

Information Sheet



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The Address Delivered by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister



Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivering the address on assumption of State duties by the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar the State Administration Council during nine-month period

Esteemed ethnic national people, I wish health and happiness for all the national people of the Union.

Nine months ago on this day, the State Administration Council started to assume the duties of the State after declaring a state of emergency due to a political situation. I will now explain the accomplishments of SAC during the nine-month period. I will now deal with the matters essential for the nation. First, the SAC adopted the five-point roadmap. In the first point, the government declared the re-establishment of the Union Election Commission, after which, it would take necessary legal action after checking the voter lists. The government is now dealing with the issue in accord with the law as the newly established UEC has completed its voter list scrutiny process.

Secondly, I would recount my determination to launch continuous, effective and accelerated preventive measures against COVID-19. COVID-19 first wave hit the country on 23 March 2020 and ended on 15 August. The second wave hit the country during the period from 16 August last year to 26 June this year. The records showed 500,073 persons were infected and 18,697 died (3.74 percent) in the country till 31 October. The infection rate reached new heights in July as 141,908 (33.38 percent) positive cases were detected. The number of deaths reached the highest point in August as 6,055 (6.05 percent) deaths were recorded. As the situation was critical during the third wave, I had led the meetings of the

COVID-19 Prevention, Control and Treatment Central Committee and tried to contain the virus. The country was facing a lot of difficulties then. There were many requirements. The economy was sluggish, medicines and oxygen were in short supply and the strength of health staff was weak. My motto amidst the many difficulties was “nothing is more important than life”, and in accord with the motto, we made a determination to curb the virus at any cost. So, the government sought both local and foreign supply sources to fulfil the requirements. Moreover, our people showed their culture of providing assistance, which is superior to other countries. Inspired by this culture, people donated medicines, medical equipment and oxygen they acquired from all available sources. Likewise, retired health staff, Tatmadaw members and civil servants joined forces in the anti-COVID-19 drive by applying all possible means to address the health staff shortage. Through the strenuous efforts, the government could ensure the arrival of vaccines and protective gear from friendly countries, Thailand and China. In consequence, the virus control drive has gained momentum. Today, the infection rate fell below 5% on a national scale. The rate will be around 3% if we do not include the 15 townships where the infection rate was higher. As the government could control the virus within its capacity, it is now arranging to resume all machinery that came to a halt. The government had to impose stay at home orders because of COVID-19. It issued the order in 119 townships during the period from 28-5-2021 to 24-8-2021. As the situation improved, the order was revoked in 50 townships. But 69 are still under the order. The remaining townships should strive to release themselves from stay-at-home orders.

As the 12 February was Union Day, which has significant features, the government released 23,369 inmates from prisons under an amnesty order. Myanmar has two significant days, Myanmar New Year Day and Fullmoon Day of Thadingyut, on which people do meritorious deeds. On those days, people pay respects to their teachers and parents. So, we with the goodwill of letting them gain such merits issued the amnesty order for 23,184 persons on Myanmar New Year Day. Likewise, an amnesty order was issued for 5,636 persons, including the ones whose ongoing court hearings were dropped on Fullmoon Day of Thadingyut. An amnesty order was also issued for 114 persons on 15 October, the sixth anniversary of NCA. So, a total of 47,869 persons were freed and court hearings of the cases of 4,434 persons were dropped.

Then, I'd like to explain the vaccination of COVID-19. A total of 33.8 million units of vaccines were purchased from India and China in addition to donations. As of 27 January, we started vaccination. Up to 31 October, a total of 13.3 million people have been vaccinated comprising once and twice vaccinated people. Of them, more than 35 per cent of the population aged 45 and above have been vaccinated. Likewise, there are more than 800,000 public service personnel, over 354,000 of whom have been vaccinated, accounting for more than 44.2 per cent. Similarly, we make preparation for the opening of the schools but students need to be vaccinated. So, we emphasized vaccination for the students aged 12 and above. There are more than 1.1 million registered students. Up to 31 October, 980,000 of people have been injected for the first dose, accounting for 84.6 per cent. I notify to all

for vaccination of the second dose on 9 November. Likewise, as we are striving for reopening universities and colleges in the near future, we inform the people about preparation for the soonest vaccination to the students registered at universities and colleges. With regard to the opening of schools, the schools were opened on 1 June. But these schools were closed due to surging of the third wave of COVID-19 on 9 July. At present, infection of the pandemic declines, the basic education schools, private schools and monastic education schools were reopened today except for the schools in 46 townships from nine regions and states where the infection rate of the disease is still high. In this regard, I'd like to request the people to fully abide by the restrictions related to the COVID-19. If so, their moves will mitigate the impacts of the opening of schools. So, they need to strictly follow the disciplines. On one hand, we need to strive for declining COVID-19 infection so as to reopen the schools in 46 remaining townships. Hence, I expect that those from relevant townships and region and state governments need to supervise the preventive measures to secure good situations. I'd like to inform the people about assigning a deputy minister to supervise the Shan State where the infection rate is high and encouraged special task forces in Shan State (East), (North) and (South).

Moreover, I'd like to explain the economic sector. As Myanmar is an agro-based country, I pointed out the importance of water and fertilizer. In collecting data from 75 model townships on rainfalls in Myanmar, we found 54 townships that secured the larger rainfalls more than that of the last year. In collecting data on 250 dams, 31 of them received the water exceeding the volume of last year's. Water inflow to 174 dams was larger in comparison with corresponding period of last year. Another 45 dams could restore the lesser water. Now, there are 15 million acres of monsoon paddy in Myanmar. These acres of land have been placed under monsoon paddy nearly cent percent. Although water at the dams and volume of rainwater are larger this year, these dams need to be filled with water in summer for irrigating the summer paddy. Likewise, these facilities must have water for irrigating the farmlands for the thriving of crops in October, November and December. Hence, we need to save the use of water from the dams and control the minimum supply of water from the dams. I would like to urge all to efficiently use the water. Fortunately, although the country received a large volume of rainwater the whole year, the country did not face terrible natural disasters except flooding in some townships of lower Myanmar.

And I would like to explain a little about fuel oil. In the previous 2020-21 financial year, US\$ 2.129 billion worth of diesel and gasoline was imported into the country. I talked about it in my previous speeches. Similarly, more than 800,000 tons of palm oil worth US\$ 826 million was imported into the country in the same fiscal year. We had to spend almost US\$ three billion on fuel and edible oil. The main point is that I would like to make a request to save fuel oil as much as possible. Especially, I believe that it is more beneficial to use public transport like trains, buses and circular rail when travelling. Therefore, railway lines have been reopened as much as we can. Despite sabotages, we are trying to do it because it is beneficial for the country. Therefore, I would like to request the public to encourage travelling by bus and train. Similarly in connection with edible oil, oil crops are grown

in Myanmar including peanuts, sesame, niger flower, sunflower, soya bean and oil palm. According to the statistics reported by the Ministry of Commerce, 66,000 tonnes of edible oil was produced by milling the oil crops after setting aside some for other forms of consumption during the previous year. It suggests that we can produce edible oil at home to some extent. Some of the more than 800,000 tonnes of edible oil we imported were used in industries as some people pointed out. Nevertheless, edible oil consumption is high in Myanmar, according to research. Take a glimpse of curries sold in restaurants. It can be seen that there are many curries cooked in edible oil. In houses, people consume a lot of edible oil. In our traditional eating habits, we consume a lot of tea leaves, boiled yellow peas, toasted dried fish with abundant edible oil. I myself like them. Therefore, the point I would like to make is to use as little edible oil as possible to save edible oil. This will reduce the imports of edible oil for the country. Therefore, I would like to request the public to mainly reduce the use of fuel oil and then to reduce the consumption of edible oil.

Then, I would like to explain a little about the trade of our country. Trade volume in the 2020-2021 budget year stood at US\$ 29,585.149 million including US\$19,832.131 million worth of maritime trade and US\$9,753.081 million worth of border trade. In terms of export and import, we exported US\$14,927.065 million worth of goods and imported US\$14,658.084 million worth of goods, resulting in a trade surplus of US\$268.98 million. During a similar period in the 2019-2020 financial year, Myanmar's trade deficit stood at US\$ 1,638.749 million. Therefore, it can be said that we are in a better position in trade this year. We can also see that border trade plays a major role. Important countries in the border trade of Myanmar include China, Thailand, Bangladesh and India. China and Thailand are major countries in border trade. In the border trade with China, the country imposed some restrictions on our exports in accordance with their disease control policies as COVID-19 infection rates in border areas were high and we could not export as much as we had done. However, as the pandemic is under control at present, we are exerting efforts to reopen border trade. I would like to say that border trade will flourish with momentum if we carry out COVID-19 control measures more strictly in townships in border areas. Therefore, I hope, as I pointed out, that we will have a trade surplus during the mini-budget period from October to March if we can reduce the consumption of the two oils to some extent. I have adopted the export-oriented system and have been encouraging manufacturing. We encourage the productivity of our ethnic people. I encourage SMEs. If we do it systematically, our export volume will increase and we will see good results in our trade. This is about trade.

There is another thing I want to urge the people to do. And it is a change in our eating patterns. Traditionally, rice is the staple food of our country. Some eat rice two times a day while some eat three times. Rice is more nutritious. However, eating rice till our stomach is filled cannot guarantee full nutrition in some parts of the body. So we need to reduce eating rice a little bit. If we eat meat, fish and vegetables as necessary, this will facilitate our health. As our country relies on agriculture and livestock breeding, basically, we have enough food. I set aims to ensure abundance in food. First, there must be peace and prosperity. Second, we must have abundant food. This is why the government is helping in vari-

ous ways to increase agricultural and livestock breeding products. For example, our country is blessed with rivers and creeks. The State is putting fingerlings into the rivers by spending millions of kyats. This will be beneficial to those who receive them. Once we change our eating patterns, our socio health will improve significantly. Normally, a person eats rice in about a condensed milk container each for his breakfast and lunch. In the early morning also, a person eats a half. So, there are about two and a half containers of rice. It is the same in the Tatmadaw also. If we reduce about 10%, we will have a lot of benefits, according to research. So, changing our eating patterns will benefit public health. This is my advice. I would like to urge the people to consider this. There are some regions where rice is not sufficient. For this, coordinative efforts are being made with relevant ministries. If the regions and states concerned are to consider this, I want to say that there will be benefits.

Now is the time we the people must be working together to make the country progressive and stable. There is no reason we cannot achieve this aim if all citizens work with love for the country. Politically, we are also facing various criticism and restrictions. As the saying goes by we must worship ourselves, I strongly believe that our self-reliant efforts and cooperation will make our country develop.

Thank you all.

Source: Global New Light of Myanmar Newspaper (2-11-2021)

- **During the nine-month period after the State Administration Council assumed the State's responsibilities with the declaration of a state of emergency due to a political situation.**
 - ♦ **The SAC adopted the five-point roadmap. According to its first point, the Union Election Commission was reorganized and the process of checking the voter lists was already completed. Therefore, the findings will be taken actions as per relevant laws.**
 - ♦ **We set policy "nothing is more important than life" regarding the COVID-19 disease. The government together with people of Myanmar conducted the COVID-19 preventive and control activities. Moreover, the friendly countries such as Thailand, China and India provided to receive easily vaccines and related materials. In consequence, the virus control drive has gained momentum.**
 - ♦ **Of 119 townships have been issued under the Stay-at-Home programme, the order was revoked in 50 townships because of declining the infection rates of COVID-19.**
 - ♦ **A total of 47,869 persons were released on amnesty and court hearings of**

the cases of 4,434 persons were dropped on the special occasions such as Union Day, Fullmoon Day of Thadingyut and Myanmar New Year Day.

- ♦ A total of 33.8 million units of vaccines were purchased from India and China in addition to donations. A total of 13.3 million people have been vaccinated against COVID-19 from 27 January and 31 October.
- ♦ At present, infection of the pandemic declines, all schools were reopened starting from 1 November except for the schools in 46 townships from nine regions and states where the infection rate of the disease is still high.
- ♦ Now, there are 15 million acres of monsoon paddy in Myanmar. Although water at the dams and volume of rainwater are larger this year, these dams need to be filled with water in summer for irrigating the summer paddy.
- ♦ We had to spend almost US\$ three billion on fuel and edible oil imported from abroad, and we need to save fuel oil as much as possible. It is more beneficial to use public transport like trains, buses and circular rail when travelling.
- ♦ Trade volume in the 2020-2021 budget year stood at US\$ 29,585.149 million including US\$19,832.131 million worth of maritime trade and US\$9,753.081 million worth of border trade.
- ♦ People are urged to change in eating patterns and to reduce eating rice a little bit. If we eat meat, fish and vegetables as necessary, this will facilitate our health.
- ♦ The State Administration Council set aims to ensure abundance in food. First, there must be peace and prosperity. Second, we must have abundant food. This is why the government is helping in various ways to increase agricultural and livestock breeding products.
- ♦ As the saying goes by we must worship ourselves, I strongly believe that our self-reliant efforts and cooperation will make our country develop.