchange, highlighted at the seminar held last year how foreign participation would entail better capital inflows, long term and sustainable investment, encourage good corporate governance, and support market orientation.

Regarding share trading, foreign investors must strictly comply with the Central Bank of Myanmar’s rules.

The security companies will monitor foreigners’ daily trades in keeping with the rules and regulations so that they do

not exceed the limit set for each listed company.

Under Section 42 (a) of the Securities and Exchange Law and Section 4 of the Trading Participant Business Regulations, the YSX has granted trading qualifications to the following securities companies — Myanmar Securities Exchange Centre Co. Ltd. (MSEC), KBZ Stirling Coleman Securities Co. Ltd. (KBZSC), CB Securities Limited (CBSC), AYA Trust Securities Co. Ltd. (AYATSC), KTZ Ruby Hill Securities Co. Ltd. (KTZRH), and UAB Securities Limited (UABSC).

According to the stock exchange, investors have to send their buy or sell orders to the YSX through the securities companies that have been issued a licence by the SECM and a trading qualification by the YSX.—KK/GNLM

Weather-based insurance key to easing impact of climate change on farmers

With the warning from the Meteorology and Hydrology Department that isolated rain or thundershowers, accompanied by strong wind, hails, thunder and lightning are expected in March and April, the people, especially farmer, are urged to be on alert to the extreme weather events.

With the impact of climate change looming large on agricultural productivity, the insurance sector has a big role to play.

Myanmar is listed among countries that are adversely affected by erratic weather. This is the reason why crop insurance is important for our farmers.

To promote the livelihood of farmers who make up over 70 per cent of the total population of Myanmar, we need to make legislations that can protect them when crops, cattle, or machinery fails.

We have experienced that crops that grew well in the past may no longer continue to do so due to climate change, and crops are getting damaged by droughts or floods every year.

Farmers are important to our country's economy as well as for achieving food sufficiency for our people. Due to this, the Protecting Rights and Enhancing Economic Welfare of Farmers Law was enacted.

Now is the time to make plans for helping farmers with a crop insurance system.

Hence, an agricultural insurance scheme should cover crops, cattle, and tractors.

We are confident that a successful insurance system is an important tool for poverty alleviation and job creation, particularly in rural areas, as it safeguards the interests of farmers.

Only Honest Efforts Will Give You Benefits

By Sann Ni Lar Winn

At the top of all the clean and innocent means for earning of livelihood is the service person's investing in their physical and mental power and abilities. In other words, they are not excessive in seeking interests for themselves and others also working honestly and conscientiously. They lead their lives as service personnel faithful to State.

For livelihood, every mature and healthy person has a suitable job. You will not get food easily without making any effort. If you have a job, you will get food, shelter and clothes.

This was stressed by great political philosopher, "Yaw Min Gyi U Pho Hlaing" of later period of Konbaung Era in his "Yazadama Thingaha" book, he wrote, "If a man lived he had been without making any effort to take care of himself, such as cutting his nails and hair, he would look like as a monkey."

In fact, every service personnel depend on their salaries from the public's fund, so they are to be loyal to the State and serve its interests. However, some service personnel are motivated by the same famous artists and totalitarian dictators who are persuading toward An-

archism. They create a "CDM= Civil Disobedience Movement" in order to neglect to serve in their offices and factories.

It is necessary for the entire national people, including service personnel, to work together with the government for national development and tranquillity according to the staff rules and regulations.

Legislative, executive and judicial pillars are the lifeblood of a nation. If should be borne in mind that when these three pillars are strong, the country is strong, and when they become weak, the nation will also become weak. It's worst results in the loss of sovereignty.

Similarly, only with the prevalence of law and order and security and peace will it be possible to build a peaceful and developed nation. Democracy is not "Mobocracy" under the multiparty democratic system. The political parties and organizations have their own principles, policies and programmes. Some of the principles, policies and programmes may be similar and some as one's own.

The simple service personnel who value and love their service personnel's life prioritize serving the interest of the country and people. They ever enjoy innocent living. And

It is necessary for the entire national people, including service personnel, to work together with the government for national development and tranquillity according to the staff rules and regulations.

scrupulous service personnel regard corruption as crimes.

The Buddha said concerning bribery and corruption as follows:

"A banana plant gets killed because of it's bearing fruits. In the same way, the fruits of a bamboo plant cause the plant to die. Likewise, gifts and bribes received from others cause the deterioration of integrity. Whatever evil one does, it follows one like a shadow no matter where he is hiding in the sky or underground. There is no hiding place for one who has done wrong. A person who has committed a sin

will always be suffering from the heat of the sin."

So, our forefather said, "Have a look at the crows. They have looted food from others, and so there is no fat in their bodies. So, as long as you are service personnel, do not enjoy taking whatever comes incorrectly. Since the era of feudalism, the system of giving rewards and punishment service personnel had been practised in our country. The following is one of many events from Myanmar's history.

It was during the reign of the king, "Tha Lun Mintayargyi"

(990-1010 BC). One day, Minister "Banyar Kyandaw", after staying later into the night in Sagaing, returned to Ava. When he arrived at the Manaung gate in front of the palace, he sent an employee to the gate-keeper, asking him to open the gate.

When the minister returned from Sagaing and asked him to open the gate, Manaung gate-keeper replied, "I've never seen a minister at midnight. If he wants to get in, he shall take the letter of permission from the mayor."

Minister Banyar Kyandaw said, "I, minister, have arrived, and why don't you open the gate?" Gate-keeper said, "When the minister left for Sagaing, he left no word as regards the exact time of his arrival back. There is neither advance notification by any minister. I don't think you are a minister. To open a gate of utmost importance out of rules and regulation on unreasonable grounds will enable insurgents, destructive elements, and traitors to enter. That will cause trouble. I will not open the gate."

So, Banyar Kyandaw had to turn to the "Aung Tun" gate and entered without any inspection made on him.

The next day, Minister Banyar Kyandaw summoned these two gate-keepers. He

gave rewards to and spoke in praise of the dutiful and loyal Manaung gate-keeper and blamed and gave warning to Aung Tun gate-keeper for his laxity in performing his duty.

Regarding the need to differentiate between good and bad service personnel to get them to discharge them from being used by parties and factions, our National leader Bogyoke Aung San in his speech to the nation over the BBS at 6.33 pm on 5 April 1947, said, "Like what we are doing, I want every service personnel to resolutely discharge their duties correctly and consciously. I will not do if they behave as if they would like to approach this or that person. Please bear this in mind that if one is dutiful, one need not be afraid of anybody, and nobody can harm such a person."

Since the service personnel have taken the oath to be loyal to the State and enjoyed the public funds' salaries, they are public servants. They must carry out according to the motto, "Do things precisely correctly and swiftly". They should perform their respective duties in the production, trade commodity, distribution, services, administration of justice, inspection, and management and administrative sectors.

Objectives of 76th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

FOR the Tatmadaw to join hands with the entire nation to safeguard democracy, which is the aspiration of all the nationalities of the country, from deviating from its path, in accord with the basic principles of the Constitution, while observing Our Three Main National Causes, which is the national policy;

To protect the people from all dangers including natural disasters at any time and in any situation and to provide all-round assistance for ensuring social security of the people;

To restore eternal peace based on NCA, without deviating from Our Three Main National Causes, as the cessation of armed conflicts is the principal requirement in realizing democracy;

To build a strong and compact Standard Army, which has the combat prowess and combat power, to effectively safeguard the State peace and stability and sovereignty.

MYANMAR GAZETTE	
Heads of Service Organizations transferred	
The following persons are transferred as Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names from the date they assume charge of their duties.	
Name	Appointment
1. U Ko Lay Win Director-General Basic Education Department Ministry of Education	Director-General Department of Myanmar Nationalities Languages
2. Dr Saw Pyone Naing Rector University of Education, Sagaing Ministry of Education	Director-General Basic Education Department Ministry of Education
3. Dr Tin Maung Tun Rector West Yangon University Ministry of Education	Rector Yangon University Ministry of Education
4. Dr Tin Tun Rector Toungoo University Ministry of Education	Rector Mandalay University Ministry of Education
5. Dr Khin Thida Rector Pyay University Ministry of Education	Rector West Yangon University Ministry of Education
6. Dr Thet Lwin Rector Pakokku University Ministry of Education	Rector Pyay University Ministry of Education
7. Dr Aung Kyaw Rector Maubin University Ministry of Education	Rector Dagon University Ministry of Education

'I look normal again': Relief as German hairdressers reopen

Hans-Joachim Berthold had a spring in his step as he set off down the street on Monday morning after getting his hair cut for the first time in two and a half months.

"It's such a relief. I couldn't bear to look at myself in the mirror before!" the 64-year-old told AFP

Berthold was one of hundreds of Germans who were able to go to the hairdresser for the first time since December, as the country eased some tough coronavirus restrictions on Monday.

Besides hairdressers, florists and garden centres have been allowed to open in certain states such as Bavaria, while other regions such as Schleswig-Holstein have reopened zoos for the first time since December 16.

"As soon as I found out in February that they were going to reopen, I booked an appointment for me and my wife," said Berthold, sporting a smart short-back-and-sides after his visit to the Haarstudio 030 salon in central Berlin.

While his job in IT has allowed him to work from home during the lockdown, his long hair still bugged him during regular video meetings, he explained.

"I could always see it falling over my face. It's just a joy to think I look normal again," he said.

Fully booked

Salon manager Manuel Heinsch said it is "really important" that he is able to work again.

"Rents aren't cheap in this area anyway and we haven't had

any real financial help from the government," the 32-year-old, who opened Haarstudio 030 in 2019, told AFP

"It feels great to finally work again."

Heinsch received several customers within minutes of opening his doors on Monday, beaming as he welcomed regulars back into the salon.

According to the new rules, customers have to book an appointment in advance, and Heinsch is already fully booked until the end of the week.

"We will do a 10-hour shift from 10 am to 8 pm," he said, gesturing to his three-person team.

Others worked even longer hours on Monday, with one salon in Dortmund opening on the stroke of midnight and serving customers through the small



A hairdresser cuts the hair of a client sitting in a space separated by transparent panes at the hair salon 'Harmony' in Dortmund, western Germany on March 1, 2021, on the day of its reopening after being closed for more than two months due to the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic.

PHOTO: AFP

hours of the morning.

In Bavaria, local media reported that one salon had raised 422 euros by auctioning off its first appointment.

Following Monday's reopening of hairdressers and a partial return to schools for some pupils last week, Chancellor Angela Merkel and German

regional leaders will meet again Wednesday to discuss possible further relaxations.

Yet after a decrease in case numbers in February, experts have cautioned that Germany's infection rate has stabilised and even climbed in recent days as concerns grow about the spread of new, more contagious virus variants. For his part, Berthold hopes that the hairdressers will stay open for "a while yet", and not just for the sake of his own fringe.

"I didn't understand why they closed them, because the hairdressers did everything they could in terms of hygiene measures," he said, as his wife went into the salon for her appointment. "But it is what it is. I am just happy that we can now go and get our hair cut when we want." —AFP

AMATA puts off listing date in equity market



The Stock Exchange in Yangon. PHOTO: GNLM/FILE

THE listing date, before scheduled, of Amata Holding Public Co., Ltd. (AMATA on Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX)) would be postponed for a certain period. And the rescheduled listing date announced in due time, according to the YSX notification on 26 February 2021.

After scrutinizing submitted application documents and a deliberate listing examination, YSX approved the Amata Holding Public Co., Ltd. (AMATA) to be listed on YSX under Section 41 (c) of the Securities

Exchange Law and Section 7 and 8 of the Securities Listing Business Regulations, on 28 December 2020. Earlier, it was scheduled to debut on the exchange on 12 March.

AMATA is the very first hotels and tourism sector to be listed in the equity market. The base price of AMATA will be announced on the YSX website one working day before the listing date.

On 18 July 2018, the company issued a prospectus in which 596 investors held

497,598 shares at an offering price of K5,000 per each unit.

AMATA would be the seventh public company to list on the exchange. As per the company's profile, AMATA is a public holding company and operates a resort in Ngapali Beach, Inle Lake and Bagan, and a hot-air ballooning business with 15 balloons in six cities.

AMATA owns 99.99% share from United International Group Co., Ltd and 51% shares from Myanmar Ballooning Co.,

Ltd.

At present, shares of six listed companies — First Myanmar Investment (FMI), Myanmar Thilawa SEZ Holdings (MTSH), Myanmar Citizens Bank (MCB), First Private Bank (FPB), TMH Telecom Public Co. Ltd (TMH) and the Ever Flow River Group Public Co. Ltd (EFR) -- are being traded on the exchange.

On 26 February 2021, the share prices of FMI were closed at K9,300 per unit, MTSH at K3,500, MCB at K8,200, FPB at K22,000, TMH at K2,800 and EFR at K3,350, respectively. Usually, over K60 million worth of shares were traded on the exchange every day. The COVID-19 impacts cooled down the market.

The stock markets worldwide have reported their largest declines since the 2008 financial crisis.

Similarly, the local equities market is also scared by the COVID-19 crash, a market observer points out.

At present, people are keeping emergency savings rather than investing amid the COVID-19 crisis and current political conditions, he added.

Next, the Securities and Exchange Commission of Myanmar (SECM) has allowed foreigners to invest in the local equity market from 20 March 2020.

Furthermore, YSX launched a pre-listing board (PLB) on 28 September 2020 to provide unlisted public companies with fund-raising opportunities and build a bridge toward listing on YSX, YSX stated.

The YSX was launched four years ago to improve the private business sector. It disseminates rules and regulations regarding the stock exchange and knowledge of share trading through stock investment seminars. The stock exchange has also sought the government's support to get more public companies to participate in the stock market and help more institutional investors, such as financing companies, investment banks, and insurance companies, to emerge.

Amid the COVID-19 crisis, Myanmar's securities market has been able to continue operating without stopping trading.

According to the annual report released by the exchange, a total of K12.6 billion worth of 1.87 million shares by six listed companies were traded on the Yangon Stock Exchange (YSX) in 2020, a significant drop compared to 2019.

Over 2.4 million shares from five listed companies, valued at K13.39 billion, were traded on the exchange in 2019. — KK/GNLM

Agro exports surge by \$781 mln as of 19 February

THE agricultural exports have touched a high of US\$2.25 billion as of 19 February 2021 in the current financial year since 1 October 2020 on the back of strong global demand for agricultural products amid the coronavirus impacts.

The figures reflect a significant rise of \$781.5 million this FY. According to the trade figures released by the Ministry of Commerce, the agro exports soared from \$1.47 billion in the

corresponding period of the 2019-2020 FY.

Myanmar's agricultural exports rose regardless of the coronavirus's impact on foreign demand for other export groups.

However, some ocean liners suspended cargo transport from Myanmar in recent days. The cargo transport will double or triple if we conduct the trade with small ships. It could harm the export sector somehow,

according to Myanmar Mercantile Marine Development Association.

In the exports sector, the agriculture industry performed the best, accounting for over 22 per cent of overall exports. The agricultural industry's chief export items are rice and broken rice, pulses and beans, and maize. Fruits and vegetables, sesame, dried tea leaves, sugar, and other agro products are also shipped to other countries.

Myanmar agro products are primarily exported to China, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka. Sometimes, the export market remains uncertain due to unsteady global demand.

The country requires specific export plans for each agro product, as they are currently exported to external markets based upon supply and demand. Contract farming systems, the

involvement of regional and state agriculture departments, exporters, traders, and some grower groups, are required to meet production targets, said an official from the Agriculture Department.

The Commerce Ministry is working to help farmers deal with challenges such as high input costs, procurement of pedigree seeds, high cultivation costs, and unpredictable weather conditions. — HH/GNLM

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Iran inspections should not be ‘bargaining chip’: IAEA



Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif (L) meets with the director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Rafael Grossi, (R) in Tehran on 21 February 2021. **PHOTO AFP**

THE head of the UN's nuclear watchdog appealed Monday for its inspection work in Iran not to become a “bargaining chip” as world powers mull negotiations to revive the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

“The inspection work of the IAEA must be preserved... (it) should not be put in the middle of a negotiating table as a bargaining chip,” International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Rafael Grossi told a press conference at the start of the agency's quarterly meeting of its board of governors.

On February 23, Iran suspended some IAEA inspections in response to the US refusal so far to lift sanctions imposed by

former president Donald Trump.

Grossi described the suspension of those inspections as a “huge loss”, but when asked if the agency could still reassure the international community that the Iranian nuclear programme was exclusively peaceful, he replied: “So far, so good.”

Grossi said the IAEA would continue to have the means to verify the amount of uranium enriched by Iran.

On February 21 Grossi announced after two days of talks with Iranian officials in Tehran that Iran and the IAEA had struck an interim three-month deal to mitigate the impact of the suspended inspections.

Recordings from monitoring

equipment the IAEA installed at Iran's nuclear sites will be kept by Iran for three months and provided to the IAEA if US sanctions are lifted.

European states are considering putting forward a resolution at this week's meeting condemning Iran's decision to suspend some inspections.

Iran has said that the introduction of such a resolution would push it to abandon the temporary agreement with the IAEA.

Grossi refused to be drawn on the utility of a critical resolution. “My appeal to all is to have constructive discussions and to preserve the work of the agency,” Grossi said. —AFP ■

US envoy in Kabul as questions over troop withdrawal swirl

THE US special envoy to Afghanistan touched down in Kabul on Monday for meetings with Afghan leaders, in a bid to revive a flagging peace process as violence soars in the war-weary country and a deadline for US troop withdrawal draws closer.

Zalmay Khalilzad's arrival marks the first time he has returned to Afghanistan since US President Joe Biden took office in January and asked him to stay in his post.

Speculation is rife over America's future in Afghanistan, after the White House announced plans to review a withdrawal deal brokered by Khalilzad and the Taliban in Doha last year.

Under that agreement, the US is set to withdraw from Afghanistan in May, but a surge in fighting has sparked concerns that a speedy exit from the country may unleash greater chaos as peace talks between the Kabul government and Taliban continue to stall.

In Kabul, Khalilzad met with both Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah, who serves as chairman of Afghanistan's High

Council for National Reconciliation, which is overseeing Kabul's peace talks with the insurgents in Qatar.

“Both sides discussed future steps in the Afghan peace process and underscored additional efforts to expedite the peace process,” a presidential spokeswoman said in a statement.

The envoy is also set to travel to Qatar, where he will meet with Taliban leaders along with trips to unspecified regional capitals, according to the State Department. Khalilzad, an Afghan-born political scientist, is a veteran of Republican administrations who has served as US ambassador to the United Nations, Iraq and Afghanistan. Donald Trump's administration, eager to end America's longest war, tasked Khalilzad with negotiating with the Taliban, culminating in a deal signed in Qatar on February 29 last year. The accord states that the US will withdraw all troops from Afghanistan by May, with the Taliban promising not to allow territory to be used by terrorists — the original goal of the US invasion following the September 11, 2001 attacks. —AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Italy debt soars on virus impact

ITALY'S public debt soared last year, rising more than 20 percentage points as the coronavirus pandemic savaged the economy, official data showed Monday.

Total accumulated national debt jumped to 155.6 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) last year from 134.6 per cent in 2019.

Italy had by the end of 2020 accumulated a colossal debt of 2.57 trillion euros, up from 2.41 trillion euros in 2019, according to national statistics agency Istat.

GDP in the eurozone's third-largest economy fell 8.9 per cent last year, thanks to restrictions imposed by the government to stem a devastating coronavirus outbreak that has killed almost 100,000 people.

Italy is banking on a windfall of more than 200 billion euros from the European Union's post-virus recovery fund to help get back on its feet. —AFP ■

French ex-president Sarkozy convicted for corruption

FORMER French president Nicolas Sarkozy was found guilty of corruption on Monday and handed a three-year prison sentence after a court in Paris convicted him for trying to illegally influence a judge during his time in office.

The sentence includes two years suspended, which means it is unlikely Sarkozy will physically go to prison.

He is almost certain to appeal and remains free, with no arrest warrant issued.

The verdict is the latest twist in the tumultuous political career of the 66-year-old who ruled France from 2007 to 2012 and remains a favourite for many on the right.

The conviction is likely to undermine any attempted comeback to frontline politics, an ambition he has denied, but which has been promoted by many supporters ahead of 2022 presidential elections.

Only one other French president, Sarkozy's political mentor Jacques Chirac, was put on trial after leaving office, but he was excused from having to attend his 2011 corruption trial because of ill health.

Chirac received a two-year suspended sentence over the creation of ghost jobs at the Paris city hall to fund his party when he was mayor. —AFP ■

Finland declares state of emergency as Covid cases rise

FINLAND on Monday activated emergency powers as the government prepared to introduce tougher restrictions to stem a rising tide of coronavirus infections.

Prime Minister Sanna Marin signalled the move was imminent last week when she warned that controls limiting restaurants to takeaway service would come into force for three weeks from March 8 in some parts of the country.

“The government along with the President of the Republic has declared a state of emergency in the country,” Marin told a press conference on Monday.

Finland's constitution requires emergency legislation to enforce such a restriction, and the restaurant proposal will now go before parliament, Marin said.

The government also announced on February 24 that it had instructed local authorities in areas with high infection rates, including the capital, to restrict public and private gatherings to six people. Controls on establishments such as gyms will also be tightened, while municipal buildings including swimming pools and museums have been closed in some areas since November.

Although the state of emergency will allow limits to be placed on freedom of movement, Marin said that the government is not currently planning to reintroduce restrictions such as a blockade between the capital region and the rest of the country, which was imposed in March last year. —AFP ■

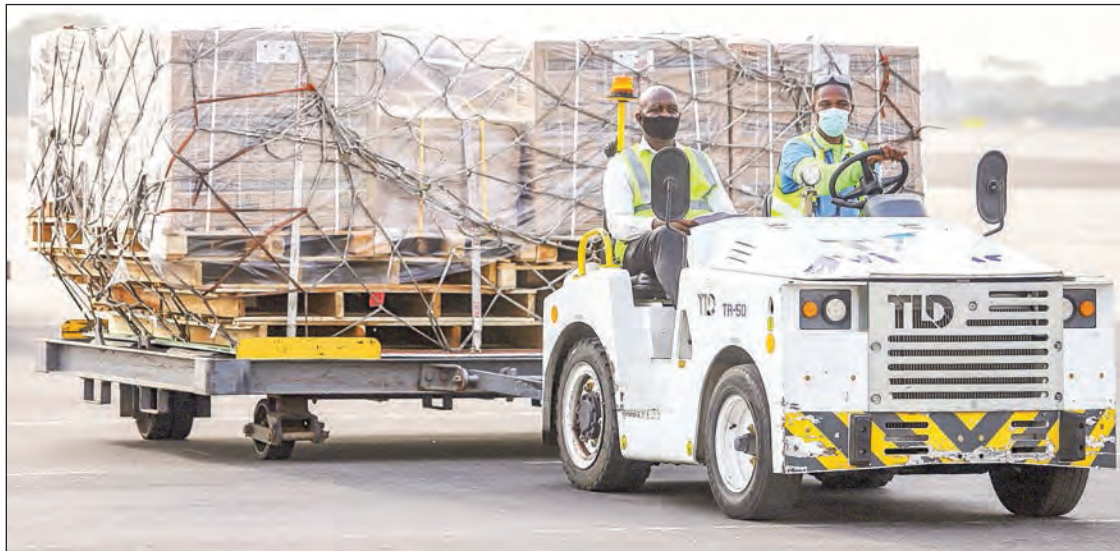
World's first Covax jab injected as US eyes J&J rollout

GHANA'S President Nana Akufo-Addo on Monday became the first recipient of a coronavirus vaccine under the global Covax scheme, as US health workers prepared to distribute nearly four million doses of the single-shot Johnson & Johnson jab.

Covax, a scheme designed to ensure that poorer countries do not miss out on Covid-19 vaccines that have so far been largely hoovered up by rich nations, is aiming to deliver at least two billion doses by the end of the year.

Akufo-Addo received his AstraZeneca shot live on television along with his wife, a day before the rest of the first batch of 600,000 Covax doses are deployed across Ghana.

"It is important that I set the example that this vaccine is safe by being the first to have it, so that everybody in Ghana can feel comfortable about taking this vaccine," the president said.



Airport workers transport on dollies a shipment of Covid-19 vaccines from the Covax global Covid-19 vaccination programme, at the Kotoka International Airport in Accra on 24 February 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi also got his coronavirus jab on Monday -- although a glitch in the online booking system meant thousands of others were turned away from hospitals nationwide.

And in the United States, 3.9 million doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine are due to

be delivered after it became the latest jab to get the green light from US regulators.

The J&J rollout comes as a boost to President Joe Biden's plan to beat back a virus that has killed more than half a million Americans, making the US the world's worst-hit nation.

Legal war over Covid jabs

Vaccines are seen as crucial to returning the world to normality and healing the economy after a pandemic that has claimed more than 2.5 million lives across the globe.

More than 224 million vaccine doses have been administered worldwide, according to national data compiled by AFP,

with the Philippines among the latest countries to launch a rollout Monday.

But rich countries have bought up the vast majority of those available, prompting the World Health Organization (WHO) to warn that the crisis cannot end unless poor countries can vaccinate their populations too. A new row is brewing over a call, led by India and South Africa, for intellectual property rights to the vaccines to be waived.

Backed by dozens of governments from Argentina to Bangladesh, they argue that this would boost production and ultimately bring the pandemic to a swifter end. But the United States, the European Union and Switzerland -- home to major pharmaceutical firms -- oppose the idea, which is being thrashed out at a World Trade Organization meeting on Monday and Tuesday. —AFP ■

S.Africa likely to miss herd immunity target : scientist

SOUTH Africa is unlikely to reach its 2021 coronavirus herd immunity target and should "recalibrate" expectations around Covid-19 jabs, a top vaccinologist said Monday.

A more transmissible coronavirus variant first identified in South Africa late last year fuelled the country's second infection wave and delayed the start of vaccinations in February. Studies have shown the variant to be more resistant to most of the existing vaccines than the virus' original form and other mutations.

Vaccinology professor Shabir Madhi, lead investigator on the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine trial in South Africa, said the local variant and a third wave of infections expected later this year were likely to hinder inoculation plans. "We need to recalibrate... our understanding of what we can actually achieve with Covid-19 vaccines," Madhi told a virtual panel discussion.

"The notion of getting to herd immunity... at least with this first generation of Covid-19 vaccines, is extremely slim."

South Africa's government aims to vaccinate 67 per cent of its population -- around 40 million people -- to achieve herd immunity by year's end.

Inoculations started last month with jabs developed by US pharma giant Johnson & Johnson. The rollout was briefly delayed after a study found that AstraZeneca vaccines -- the first doses to land in the country -- only offered limited protection against mild and moderate disease caused by the new variant.

Substantial quantities of the vaccines are only expected in April and May. Infections are meanwhile expected to resurge in June or earlier if a cap on mass gatherings is lifted during the upcoming Easter holiday.

So far South Africa has secured 11 million Johnson & Johnson vaccines and 20 million doses of a jab developed by Pfizer.

Another 12 million doses are expected from the WHO-backed vaccine pooling initiative Covax and an undetermined amount from the African Union.

The country is the worst-hit by the pandemic in Africa, with over 1.5 million cases and almost 50,000 deaths recorded to date. But President Cyril Ramaphosa on Sunday said the start of vaccinations had "gone extremely well" and that daily infections had slowed enough to lift almost all movement restrictions. —AFP ■

EU agrees sanctions on four senior Russian officials

EU member states on Monday approved sanctions to be slapped on four senior Russian justice and law enforcement officials involved in the detention of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

Diplomatic sources told AFP the names would be published in the bloc's official journal on Tuesday, after envoys from member states approved the list of targets drawn up by Brussels.

According to two sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, the targeted Russians are: Alexander Kalashnikov, federal prisons administrator;

Alexander Bastrykin, head of the Investigative Committee of Russia; Igor Krasnov, prosecutor general; and Viktor Zolotov, director of the National Guard.

The four are the first individuals to be targeted under the EU's new human rights sanctions regime, which came into effect in December. They will be banned from travelling to the EU and any assets held there will be frozen.

Navalny was jailed last month after returning to Moscow from Germany, where he had spent months recovering from a poisoning with a banned

nerve agent he blames on Putin. The Kremlin denies it was behind the attack.

The imprisoning of Putin's best-known opponent sparked nationwide protests that saw thousands of demonstrators detained and triggered calls in the West for Navalny's release -- calls now backed by EU sanctions.

Last week, Russia's foreign ministry dismissed the sanctions decision and said they were prepared under a "far-fetched pretext", accusing Brussels of bowing to "anti-Russian stereotypes". —AFP ■

Coronavirus toll at 1100 GMT Monday

THE novel coronavirus has killed at least 2,531,448 people since the outbreak emerged in China in December 2019, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP at 1100 GMT on Monday. At least 114,050,170 cases of coronavirus have been registered. The vast majority have recovered, though some have continued to experience symptoms weeks or even months later.

These figures are based on daily tolls provided by health authorities in each country and exclude later re-evaluations by statistical organisations, as has happened in Russia, Spain and Britain. On Sunday, 5,680 new deaths and 306,735 new cases were recorded worldwide. Based on the latest reports, the countries with the most new deaths were the United States with 1,001 new deaths, followed by Brazil with 721 and Mexico with 458. The United States is the worst-affected country with 513,092 deaths from 28,605,953 cases.

After the US, the hardest-hit countries are Brazil with 254,942 deaths from 10,551,259 cases, Mexico with 185,715 deaths from 2,086,938 cases, India with 157,157 deaths from 11,112,241 cases, and the United Kingdom with 122,849 deaths from 4,176,554 cases. The country with the highest number of deaths compared to its population is the Czech Republic with 191 fatalities per 100,000 inhabitants, followed by Belgium with 190, Slovenia at 185, the United Kingdom with 181 and Italy with 162. Europe overall has 852,569 deaths from 37,626,483 cases, Latin America and the Caribbean 678,450 deaths from 21,381,322 infections, and the United States and Canada 535,083 deaths from 29,471,938 cases. Asia has reported 256,364 deaths from 16,146,765 cases, the Middle East 104,318 deaths from 5,493,708 cases, Africa 103,715 deaths from 3,897,601 cases, and Oceania 949 deaths from 32,353 cases. —AFP ■

Yahoo Japan operator, Line merge to take on foreign tech giants

Z Holdings Corp., operator of Yahoo Japan online services, and messaging app provider Line Corp. merged on Monday to expand their online services globally as they aim to better compete with U.S. and Chinese tech giants.

With a combined user base of about 150 million in Japan, the merger of Z Holdings, a SoftBank Group Corp. subsidiary, and Line will make it one of the biggest information technology companies in the country.

“We would like to launch a global smartphone app” in the future to expand online services worldwide with the help of global tech firms in which SoftBank Group’s nearly \$100 billion Vision Fund has invested, said Takeshi Idezawa, Z Holdings co-CEO and former Line



Kentaro Kawabe (L), president of Z Holdings Corp, operator of Yahoo Japan online services, and messaging app provider Line Corp President Takeshi Idezawa are pictured at a press conference in Tokyo on 1 March 2021. PHOTO: KYODO NEWS

president, at a press conference.

Kentaro Kawabe, the other Z Holdings co-CEO said, “We can offer a wider range of services, such as search engine, e-commerce and online financial operations, than those provided by GAFA -- Google

LLC, Apple Inc., Facebook Inc. and Amazon.com Inc. -- with our group’s total power.”

The surviving entity is Z Holdings, under which Yahoo Japan and Line operate their respective businesses.

The integrated compa-

ny said it is targeting sales of 2 trillion yen (\$19 billion) in fiscal 2023, compared with the two companies’ combined sales of 1.28 trillion yen in fiscal 2019, and aiming to become the largest e-commerce operator in Japan in the first half of the 2020s. — Kyodo News

German consumer prices accelerate rise in February

Consumer prices in Germany rose at a faster pace in February, preliminary official data showed Monday, as fears grow that a return of inflation could hamper a post-pandemic economic recovery.

Inflation reached 1.3 per cent year-on-year, its steepest rise since March 2020, when borders were first slammed shut across the world as countries battled to halt contagion of the coronavirus.

Analysts had projected inflation to reach 1.4 per cent for the month.

Consumer prices were pulled up in February by rising energy prices after months of slumps. A growth in food prices has meanwhile slowed down to 1.4 per cent compared to 2.2 per cent a month ago, according to the preliminary

data from federal statistics agency Destatis. After having slowed considerably in 2020, inflation is expected to rise this year in Europe as the economy picks up following the relaxation of measures to slow the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

With the European Central Bank poised to hold its regular monetary policy setting meeting next week, voices warning against its ultra expansionary stance are growing louder. Monday’s figures do “little to quieten the discussions around potential ECB action,” said Carsten Brzeski, ING analyst. A member of a German government advisory panel, Volker Wieland, last week called on the ECB to look at raising interest rates in case of surging inflation.—AFP ■

Global markets bounce back from last week’s slump

WORLD stock markets rebounded Monday from last week’s heavy selloff, as falling US Treasury yields soothed inflation concerns, dealers said.

Wall Street stocks snapped higher at the open, with the Dow gaining 1.4 per cent. The broader S&P 500 climbed 1.5 per cent and tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite shot 1.7 per cent higher.

London equities jumped 1.2 per cent in afternoon trade, while Frankfurt was up 1.0 per cent and Paris added 1.3 per cent.

Asian stocks rose strongly on bargain-buying as the passage of President Joe Biden’s \$1.9-trillion Covid relief stimulus through Congress provided additional cheer.

Oil prices climbed before this week’s output meeting of the OPEC group of oil producers and their allies, while the dollar advanced versus the euro and yen.

“Equity markets are showing strong gains as bond yields cool,” said analyst David Madden at online trading firm CMC Markets UK.

“Stocks came under pressure last week as a spike in government bond yields encouraged traders to trim their exposure to equity markets.

“The prospect of higher inflation on the horizon has not disappeared but the fear of a higher cost of living is not having the same impact that it once had.”

Markets tumbled last week on fears that the recovering global economy, in tandem with vast US stimulus, could fuel inflationary pressures and spark interest rate hikes in the long run.

In a bid to calm markets, several central banks — including in Japan, South Korea and the European Union — sought over the weekend to reiterate their pledges to maintain their ultra-loose monetary policies for as long as needed.—AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V IAL 001 VOY. NO. (093N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **1-3-2021** 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
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S INTER ASIA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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Shipping Agency Department
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Agent For:

M/S UNI SPRING LOGISTICS HOLDING PTE LTD

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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: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CHUN AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS CO LTD

Bali kicks off drive-thru virus jabs for hospitality workers



Medical workers prepare to administer the Covid-19 coronavirus vaccine during a drive-through vaccination service in Nusa Dua, Indonesia's resort island of Bali, on March 1, 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

INDONESIAN resort island Bali has launched a drive-thru vaccination campaign targeting thousands of hospitality

workers, as the popular tourist destination eyes reopening to foreign visitors.

Billed as the first such

campaign in Southeast Asia, Bali's drive-thru vaccinations kicked-off at the weekend. The programme aims to inoculate

around 5,000 workers in hospitality and ride-sharing services by the end of this month.

The campaign was rolled out at Nusa Dua Bali Convention Centre in Bali's capital Denpasar, set up in partnership with Southeast Asian ride-hailing giant Grab.

"This drive-thru programme is good, because for us drivers who work on the street every day, we are very vulnerable to being exposed to the virus," said ride-hailing driver Zul Widodo.

In August, Bali closed the door to foreign tourists over coronavirus concerns, battering its key tourism sector.

"The Covid-19 vaccine is paramount for Indonesia's tourism industry recovery," Tourism Minister Sandiaga Uno said in a weekend statement.

"The availability of vaccines continues to be a source of hope for people to return to normalcy and boost confidence

that they can travel safely."

The island has recorded some 923 deaths and just over 34,000 virus cases.

The drive-thru vaccination has been rolled out alongside Indonesia's nationwide vaccination bid, which kicked off in January with the Chinese CoronaVac jabs.

Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous nation, plans to inoculate more than 180 million of its nearly 270 million people.

But it was not clear if the drive-thru programme would be rolled out in other cities across the archipelago.

Indonesia's economy — Southeast Asia's largest — has lurched into recession during a pandemic that has infected more than 1.3 million people and killed over 36,000 nationwide, according to official data, though low testing rates mean the figures could be much higher. —AFP ■

Ex-PMs Kan, Koizumi urge Japan to quit nuclear power generation

FORMER prime ministers Naoto Kan and Junichiro Koizumi on Monday urged Japan to stop using nuclear power, saying the country should learn from the Fukushima crisis a decade ago and turn to renewable energy.

Both were proponents of nuclear power while in office but became critics following the March 11, 2011, earthquake, tsunami and subsequent triple meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant. "Japan has so much natural sources of energy like solar power, hydropower and

wind power. Why should we use something that's more expensive and less safe?" said Koizumi, a maverick reformist who held office from 2001 to 2006, at a joint press conference.

Kan, who led the response to the disaster at the time, criticized Yoshihide Suga's vow to reduce Japan's net carbon emissions to zero by 2050, calling it a pretense to restart nuclear reactors across the country, most of which have been halted as utilities wait to clear tougher regulations imposed after the Fukushima crisis.

While the former prime ministers come from opposite ends of the political spectrum — Koizumi led the center-right Liberal Democratic Party while Kan headed the now-defunct Democratic Party of Japan, which leaned left — they said opposing nuclear energy was a nonpartisan stance.

The main obstacle to shifting toward renewable energy is structural, Kan said, stemming from the entrenched interests of utility companies, government agencies and academics who constitute the "nuclear power village." "They know it would be too expensive to build new plants, or that there's no way to properly dispose of nuclear waste. But there are a lot of stakeholders and they want to keep it that way," said Kan, now a member of the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan.

Regarding tritium-laced water at Fukushima Daiichi quickly filling up tanks, Koizumi said in the press conference at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan that plans to release the water into the sea were fiercely opposed by local fishermen and that further research into other options was needed. — Kyodo News ■



Former Japanese prime ministers Junichiro Koizumi (R) and Naoto Kan attend a press conference at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan in Tokyo on March 1, 2021, urging the country to stop using nuclear power. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Over 30 injured in anti-government protest in Bangkok



A pro-democracy protester holds the Thai national flag during a demonstration headed toward the residence of Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha in Bangkok on 28 February, 2021.

PHOTO: AFP

OVER 30 people were injured as an anti-government protest in Thailand's capital Bangkok led to a clash between protesters and police on Sunday night, according to a medical centre serving the area.

More than 20 of the injured were police officers. Police said one male officer in his 40s died from a heart attack while on duty at the scene.

On Sunday, over 1,200 mostly young protesters marched toward an army compound where Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha lives, calling for the release of protest leaders detained on various

charges, including violations of the country's lese majeste law that makes it a crime to insult the monarchy.

Riot police sought to block the marchers by using water cannons, tear gas and rubber bullets.

The protesters dispersed late Sunday. Protests comprising mostly young Thais erupted last year, calling for reform of the monarchy and constitutional changes as well as the resignation of Prayut and his government. The former army chief led a 2014 coup that toppled a civilian government. — Kyodo News ■

Malaysian PM says will call election once pandemic contained

MALAYSIAN Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin marked his one year in office Monday by pledging to call a general election once the coronavirus pandemic is contained.

“The main focus of this government at this moment is to steer this country clear of the double whammy of health and economic crises. Once the pandemic is over, which I hope will be very soon, I will advise the king to dissolve the parliament,” he said in a televised address to commemorate the anniversary of his administration.

Muhyiddin, who came to power after political desertion upended former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad’s government last year, has been plagued with questions over the legitimacy of his administration since he was sworn in a year ago.

Mahathir resigned after several lawmakers from his ruling coalition including Muhyiddin, switched sides, leading to the collapse of his barely two-year-old government.

Muhyiddin took the top job under a new alliance that includes the United Malays National



Prime Minister of Malaysia, Muhyiddin Yassin shows his immunization passport after undergoing the coronavirus vaccine process in Putrajaya, Malaysia on Feb. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Organization, the once dominant party that has led the country since independence in 1957, but which Mahathir and his ragtag coalition stunningly defeated in the 2018 election.

Muhyiddin came into office just as the country saw a surge in coronavirus cases and he quickly ordered a lockdown, closing borders and schools and the economy came to a standstill.

Cases have risen to four digits daily since last November.

But the economy is now open even as the country is placed under a state of emergency with parliament and elections

suspended, which the prime minister’s critics claim was intended to allow him to cling to power. Muhyiddin has a tenuous hold on the reins of power as he controls only a very slim majority in parliament, and UMNO, the biggest party in the ruling alliance, has threatened to quit after complaining of bullying by Muhyiddin’s smaller party. Factions in UMNO even threatened to throw their support for opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim, who has claimed to have the backing of enough lawmakers to replace Muhyiddin. King Abdullah Ri’ayatuddin made the emergency proclamation on 12 Jan-

uary based on Muhyiddin’s advice that the outbreak in the country has reached a “critical level.” The first nationwide emergency in 51 years is to last until 1 August or earlier, depending on how fast authorities can contain the virus. “I know and understand the meaning of democracy. Thus, not a single one of the ordinances was meant to make the prime minister stay forever,” Muhyiddin said. “In fact, the emergency being implemented has a deadline until 1 August 2021. This is the first time in the country’s history, a declaration of emergency has a deadline,” he said. — Kyodo News ■

Toyota Tsusho invests in Thai bus operator ATP30 for smart mobility

JAPANESE trading house Toyota Tsusho Corp. is acquiring an equity stake in ATP30 Public Co., a commuter bus operator for industrial estates in Thailand, to promote smart mobility for its services.

Toyota Tsusho said last week that the trading arm of the Toyota Motor Corp. group is purchasing a 9.5 per cent stake in ATP30 for 64.35 million baht (\$2 million) through its local unit, Toyota Tsusho Thai Holdings Co. The acquisition procedure is set to be completed in early March, a Toyota Tsusho official said.

The partnership will enable Toyota Tsusho to provide ATP30 with its mobility-related digital technologies to boost the safety and efficiency of commuter bus services, mainly for Japanese businesses operating in Thailand.

er bus services, mainly for Japanese businesses operating in Thailand.

The company’s solutions system will also help optimize bus allocation plans for better vehicle occupancy, reduce carbon dioxide emissions and alleviate traffic congestion, it said.

TT Techno-Park Co., a Toyota Tsusho unit running industrial estate commuter buses in eastern Thailand, is also involved in the smart mobility program being undertaken in three stages.

TT Techno-Park President Takayuki Tatsuta has told NNA that the first stage, already in practical use, sets the most efficient bus routes and is designed to help businesses cut commuting expenses by 10 to 20 per cent.— Kyodo News ■



Kiyoyoshi Oba (2nd from R), president of Toyota Tsusho (Thailand) Co., and Piya Techakul (2nd from L), president of ATP30 Public Co., attend a ceremony on 24 February, 2021, in Bangkok to form a partnership for smart mobility in commuter bus services in Thailand. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Obituary

"And to Him Will ye Be all brought back."
(Holy Quran: Chapter (36), Verse (83))

AL-HAJ DR. SALMAN RASCHID (Psychiatrist)
Age {84} years

Son of late Minister U M.A. Raschid + late Daw Thaug May (Fatima Raschid), nephew son-in-law of late Wnna Kyaw Htin Dr. U Ba Khet and late Sayama Gyi Daw May Yu, younger brother of U Bilal Raschid (Architect) + Daw Tin Tin Nu, Maryland, U.S.A., beloved husband of late Al-Hajja Daw Tin Tin San @ Rose Bakhet, passed away peacefully in accordance with the Command of Allah in London.

He will be buried along with his beloved wife Al-Hajja Daw Tin Tin Sann at the Eternal Garden Islamic Cemetery in London.

Please pray for the departed souls.

Bereaved family

Obituary

O Soul thou art at Peace, return to thy Lord Well Pleasing Him, well pleased with Him. (Quran: Chapter (89), Verse (27))

Al-Hajja Daw Tin Tin Sann @ Habiba Be Be @ Rose Bakhet
Bsc (Hons.) Msc (Bontany)
Age (77) years

Manager BBC London (Retd)
Old Student, Methodist English High School (MEOSA)
Botany Department, Rangoon Arts and Science University
Magwe College, Taung Gyi College
Artist, RASU Art Association

Daughter of late Wnna Kyaw Htin Dr. U Bakhet and late Sayamagyi Daw May Yu, neice, daughter-in-law of late U M.A. Raschid (ex-Minister) late Daw Thaug May (Fatima Raschid), beloved spouse of late Al-Haj Dr. Salman Raschid, younger sister of U Tin Maung Aye (Physical Education Officer- Magwe university) + Daw Kyi Kyi Win, elder sister of Daw Khin Myint Myint @ Patsy (BBC London, Rtd) - Mr. Steve Weinman (Editor, Diver Magazine), Prof: Dr. Arthur San Myint (Lead Clinician (Papillion)- (Catterbridge Cancer Centre) + Daw Cicilia Ann, Al-Haj Kalifah U Aye Lwin (Counsellor, The Diplomatic School, Yangon, Chief Convener, The Islamic Centre of Myanmar, Core Member, Religions for Peace, Myanmar) + Al-Hajja Daw San San Tint (Head of Accounting Technology Department, Regional College (1), Yangon), beloved aunty of six nephews and nieces, Al-Hajja Daw Tin Tin San, passed away peacefully in accordance with the Command of Allah in London, UK.

She will be buried along with her beloved husband Al-Haj Dr. Salman Raschid at the Eternal Garden Islamic Cemetery in London.

Please pray for the departed souls.

Bereaved family

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AFF, QFA discuss football matters over second webinar

ASEAN Football Federation and Qatar Football Association held a second digital webinar between 23 and 25 February with aiming to solve match-fixing and illegal betting activities that distort the integrity of football.

The workshop was attended by 12 AFF Member Associations: namely, the football federations of Australia, Bru-

nei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste and Vietnam.

The programme included sessions covering many topics during the three days of the symposium, with the first day focusing mainly on the importance of understanding the glob-

al impact of match fixing. Additionally, it promoted skills in reporting related issues, raised awareness on the threats posed by sports betting to international football, and proposed solutions including enhanced information exchange and well-defined common goals, according to the statement with the AFF.

AFF President, Major-Gen-

eral Khiev Sameth commented on the webinar that: "Similar to the first one, this second webinar has armed the participants from our respective national associations with critical information and in-depth knowledge that will benefit them in their football operations. I thank the world-class speakers and experts who delivered insightful

presentations and also shared their experiences with us over the last three days. On behalf of the AFF, I would like to express our thanks to the Qatar FA and officials from QFA and AFF involved with organizing this event. We also record our appreciation to Jasoor Institute for developing this webinar series."—GNLM ■

Atletico hold La Liga rivals at bay with tight Villarreal win

ATLETICO Madrid bounced back from recent poor form with a hard-fought 2-0 win at Villarreal on Sunday that allowed the La Liga pace-setters to extend their lead to five points.

An own goal from Alfonso Pedraza and Joao Felix's powerful strike gave Atletico a precious win after a wobble which had allowed Barcelona and Real Madrid to gain ground in the title race. Diego Simeone's side had come into the match off the back of a Champions League last 16 defeat to Chelsea and a league run in which they picked up just five points from their previous four matches.

However despite Villarreal coming close on a number of occasions Atletico held on for a win that ensures they keep second-placed Barca at bay and crucially increase the gap between them and rivals Real Madrid to six points ahead of next weekend's local derby.

Madrid can go back to within three points of Atletico when they host Europe-chasing Real Sociedad on Monday night.

"We suffered, and even after the second goal they had good chances. But we come



Atletico Madrid's Slovenian goalkeeper Jan Oblak grabs the ball in front of Villarreal's Spanish forward Gerard Moreno during the Spanish league football match between Villarreal CF and Club Atletico de Madrid at La Ceramica stadium in Vila-real on February 28, 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

home with a very important victory at this point in the season," said Simeone. Atletico opened the scoring thanks to Pedraza's odd own goal mid-way through the first half, which came after long VAR check to see if Stefan Savic, who was initially credited with the goal, had strayed off-side for Thomas Lemar's cross.

Savic's header was saved by Sergio Asenjo only for the ball to ricochet off Pedraza and into the net as the 24-year-old defender fell over. Gerard Moreno should have pulled the hosts level when he met a Daniel Parejo cross but couldn't

muster a decisive finish and Savic recovered easily to clear the ball off the line.

'I love rebel players'

Suarez could have doubled Atleti's lead eight minutes after the break when he pounced on a defensive lapse to let off a powerful shot, only for Asenjo to pull off a superb reaction save to deny the Uruguayan. However Joao Felix gave the away side the two-goal cushion they needed in the 69th minute, quickly latching onto a poor clearance by Pau Torres to lash home the second from just outside the penalty area.—AFP ■

Lukaku keeps Inter's title push on track as Milan bounce back against Roma

ROMELU Lukaku scored after 33 seconds and set up another in Inter Milan's 3-0 win over Genoa on Sunday to keep their title push on track ahead of city rivals AC Milan, who beat Roma 2-1.

Inter remain four points ahead of second-placed Milan, who got back to winning ways in Rome after consecutive league losses including last weekend's derby defeat. Champions Juventus are a further six points adrift after being held 1-1 at Hellas Verona on Saturday, but have played a game fewer. Atalanta, equal on points with Juventus, take fourth spot two points ahead of Roma who drop to fifth following the loss to Milan.

Lukaku scored with the first chance at the San Siro, then laid on Matteo Darmian for Inter's second in the 69th minute. Alexis Sanchez came off the bench to add a third with 13 minutes to go. "We're first in the standings and it's a good feeling," said Lukaku as Inter try to deny Juventus a 10th consecutive league title after finishing runners-up last

season.

Antonio Conte's side followed on from last weekend's 3-0 derby win over Milan, notching up a fifth win in a row as they push for a first league title since 2010.

"We're happy because our hard work is paying off," said Conte.

"We know that there are 14 games left. Let's keep our antennas up until the end if we want to do something good."

Lukaku led the way, completing a give-and-go with Lautaro Martinez after good work from Nicolo Barella to fire in from an angle for his 18th Serie A goal of the season, one shy of leading scorer Cristiano Ronaldo.

The 27-year-old has scored six goals in the last five games.

"I'm in a good moment of my career but the important thing is that Inter win," added the former Manchester United player.

"These matches are opportunities for us to give signals to others, but the championship is long."—AFP ■



Inter Milan's Belgian forward Romelu Lukaku (C) holds back Genoa's Italian midfielder Nicolo Rovella during the Italian Serie A football match Inter Milan v Genoa on February 28, 2021 at the San Siro stadium in Milan. **PHOTO: AFP**

Rose to meet Dortmund as rivals eye cup chance in Bayern absence

BORUSSIA Moenchengladbach coach Marco Rose will meet his future club Borussia Dortmund in the German Cup quarter-finals on Tuesday, as Germany's top teams eye a rare chance for silverware in Bayern Munich's absence.

Finalists in eight of the last ten seasons and 20-time winners overall, favourites Bayern suf-

fered their earliest exit since 2001 with a penalty shootout defeat to second-tier minnows Holstein Kiel in the second round in January.

The upset left the race for the cup wide open, and handed rivals such as Dortmund, Gladbach and RB Leipzig their best chance in years of winning a trophy.

For Gladbach coach Rose,

Tuesday's clash is a chance to save a faltering final season before joining Dortmund at the end of the campaign. After leading them to a top-four finish last season and the Champions League knockout stages in the current campaign, the 44-year-old has seen his side drop to eighth after four defeats in their last five league games.—AFP ■