

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Sunday, 30 January 2022

Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing opens Youth and Literature Festival to mark Diamond Jubilee Union Day



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing takes the documentary group photo at the launching event of the Youth and Literature Festival to mark Diamond Jubilee Union Day, in Nay Pyi Taw on 29 January 2022.

A ceremony to launch the Youth and Literature Festival to mark Diamond Jubilee Union Day took place at the Wunna Theik-di Stadium in Nay Pyi Taw in line with prevention and con-

rol restrictions of COVID-19 yesterday morning, attended by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

First, Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn, Union Minister for Education Dr Nyunt Pe and Union Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs U Min Thein Zan for-

mally cut the ribbon to open the festival.

The Senior General unveiled the signboard of the festival and presented cash awards to the Kyaukse elephant dance

troupe who participated in the entertainment of the festival. Then, he posed for documentary photos together with attendees to the festival and students.

SEE PAGE-2

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National Objectives of Diamond Jubilee Union Day 2022

- (1) All ethnic nationals to safeguard non-disintegration of the Union, national unity and sovereignty forever
- (2) To perpetually ensure strengthening dynamic Union Spirit which is a genuine patriotic spirit
- (3) To further strive for the perpetual existence of the country through strong and united strength of all ethnic national brethren
- (4) To build the Union based on democracy and federalism in the realization of genuine, disciplined multiparty democracy
- (5) To equalize development of all regions and states while making efforts for the enhancement of health, education and job opportunities of the ethnic nationals

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing opens Youth and Literature Festival to mark Diamond Jubilee Union Day

FROM PAGE-1

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla and party viewed around the booths of Ministry of Information, Ministry of Health, National Archives Department, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Science and Technology, Aerospace Technology, and Ministry of Education, asked further information and attended to the needs.

The Senior General and party viewed drawing of cartoon pictures, painting, installation of



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing unveils the signboard of the festival.



The Senior General and party view around the exhibition booths at the event.



housing parts ad jigsaw of students and presented gifts to the students.

The Senior General, wife

and party enjoyed dance and song entertainment of artistes and students to the accompaniment of the Myanmar Athan

music band. Two students presented the commemorative gifts to mark the festival to the Senior General and wife who returned

gifts and sports equipment for students who participated in the entertainment.

The festival arranges more

than 40 booths which will last from 29 to 31 January. Students may pay visits to the festival.

—MNA

Motto of 75th Anniversary Union Day 2022

*** United strength across Myanmar focuses on Union affairs forever**

Public Notification

THE Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee was reconstituted under the State Administration Council's Order No 366/2021 dated 10.12.2021, and action is being taken effectively against illegal trade under the law.

The following telephone numbers, fax and email address can be reached to safely report information in connection with illegal trade.

Auto telephone number - 067 409 883

Mobile phone - 09 404339969

Fax - 067 409 886

Email address - antiillegaltradeinfo@gmail.com

Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses meeting 2/2022 of State Administration Council

STATE Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing clarified the one-year endeavours of the State Administration Council at the meeting 2/2022 of the Council at the Office of SAC Chairman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

First, the Senior General explained situations of taking State responsibilities by the Tatmadaw for political issues, efforts made after taking the State responsibilities and future plans, security and economic measures before and after the State responsibilities had been taken by the Tatmadaw, destruction of language, religion and Myanmar culture related to the social affairs before and after the Tatmadaw took the State responsibilities, progress of preservation of these measures by the Tatmadaw after taking State responsibilities, implementation of five-point road map and nine objectives of the State Adminis-



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the SAC meeting 2/2022 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

tration Council, efforts to issue citizenship scrutiny cards to all citizens, constant acceleration of preventing COVID-19, efforts to restore perpetual peace in the entire nation, beefing up the agricultural and livestock tasks for

improvement of socio-economic life of the people and State economy, and endeavours for ensuring health and fitness of the entire nation and enhancement of education qualification in detail.

Council members U Thein

Nyunt, Mahn Nyein Maung, U Khin Maung Swe, Jeng Phang Naw Taung, Daw Aye Nu Sein and Dr Banya Aung Moe discussed matters related to the one-year endeavours of the State Administration Council.

The Senior General also explained efforts being made for security, peace and stability of the regions at present, and preparations for holding the forthcoming multiparty democracy general election in all townships. —MNA

Press Release

MYANMAR congratulates Cambodia for assuming the ASEAN Chairmanship 2022. Myanmar, being a member of ASEAN, will be extending full support to Cambodia's Chairmanship of ASEAN and its efforts to deliver the priorities set for 2022.

Myanmar appreciates Prime Minister Hun Sen for paying a working visit to Myanmar from 7 to 8 January 2022. This visit has delivered several positive outcomes particularly on the provision of humanitarian assistance; convening of a meeting among the stakeholders involving special envoy of the ASEAN Chair, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, representatives of AHA Centre, the Myanmar National Task Force to facilitate the provision of Humanitarian Assistance through AHA Centre, the Myanmar Red Cross Society and relevant UN Specialized Agencies; pledging to support the special envoy of the ASEAN Chair and to meet with all parties concerned, including EAOs, taking into account of the prevailing situation in Myanmar. Prime Minister Hun Sen's visit has also paved the way for the special envoy to join the ceasefire talks with and among the EAOs.

Myanmar has also taken note of Prime Minister Hun Sen's dedication to resolving differences in ASEAN through consultations, to maintain the ASEAN solidarity while upholding the ASEAN Charter and for reaching out to stakeholders on the implementation of the five-point consensus.

Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and Prime Minister Hun Sen had a videoconference on 26 January 2022 and discussions were held constructively with regard to Myanmar's continued cooperation with ASEAN.

With regard to the implementation of ASEAN's five-point consensus, Myanmar has taken measures to maintain law and order in the country to protect the livelihood of the people by exercising maximum restraint and minimum use of force and cooperated with the ASEAN Chair on the visit of the special envoy to Myanmar after the ASEAN Leaders' Meeting held on 24 April 2021. Myanmar's constructive engagement with ASEAN continues even in the wake of the Emergency ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting which was held on 15 October 2021. To maintain the momentum, Myanmar has welcomed Cambodia's nomination of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Prak Sokhonn as the next special envoy. Myanmar looks forward to the finalization of his appointment process by all ASEAN Foreign Ministers at an early date. With regard to representation at the ASEAN meetings, Myanmar will continue to stand based on the principles of equality as stipulated in the ASEAN Charter.

With a view to constructively engage with ASEAN, Myanmar, while upholding the principles of the ASEAN Charter, will extend cooperation with the new special envoy to be appointed by the ASEAN Chair.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Dated, 29 January 2022

The government will grant the needs of athletes representing the country for their lives, says Senior General

Athletes have technical skills as well as individual physical strength, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in viewing the skill demonstration of selected Myanmar athletes, who are undergoing training for taking part in the XXXI SEA Games, at the Wunna Theikdi Gymnasium (B) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

First, selected Myanmar athletes under training for taking part in the XXXI SEA Games in groups introduced each sports category, while athletes from Vietnam, Judo, Taekwondo, Sepak Takraw and Myanmar Fitness

technical skills as well as individual physical strength.

Although Myanmar has been encouraging sports for many years, selected Myanmar teams could not have achieved success as expected. It can be reviewed that there are many requirements for not only athletes but the State-level in weakness in securing the victory as expected. Athletes need to strive for winning in sports. Especially, selected athletes representing the country must salute the flags of the first prize-winning team in the competitions. At that time, such a flag must be of Myanmar, and efforts to seek the honour for winning is uplifting the prestige



The Senior General and party watch the skill demonstrations of athletes participating in the XXXI SEA Games.



The selected Myanmar athletes under training for competing in the XXXI SEA Games.



The Senior General views around the sports museum.

Dance troupe performed skill demonstrations of respective sports.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said that sports are an act of bringing honour to the State. It shows off physical and mental skills representing respective countries. Athletes need to have physical strength and skills and utilize good morals and individual talent in competitions. In individual events, athletes need to use their talents to win over the opponent with their advantages seeking the weakness of opponents. Team-wise events depend on applying the sports manoeuvres to secure the victory. Athletes have tech-

of the State. Hence, selected athletes must try their best in taking training for achieving success in the competitions.

Likewise, the Senior General continued to say that athletes need to have good morals and disciplines. They have to take systematic training based on morals and disciplines. If so, victory will be reachable for them. If they set great visions with hardworking, they will have achievements. The Senior General pledged to fulfil the needs of athletes in preparation and competition time. The Senior General said he saw hardworking athletes in the skill demonstrations. Hence, they have to continue further efforts

for making progress. The selected players need to take care of health conditions and other matters. They all have to take care of their sports activities to be free from the infection of COVID-19.

The Senior General presented cash awards to selected Myanmar athletes who are undergoing training to take part in the XXXI SEA Games and cordially greeted them.

The Senior General and party visited the booth of sports activities where they were welcomed by gold medalists Captain Tin Aung (Rtd), Daw Than Than, Daw Mar Mar Min, Daw Nu Nu Yi and Daw Khin Mu Mu.

The Senior General and par-

ty viewed the booth of Myanmar sports activities in the time of the State Administration Council, statues and photos of gold medalists in the Asia and international sports meets at the Myanmar sports archive hall, documentary photos on winning the prizes and medals of victorious Myanmar athletes in the successive eras at the sports museum (sporting spirit hall), and documentary photos of the XXVII SEA Games. Officials conducted them around the booths.

After hearing the reports, the Senior General said the government will fulfil the requirements for the enhancement of the Myanmar sports sector. Standard-

ized stadiums, gymnasiums and swimming pools will be built in regions and states, districts and townships. Sports grounds will be systematically built at universities and basic education schools to organize sports competitions for students. Sports trainers and physical fitness trainers need to be recruited for providing good sports techniques to athletes. The government will grant the needs of athletes representing the country for their lives and left necessary instructions.

Later, the Senior General signed the visitors' book of the booth for Myanmar sports activities. — MNA



Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email aunghthuya@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

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

Carrying out physical and mental improvement of the students

WHILE the government is striving for the development of the country, faculty members and students need to improve the education sector. The government is carrying out physical and mental improvement of the students.

(Excerpt from the speech by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the coordination meeting on the higher-education sector on 18 January 2022.)

MoALI Union Minister gives prizes to Livestock Contest awardees

THE second day of the Livestock Show and Contest 2022 marking the Diamond Jubilee Union Day jointly conducted by the Livestock and Veterinary Department and the Myanmar Livestock Federation was held at Setsetyo Ground near Koeywa Thabyegon Village in Pobbathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area in line with the COVID-19 health rules yesterday.

The event was crowded with students of the Agricultural University, the University of Veterinary Science and State Agricultural Institute, residents and those who are interested in livestock breeding.

At the event, a total of 265 animals, including cattle, sheep,



The award presentation ceremony takes place on the second day of the Livestock Show and Contest 2022.

goats and gayals competed in the contest and 145 booths were

showing the way of making hay using machines, animal feeds,

animal medicines, equipment and value-added products.

The award presentation ceremony took place and was attended by Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Tin Htut Oo, Deputy Minister Dr Aung Gyi, officials of the Myanmar Livestock Federation and cattle farmers.

The Union minister and officials gave awards to the winners in the ceremony.

At noon, the Union minister presided over a talk regarding the livestock sector.

He first delivered an opening speech and experts from respective sectors coordinated the discussion.

The third day of the Livestock Fair (2022) will continue today. — MNA

172 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 29 January, total figure rises to 535,080

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 535,080 after 172 new cases were reported on 29 January 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 513,101 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll still stands at 19,310 without casualties for six consecutive days. — MNA

Motto of 75th Anniversary Union Day 2022

*** Let's strive for forging unity of the State through Union Spirit!**

Daily imports of COVID-19 equipment operated as planned

THE Ministry of Commerce is overseeing the importation of essential medical supplies plus anti-COVID devices that are critical to the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities, through trading posts, international airports and seaports.

A total of 12 tonnes of gloves were imported via the Chinshwehaw trade zone yesterday.

Between 1 and 29 January, a total of 20 tonnes of liquid oxygen, 846 home oxygen concentrators, 43 tonnes of gloves and 75 tonnes of masks were imported by seven companies using 14 vehicles.

One oxygen bowser arrived in Yangon from the Myawady trade zone.

Officials from relevant departments are cooperating to facilitate and expedite the standard operating procedures, including online registration for the import process. It is reported that the Ministry of Commerce is coordinating with relevant departments and treatment of COVID-19 as well as contact persons for inquires can be reached through the Ministry's Website — www.commerce.gov.mm. — MNA

Tradenet 2.0 system training No 1/2022 launched for traders

THE Tradenet 2.0 system training No 1/2022 was launched for traders through a virtual system in the meeting hall of the Department of Trade under the Ministry of Commerce yesterday at 10 am.

At the opening ceremony of the training, Director-General U Myint Thura of the Department of Trade said that export/

import registration certificates, licences and other related cards are being issued online using the Tradenet 2.0 system. The purpose of this training is to enable traders to use the Tradenet 2.0 system easily and rapidly. The trainers from relevant departments of the Department of Trade will lecture on the following subjects:

Tradenet brief, policy of related cards, application and authorization system of related cards, the policy of export/import licence permits, application and permit system of export/import licences and e-commerce pay.

The training period is only two days and was attended by 346 trainees. — MNA



Illegal teak, utensils, vehicles seized this week



Seized vehicles at Kawkareik (Tadakyoe).

Similarly, Kawkareik Township Police conducted a search operation in the area under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force on 27 January.

Illegal consumer goods and foodstuffs on six vehicles (estimated value of K17,168,400) and six vehicles carrying such items (estimated value of K90,000,000): a total of K107,168,400 was seized and handed over to the Kawkareik (Tadakyoe) Joint Inspection Station, where the action is taken under the Customs Law.

Managed by the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force, the Bago

Township Customs Department conducted a surprise inspection between DaikU and Nyaungkhashay on 27 January.

Consumer goods and machinery (estimated value of K5,120,000) were seized from two passenger vehicles.

According to the report, the inspection was carried out by joint teams led by the Forest Department on 28 and 29 January.

A total of 27.983 tonnes of illegal timbers (estimated value of K3,396,320) was seized and a total of K8,516,320 (estimated value) of illegal goods have been

confiscated.

On 28 January, the airport (warehouse) customs team made an inspection at Yangon International Airport.

A total of 216 packs of unapproved health supplements (estimated value of K1,152,144,000) was seized and action is taken under the Customs Law.

Thus, a total of 25 arrests (estimated value of K1,276,600,792) were made from 26 to 29 January, stated the Steering Committee on Combatting Illegal Trade. — MNA

UNDER the supervision of the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee, effective action is being taken to prevent illegal trade under the law.

With the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force, a joint team led by the Department of Forestry conducted a joint inspection and seized 20,296 tonnes of illegal timbers (estimated value of K142,072) in Taungup Township, Rakhine State on 26 January and action is being taken under the Forest Law.

A joint inspection team led by the Customs Department con-

ducted inspections at the Mayanchaung Permanent Checkpoint on 27 January.

Illegal consumer goods (estimated value of K4,000,000) mixed with the luggage of a delivery van departing from Myawady to Yangon;

On 28 January, a single passenger vehicle departing from Mawlamyine to Yangon was found to be carrying undocumented engine oil and various agricultural pesticides (estimated at K4,630,000): a total value of K8,630,000 was seized.

Action is taken under the Customs Law.



Confiscated consumer goods at Mayan Chaung.



Police seize K1.5 billion worth of drugs in Nawngkhio Township

K1.5 billion worth of stimulant tablets were seized in Nawngkhio Township on 17 January, according to police.

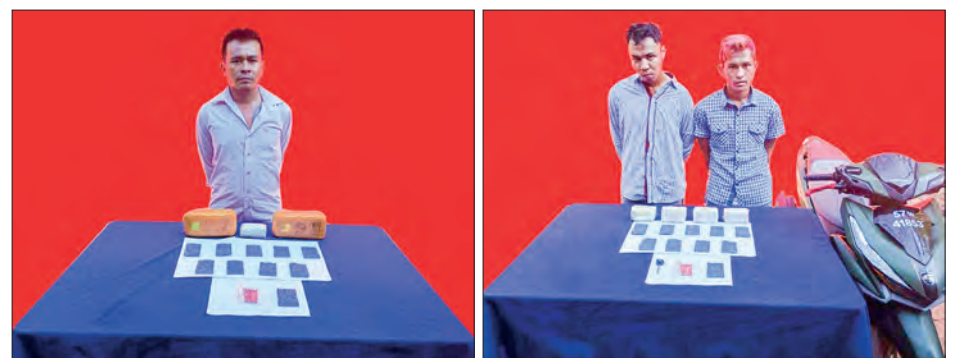
On that day, police found three million stimulants tablets worth K1.5 billion from Voxy car driven by Sai Aung Tun, Sai Lut and Sai Sar Lu,

heading to Mandalay from Mongshu Township of Shan State (South), near Oriental Tollgate at the entrance to Nawngkhio Township of Shan State (North). The three suspects were charged under the law. — MNA



Three arrestees are seen together with seized drugs and car.

Stimulant tablets seized in Myeik, Mongyaung



Three are arrested along with stimulants.

A joint team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force stopped and searched a motorcycle driven by Than Htike on the Tat Oo Kyaung Road, Myeik Taung Village, Myeik Taung Village-Tract in Myeik Township at 11:30 am on 28 January and a total

of 10,000 tablets of ecstasy was captured.

Similarly, a search of Nyi Nyi Win (b) Nyi Nyi's house in Kangyi Ward, Myeik Township turned up 24,000 ecstasy tablets.

At 7:30 am on the same day, a joint team consisting of members of the An-

ti-Drug Police Force made inspections in Mongyaung. A search of Ma Ei Hong Nun's house in Ward 8 resulted in the seizure of 2,050 ecstasy tablets. They are being prosecuted under the Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, stated the Police Force. — MNA

Schoolchildren and youths all together take part in the Youth and Literature Festival to mark Diamond Jubilee Union Day



Lend a helping hand to leprosy patients

THE World Leprosy Day designated by French journalist-cum-humanitarian Raoul Follereau started in 1954. The day is commemorated on the last Sunday of January every year. World Leprosy Day falls on 30th January this year. The day aims to support the patients suffering from leprosy to receive treatment and to raise awareness of leprosy disease to the people. Whenever World Leprosy Day falls, every country holds community-based awareness of the disease, counselling and giving treatment to such patients free of charge.

If anyone faces leprosy patients, they should comfort the patients and give a helping hand to them. The souls of patients must be encouraged with active and brave stories. It is because everybody is trying to overcome various challenges even though they themselves are not patients.

If the patients take the proper treatment in its initial stage, it can prevent the disabilities of body organs. According to the best therapy of the WHO, MDT drugs can stop the infection of leprosy to others who closely live together with the patient. If anyone faces leprosy patients, they should comfort the patients and give a helping hand to them. The souls of patients must be encouraged with active and brave stories. It is because everybody is trying to overcome various challenges even though they themselves are not patients. Truly, nobody can suffer from the impacts of any disease and leprosy as well. Likewise, nobody does become the victim of disease without committing anything. To do so, all people need to emphasize a healthy lifestyle. Even if they face infection of any diseases, it is sure that they would overcome it.

World Leprosy Day was marked on the day when Mahatma Gandhi, the paramount leader of India, died in the assassination on 30 January 1948. Global countries aim to realize the theme of World Leprosy Day 2022, as 'United for Dignity'.

The campaign honours the individuals who have experienced leprosy by sharing their empowering stories and advocating for mental wellbeing and the right to a dignified life free from disease-related stigma. The World Health Organization stated that a total of 101,000 new patients are found across the world every second.

Leprosy is an infectious chronic disease that targets the nervous system, especially the nerves in the cooler parts of the body: the hands, feet, and face. The initial symptoms of leprosy are not noticeable. If the patients do not receive the proper treatment, they will face subsequences of the disease such as damage of the body organs, blindness and situation to cut the limbs. As such, the patients will be disabling in their lives.

Global forum focuses on easing trade during and after COVID-19

UNCTAD brings together stakeholders to examine how measures to facilitate cross-border trade can contribute to a strong and inclusive recovery from the pandemic.

COUNTRIES are at a turning point amid the COVID-19 crisis, and the decisions their policymakers make to ease trade will go a long way in determining the strength of their recovery from the pandemic.

UNCTAD's global forum for national trade facilitation committees (NTFCs) to be held online from 1 to 4 February will examine how to accelerate the implementation of trade facilitation reforms through these committees during and after the pandemic. To participate in the forum, register here.

Trade facilitation entails expediting the clearance of goods to reduce the time and cost of import, export and transit procedures to ensure the free flow of goods across borders.

"COVID-19 has been a stark reminder that the pains caused by trade disruptions are real. These pains were already daily realities for people in vulnerable nations, who rely on trade for essential goods," said UNCTAD Secretary-General Rebeca Grynspan.

"Making it easier and less costly to move goods across seas and borders is critical to ensuring a sustainable and inclusive recovery. Because trade is about people and about improving their lives," Ms Grynspan said.

The forum offers an opportunity to members of NTFCs, policymakers and other relevant stakeholders to discuss the latest trends in the implementation of trade facilitation reforms and share insights on good practices.



Containers are loaded onto a China-Vietnam freight train at Nanning International Railway Port in Nanning, capital of south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, 21 April 2021. PHOTO: CHINA RAILWAY NANNING GROUP CO., LTD. / HANDOUT VIA XINHUA

Drivers of change in COVID-19 recovery

NTFCs are drivers of change in COVID-19 recovery efforts. They are multi-stakeholder coordination bodies established in most countries as public-private-partnerships to advance trade facilitation and logistics policy reforms.

They play a key role in assisting global supply and value chains to be efficient and identifying best trade measures in times of emergencies such as the pandemic.

Although NTFCs existed in many countries prior to 2017, the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) of the World Trade Organi-

zation (WTO), made them mandatory, recognizing the importance of close coordination between government entities and the business community to facilitate cross-border trade.

The forum's discussions will offer participants evidence on how planning, organization, automation and digitalization of NTFCs' work can assist in advancing and accelerating trade facilitation reforms.

Supporting progress on trade facilitation reforms

Forum participants will examine the progress made in the

FCs, which are often in need of additional skills and knowledge to build a common understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

It also hosts a reform tracker platform that has empowered 19 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America to better track, monitor and manage their trade facilitation initiatives.

UNCTAD also maintains an NTFCs knowledge database that enables countries to explore and compare NTFCs' profiles among each other and across regions and levels of development.

UNCTAD's trade information portals programme assists countries in providing a platform for transparent rules and procedures for cross-border trade and simplifying them.

And the organization's largest technical assistance programme, ASYCUDA, has over the past 40 years helped customs offices around the world accelerate the clearance of goods and increase the pace of trade.

Tangible solutions to ease trade

Among other issues, the forum will examine tangible solutions and approaches to empower NTFCs as coordinators of trade facilitation reforms and how they can mainstream digital tools.

These tools are becoming a must for NTFCs, especially in the context of the movement restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. They ensure that NTFCs can effectively coordinate

their trade facilitation activities without disruption. The tools can also help solve many recurrent challenges facing NTFCs, such as the rotation of members and the lack of accountability, making the committees more results oriented.

Participants will also discuss NTFCs' role in promoting gender equality in trade facilitation policies, as women traders often face gender-based barriers, such as legal discrimination and verbal, physical and sexual violence at borders. The forum will offer countries a unique opportunity to learn more about the trade facilitation programmes offered by UNCTAD and its partners. Participants will also have the chance to interact online with donors, regional and international organizations.

Global trade facilitation report

The event will feature the launch of the Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation Global Report 2021, jointly prepared by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and other UN regional commissions.

The report provides insights on the implementation of trade facilitation measures in 144 economies. It notes that countries across the globe have accelerated progress on digitalizing international trade formalities during the COVID-19 pandemic, with the Asia-Pacific region leading other developing regions in the implementation of paperless trade measures.

SOURCE: UN

Myanmar's ghostly monkey among new species found in Mekong region



The Popa langur was identified based on genetic matching of recently gathered bones with specimens from Britain's Natural History Museum collected more than a century ago. PHOTO: HANDOUT PHOTO VIA WWF/AFP

A MONKEY with ghostly white circles around its eyes is among the 224 new species listed in the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF) latest update on the greater Mekong region.

The conservation group's report highlights the need to protect the rich biodiversity and habitats in the region, which includes Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Myanmar.

The species listed were found in 2020, but last year's report was delayed.

Popa langur

The monkey is called the Popa langur, for it lives on the steep hillsides of the extinct Mt Popa volcano in Myanmar. It was the only new mammal that has been discovered.

Images of the Popa langur monkey, which takes its name from the extinct volcano Mount Popa in central Myanmar, were caught by camera traps.

The mountain is still home to the largest population of the reclusive simian, around 100 individuals, WWF said.

Only around 200 to 250 of the monkeys -- which are threatened by hunting, logging and loss of habitat -- are thought to survive in total.

Scientists discovered more than 200 new species across the greater Mekong region in 2020, according to a WWF report, despite the threats posed by climate change and human activities such as logging.

New species

The finds include a new primate, a colourless cavefish and

an iridescent snake with an unusual non-overlapping pattern of scales.

In all, 224 new species of plants and vertebrate animals were found in the region -- which includes Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam -- WWF said in its "New Species Discoveries" report.

In Vietnam, researchers found the vivid-coloured Mount Ky Quan San horned frog at an altitude of more than 2,000 metres (6,500 feet) on the peak which gives it its name. — AFP



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 29 January 2022)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over the South Bay of Bengal and a few cloud over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 30 January 2022: Weather will be partly cloudy in Upper Sagaing, Yangon, and Taninthayi regions and Kachin, Kayin and Mon states and generally fair in the remaining regions and states.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Decrease of night temperatures in Nay Pyi Taw, Upper Sagaing, Mandalay, Bago, and Yangon regions and Kachin, Shan, Chin and Kayah states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30 January 2022: Generally fair weather.

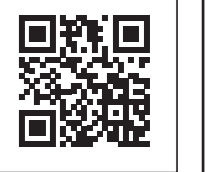
FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30 January 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 30 January 2022: Generally fair weather.

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01 860 4530

Mingala Yankin affordable rental housing programme to kick off in June

MINGALA Yankin affordable rental housing scheme developed in Shintawgon village in Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Region has completed 80 per cent and the apartment units will be rented out in June 2022, according to the Mandalay Region Department of Urban and Housing Development.

This affordable rental housing scheme is aimed to provide accommodation to low-income people, retirees and government personnel. A stake-driving ceremony for the construction of this housing was held on 28 August 2020, with estimated spending of K41.6 billion. The construction is slated to be finished in June 2022. The construction work is 80 per cent complete, said U Thet Naing, director of the Mandalay Region Department of Urban and



This affordable rental housing scheme is aimed to provide accommodation to low-income people, retirees and government personnel. A stake-driving ceremony for the construction of this housing was held on 28 August 2020, with estimated spending of K41.6 billion.

Housing Development.

“The eligibility will be determined by the annual gross

income of the applicants. It is a five-year lease with a five-year renewal option. The head

of the household has to renew the lease. A person with disabilities or the elder can also pro-

cess with the recommendation of the housing committee. The department is making efforts to accomplish this project as soon as possible,” he elaborated.

The housing scheme includes 91 five-storey buildings with 1,456 units. The monthly rent for the 666-square foot apartment is K40,000-50,000 depending on the floor. A matter concerning the housing policy and setting rental rate is submitted to the housing committee and the regional government.

The affordable rental housing projects are undertaken with 194 buildings (3,104 units) in Yangon Region, 28 buildings (448 units) in Nay Pyi Taw and 91 buildings (1,456 units) in Mandalay, respectively. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)/GNLM

Myanmar targets to export 100,000 tonnes of sugar to Viet Nam this sugarcane season

MYANMAR targeted to export about 100,000 tonnes of sugar to Viet Nam in this sugarcane harvest season, said U Win Htay, vice-chair of the Myanmar Sugar and Cane-Related Products Association.

“This year, we will convey the sugar as it was contracted with Viet Nam. Now, we have already started shipping. It will be around 100,000 tonnes of sugar to Viet Nam through sea route,” he added.

Last year, about 160,000 tonnes of sugar was exported to Viet Nam during the sugarcane harvest season. But this year, Myanmar can convey only about 100,000 tonnes of sugarcane due to less domestic sugarcane production and mounting of sugarcane price, according to the Myanmar Sugar and Cane Related Products Association.

Last year, the price of sugarcane was only K42,000-K43,000 per tonne. Consequently, the sugarcane growers are facing losses. Due to high cultivating costs and lack of good price last year, the growers have reduced their sugarcane plantation this year. This year, the sugar fetches around K50,000 per tonne. Sugarcane covered 450,000 acres in the country last year. But this year, there are only 430,000 acres of sugarcane plantation, according to the association. — Ko Naing/GNLM



A female farm worker is seen cutting the sugar cane.

Public rental housing project phase 1 to complete in June

THE first phase of over 5,000 units of the rental housing project, under implementation in Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay will complete in next June, according to the Myanmar Construction Entrepreneurs Federation (MCEF).

Under the economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the 10,000-unit public rental housing project is being implemented to provide job opportunities and livelihoods to low-income people through the construction sector.

There will be a total of 5,008 units, including 448 units of 28 buildings in Dekkhinathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw; 3,104 units of 194 buildings in Dagon Myothit (South) Township, Yangon and 1,456 units of 91 buildings in Patheingyi Township, Mandalay Region.

“Currently, about 80 per cent of the phase 1 construction project has been completed in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay region. The whole project will

be finished by March. Similarly, the Yangon project will also be constructed about 35 per cent by March,” said U Myo Myint, general secretary of the MCEF.

“Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw project is almost completed. Some parts of the project will be done before this budget year. The construction of 40 or 50 buildings in Yangon will be completed by March. The infrastructure projects have yet to be done 100 per cent. About 91 buildings in the Mandalay project will be completed by March. Under the contract, the entire project will be rescheduled to finish in June 2022,” he added.

The public rental housing project is developed by the Urban and Housing Development Department, the Ministry of Construction and three private construction entrepreneur associations — MCEF, Myanmar Licensed Contractors Association (MLCA) and Myanmar Developer Association (MDA). — Ko Naing (Bago)/GNLM

Dollar exchange rate hits around K2,000 despite CBM control to maintain stability

DESPITE the Central Bank of Myanmar keeping selling the US dollar to control the sudden fluctuation of foreign exchange rates, Myanmar's foreign exchange hits around K2,000 per dollar in the outside foreign exchange market.

The CBM sold a total of

\$65 million at an auction rate including \$15 million each on 7, 12 and 20 January and \$10 million on 13 and 14 January.

The CBM is selling the foreign currency at its auction-rate through banks to the prioritized sectors especially fuel oil, edible oil and phar-

maceutical sectors where the dollars are vastly in need.

Although the exchange rate on the US dollar hit around K1,330 per dollar the last January, the dollar value reached the highest of over K3,000 last September-end.

Last year, the CBM sold

\$443.8 million to the sectors especially the oil, fuel and pharmaceutical sectors that need US dollars through the banks.

Besides, the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) issued the instruction on 9 November that the foreign exchange transitions must be carried out

within ± 0.5 per cent of the reference rate established by the CBM. The CBM's reference rate was K1,778 per dollar on 28 January, but the outside foreign exchange market rate hit around K1,970 per dollar. — NN/GNLM

EU chief rebuked for keeping secret texts with Pfizer CEO

AN official EU watchdog on Friday slammed European Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen for keeping secret text messages with Pfizer's CEO about purchasing Covid vaccine doses, saying it "constituted maladministration".

The EU ombudsman, Emily O'Reilly, issued a formal recommendation telling von der Leyen's office to search for and hand over the texts under a freedom of information request lodged by a journalist.

Von der Leyen's Commission spearheaded the pre-purchase of Covid vaccines for the 27 EU countries.

More than half the 4.2 billion doses the commission has bought or optioned are sourced from BioNTech-Pfizer, making it by far the biggest supplier to the bloc's inoculation efforts.

The commission refuses to divulge key aspects of its contracts with Covid vaccine suppliers, notably on pricing, citing commercial confidentiality.

Von der Leyen's active public



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen (2nd R) speaks with Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla (2nd L), Belgium's Prime Minister Alexander De Croo (L) and German scientist, CMO and co-founder of BioNTech Ozlem Tureci (R) during a visit of the factory of US pharmaceutical company Pfizer, in Puurs, on 23 April 2021. PHOTO: AFP/POOL

role in ensuring vaccine access included one-on-one conversations with Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla, a dual Greek-American.

Her commission rebuffed a freedom-of-information request last year for the text messages, refusing to say whether the texts existed -- even though von der

Leyen had referred to them herself in a media interview.

It argued to the ombudsman's service that it was only obligated to hand over archived documents and that text messages or other forms of instant messages did not qualify, being "short-lived" and unlikely to "con-

tain in principle important information" on its policies, activities or decisions.

The ombudsman strongly disagreed, saying in her recommendation "it is clear that text messages fall within the scope of the EU's law on public access to documents" and that EU case-law upholds the duty by EU institutions to retain documentation related to its activities.

"The case concerns whether, if the messages concern the commission's work and if it holds them, the commission should have granted public access to them. How the commission dealt with this matter did not allow those questions to be answered. The ombudsman considers that this constituted maladministration," it said. The ombudsman said the commission should ask von der Leyen's office to again look for the texts, and if it found them, "the Commission should assess whether public access can be granted to them" in line with EU rules.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hong Kong outbreak exposes flaws in 21-day quarantine policy

HONG KONG'S U-turn on its mandatory three-week quarantine for arrivals follows growing scrutiny of the strict policy after a coronavirus outbreak was traced to a woman infected during her hotel stay.

Like mainland China, Hong Kong is one of the few places left in the world still pursuing a zero-Covid strategy that has largely kept the virus at bay but left the finance hub internationally isolated. On Thursday, city leader Carrie Lam announced the 21-day quarantine period that most arrivals faced -- among the world's longest -- would be cut to two weeks because the increasingly dominant Omicron variant has a shorter incubation period.

The surprise move came after multiple recent outbreaks forced the reimposition of economically painful social-distancing measures and saw thousands of residents in one district confined to their homes.—AFP ■

Germany's COVID-19 figures not as high as predicted despite Omicron wave

GERMANY has kept control over the pandemic situation despite the Omicron wave, Minister of Health Karl Lauterbach said at a joint press conference with the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) for infectious diseases on Friday.

"We had expected high case numbers," said Lauterbach, stressing that the current numbers are below those predicted by the RKI.

However, Germany's seven-day COVID-19 incidence rate has continued to surge, hitting a new record of 1,073 infections per 100,000 inhabitants on Friday. The previous day, the number had stood at 1,017.4, RKI reported. On Friday, 190,148 new cases had been registered in the previous 24 hours, around 50,000 more than a week ago. The day before, two years after the first case of COVID-19 was discovered in Germany, daily infections hit 200,000 for the first time.—Xinhua ■



Coronavirus controls in Beijing have been ramped up ahead of the February Winter Olympics. PHOTO: AFP

China beefs up COVID-19 alert at community level during Chinese New Year holiday

CHINA has asked its community medical institutions to improve their ability of early identification of COVID-19 cases as the country is seeing more cross-regional trips during the coming Spring Festival holiday.

Warning against the grave and complex situation in the fight against COVID-19 at present, the National Health Commission said in a circular that the country is facing heightened pressure in epidemic response that comes with the festival travel rush.

Local authorities are urged to guide primary health centres

in both urban and rural areas to strengthen the management of fever clinics, report suspicious cases as soon as possible, and take measures to prevent transmission within hospitals.

Spring Festival, or Chinese New Year, falls on 1 February this year. This year's Spring Festival travel season began on 17 January and will continue until 25 February, with the number of passenger trips expected to reach 1.18 billion, up 35.6 per cent year on year, official data shows.—Xinhua ■

African countries conduct over 94 mln COVID-19 tests: Africa CDC

SOME 53 African countries have conducted 94,293,113 COVID-19 tests so far, the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) said in the latest weekly briefing held Thursday.

The Africa CDC, the specialized healthcare agency of the African Union, said 1,405,112 new tests were reported during the past one week.

This is a five per cent decrease from the previous week when 1,484,901 tests were reported.

"The cumulative positivity rate is 11.3 per cent and the test per case ratio is nine per cent," according to the agency.

Five countries, namely South Africa, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Ethiopia account for about 60 per cent of all COVID-19 cases reported in Africa.

As of Thursday morning, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Africa had reached 10,639,436 with 237,524 deaths and 9,565,937 recoveries, according to the agency.

In terms of the caseload, southern Africa is the most affected region, followed by the northern and eastern parts of the continent, while central Africa is the least affected region in the continent, according to the Africa CDC.—Xinhua ■



Some 53 African countries have conducted 94,293,113 COVID-19 tests so far, the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) said in the latest weekly briefing held Thursday. PHOTO: WHO

Germany's exports to UK continue to decline in 2021: Destatis

ONE year after the United Kingdom's (UK) withdrawal from the European Union (EU), Germany's exports to the UK decreased by 2.5 per cent year-on-year to 65.4 billion euros (72.8 billion US dollars) in 2021, the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis) said on Friday.

In 2020, the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, Germany's exports to the UK had already plummeted by 15.3 per cent.

After the UK ceased to be

part of the EU's single market, the two sides concluded a comprehensive trade and cooperation agreement, which entered into force on 1 January 2021.

In 2021, the UK fell from fifth to eighth place in terms of exports and from 11th to 13th place in terms of imports in the ranking of Germany's most important trading partners Destatis said.

"Brexit has had an unfavourable impact on trade be-

tween the EU and the United Kingdom," the German ifo Institute said on Friday.

Although the trade and cooperation agreement did manage to avoid higher tariffs, barriers such as inspection certificates as well as other documents and requirements "make the border crossing more time-consuming and complicated, resulting in higher trade costs," the ifo Institute said. (1 euro = 1.12 US dollar)—Xinhua ■



The Port of Hamburg is a seaport on the river Elbe in Hamburg, Germany, 110 kilometres (68 miles) from its mouth on the North Sea. **PHOTO: ISTOCK/XINHUA**

Xinjiang to open first plateau airport

NORTHWEST China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region will soon open its first plateau airport after an airplane landed successfully at the airport on Friday afternoon.

Standing at over 1,700 metres above sea level, the Zhaosu Tianma Airport is located in Zhaosu County, Kazak Autonomous Prefecture of Ili. With an investment of 640 million yuan (about 100.7 million US dollars), the construction of the 170-hectare airport began in September 2019.

The passenger throughput of the domestic civil regional airport is designed to reach 200,000, while cargo and mail throughput to 600 tonnes by 2025, according to the airport.

"The opening of Zhaosu Tianma Airport will greatly improve the transportation conditions of more than 400,000 residents in Zhaosu County and the surrounding counties. It is expected to promote the development of the local

tourism industry and improve the investment environment," said Dalelybek Kanjakhon, a prefecture official.

Zhaosu Tianma Airport will become the 23rd civil airport in the region.

Neighboring Kazakhstan, Zhaosu is known as the hometown of one of the country's

best horse breeds. The county has been promoting equine tourism in recent years. An international horse tourism festival is held in Zhaosu each summer, where Chinese and foreign visitors can enjoy breathtaking views of galloping horses and equestrian performances.—Xinhua ■



An airplane lands at Zhaosu Tianma Airport in Zhaosu County, Kazak Autonomous Prefecture of Ili, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, 28 Jan 2022. The plateau airport will be put into operation soon. **PHOTO: LI WENWU/XINHUA**



US President Joe Biden and Pittsburgh Mayor Ed Gainey visit the scene of the Forbes Avenue Bridge collapse. **PHOTO: AFP**

At collapsed bridge, Biden envisions rebuilding America

A bridge collapse Friday in Pittsburgh provided a symbolic backdrop for President Joe Biden's trip to the city to tout his \$1 trillion infrastructure plan — and try rebuilding his own crumbling approval ratings.

Arriving in the gritty city in Pennsylvania — a key battleground state in presidential elections — Biden motorcaded straight from Air Force One to the road bridge, which hours earlier had buckled into a snowy ravine.

"There are literally more bridges in Pittsburgh than in any other city in the world," the Democrat pronounced. "And we're going to fix them all. Not a joke — this is going to be a gigantic change. There's 43,000 nationwide and we're sending the money."

Pittsburgh's public safety authorities tweeted that three people were hospitalized with injuries that were not life threatening. But Biden's visit threw the otherwise minor accident into the national spotlight.

In a speech later, Biden said rebuilding infrastructure, while completing a painful shift from old-school, heavy industry to high-tech jobs, would restore American economic leadership in an increasingly competitive world.

"Right here in Pittsburgh, the future is being built on the foundation of the city's storied past," he said at a once massive steel mill, which now houses Carnegie Mellon University's Manufacturing Futures Institute — a hub for research and development.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hong Kong economy grew by 6.4 per cent in 2021: govt

Hong Kong's economy grew by 6.4 per cent in 2021 but the city warned that anti-Covid measures in response to the latest outbreak may stifle further recovery, a government spokesperson said on Friday.

The rise marks Hong Kong's first annual growth of gross domestic product after two years of recession, with the city roiled by democracy protests in 2019 and the coronavirus pandemic the year after.

GDP rose by 4.8 per cent in the last quarter of 2021 compared to the previous year, capping off a year where Hong Kong's economy saw an overall rebound.

"The Hong Kong economy recovered further in the fourth quarter of 2021 thanks to robust export performance and improved private consumption," a government spokesperson said in a statement on preliminary GDP estimates. Besides a double-digit jump in exports, Hong Kong also saw a spike in private consumption spending, an improved labour market and a government stimulus programme. Like mainland China, Hong Kong adheres to a "zero-Covid" policy with strict anti-epidemic measures, which kept the city largely virus-free last year at the cost of deepening international isolation.—AFP ■

China Unicom says no 'justifiable grounds' for US ban

CHINA Unicom said Friday there were no "justifiable grounds" for a US order that banned the company from operating in the country on national security concerns.

The decision by the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on Thursday was the latest broadside in a standoff that has seen Beijing and Washington clash over trade, technology, human rights and other issues.

The United States has previously cited national security fears to restrict the operations of China's big three state-owned mobile carriers as well as tech giant Huawei, which claims to be a private company. State-owned China Telecom and China Mobile are already barred from doing business in the United States, while Huawei is labouring under sanctions that have crippled its smartphone business. China Unicom said in a statement to AFP that the FCC's decision was "without any justifiable grounds



Photo taken on 20 November 2021 shows the venue of China 5G+ Industrial Internet Conference in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province. PHOTO: WU ZHIZUN/XINHUA

and without affording required due process". Its US subsidiary "has a good record of complying with relevant US laws and regulations and providing telecommunication services and solutions as a

reliable partner of its customers in the past two decades", the company added. The firm said it would "act proactively to protect the rights and interests of the company and its customers". —AFP ■

Google to invest \$1 bn in India's number two mobile operator

GOOGLE will invest up to \$1 billion in India's second-largest mobile operator, Airtel, the companies said Friday, as the Android-maker looks to bolster its presence in the vast nation's booming telecoms market.

The global tech giant will buy a \$700 million stake in billionaire Sunil Mittal's Bharti Airtel, giving it 1.28 per cent ownership, the firms said in a joint statement.

Up to \$300 million more will be invested in "mutually agreeable" commercial projects over the next five years, including exploring opportunities to "bring down the barriers of owning a smartphone" in the price-conscious market. "We are proud to partner on a shared vision

for expanding connectivity and ensuring equitable access to the internet for more Indians," Sundar Pichai, the Indian-born chief executive of Google parent Alphabet said in a statement.

Google already holds a 7.7-per-cent stake in Indian market leader Reliance Jio, owned by Asia's richest man, Mukesh Ambani, following a \$4.5-billion investment in 2020.

The two companies collaborated on a 4G-enabled, low-cost smartphone that launched in November last year. Jio has been locked in fierce competition with Airtel and British telecoms giant Vodafone's local unit Vi since it kicked off a price war in 2016 by offering dirt-cheap internet and free calls. —AFP ■

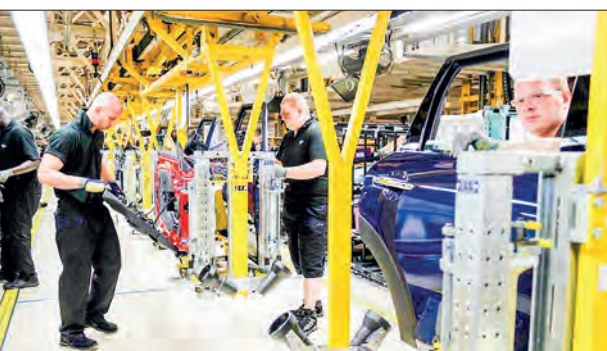
UK car production falls to lowest level since 1956 due to COVID-19

CAR production in the UK has been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, falling by 6.7 per cent to 859,575 units in 2021, the worst total since 1956, an industry report said Thursday.

"The shortage of semiconductors, a critical component in modern car manufacturing, was the principal cause of the decline, with factories having to reduce or even pause production while awaiting parts whose supply has been heavily constrained by the global pandemic," said the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT),

the trade association for the British motor industry, in the report.

Manufacturers also struggled with staff shortages arising from



2021 was another incredibly difficult year for UK car manufacturing, one of the worst since the Second World War which lays bare the exposure of the sector to structural and, especially, COVID-related impacts. A production line at the Mini series car assembly plant in Cowley, near Oxford, England. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

the need to self-isolate and depressed demand with car showrooms closed for months due to lockdowns and despite the success of "click and

collect" services, the SMMT added.

Other non pandemic-related issues also contributed to the decline, it said, "most notably the closure of a major UK car plant in July, which accounted for around a quarter of the annual decline".

"2021 was another incredibly difficult year for UK car manufacturing, one of the worst since the Second World War which lays bare the exposure of the sector to structural and, especially, COVID-related impacts," said SMMT Chief Executive Mike Hawes. —Xinhua ■

US inflation slowed in December, spending fell: govt

IN the final month of 2021, Americans dialled back their spending even as incomes rose thanks to wage increases, while inflation showed signs of moderating, government data released Friday said.

The Commerce Department's personal

consumption expenditures (PCE) report for December was largely in line with analysts' expectations, but nonetheless closely watched as it contains the Federal Reserve's preferred gauge of price increases.

The central bank ear-

lier this week had strongly signalled they will raise interest rates in March -- for the first time since Covid-19 broke out -- to fight inflation, and separate PCE data released Thursday showed prices rising 3.9 per cent last year, above the Fed's two-

per cent target.

The report released Friday said that compared to November, PCE prices rose 0.4 per cent, in line with analysts' expectations and less than the month-on-month growth in the prior two months. —AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V FILOTIMO VOY.NO. (203N)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V FILOTIMO VOY.NO. (203N) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 30-1-2022 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MIP where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanmar Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

The Global New Light of Myanmar

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NEWS
IN BRIEF

Japan to recommend Sado mine as UNESCO world heritage: Kishida

JAPAN will recommend a gold and silver mine site on Sado Island for the 2023 UNESCO World Heritage list, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Friday, defying opposition from South Korea due to what it sees as the site of forced Korean labour during World War II.

The decision marks a reversal of the government's initial plan to forgo making a recommendation this year. Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and other conservative ruling party lawmakers had stepped up calls for the government to register the site in Niigata Prefecture.

"It's a wonderful cultural heritage site," Kishida told reporters, adding that making a recommendation this year will be more "effective" than later. The Cabinet is expected to make a formal decision on Tuesday.—Kyodo ■

Six rockets target Baghdad airport, damaging plane: sources

SIX rockets were fired Friday at the Iraqi capital's airport, causing damage but no casualties, security sources said, the latest in a string of attacks the US blames on Iran-linked militias.

The rockets hit Baghdad International Airport's runways or parking areas, one of the sources said.

"One civilian plane has been hit and damaged," this source, based at the interior ministry, said.

A second security source confirmed the attack consisted of six rockets that fell around civil installations at the airport, damaging a stationary plane.

A third source identified the plane as a Boeing 767 belonging to the state-owned Iraqi Airways, noting that it was not in service and was undergoing repairs.

The attack was not immediately claimed.—AFP ■

DR Congo court set for verdict in murder of UN experts

A military court in Democratic Republic of Congo Saturday is set to pronounce a long-awaited verdict in a mass trial over the 2017 murder of two UN experts in a troubled central region.

Dozens of people have been on trial for more than four years over a killing that shook diplomats and the aid community, although key questions about the episode remain unanswered.

Michael Sharp, an American, and Zaida Catalan, a Swedish-Chilean, disappeared as they probed violence in the Kasai region after being hired to do so by the United Nations.

They were investigating mass graves linked to a bloody conflict that had flared between the government and a local group.

Their bodies were found in a village on 28 March 2017, 16 days after they went missing. Catalan had been beheaded.

Unrest in the Kasai region had broken out in 2016, triggered by the killing of a local traditional chief, the Kamuina Nsapu, by the security forces.—AFP ■

China unveils Winter Olympics world leader guest list



The Olympic flame for the 2022 Olympic Winter Games on display in Beijing's Olympic Tower on 20 October 2021. PHOTO: XINHUA

CHINA on Friday revealed a list of visiting dignitaries for next week's Winter Olympics that includes the leaders of Russia, Saudi Arabia and Egypt for an event that is being diplomatically shunned by some Western nations.

Beijing is keen to shore up international support for the Games, which are the most po-

liticized in recent memory.

Multiple Western nations have announced a diplomatic boycott citing China's human rights record.

State broadcaster CCTV released an updated guest list for next Friday's opening ceremony which includes many of China's neighbours, a host of royals and leaders from key autocratic

nations.

Among the more than 20 foreign visitors on the list are Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Russia's Vladimir Putin was last year the first foreign leader to confirm his presence at the Beijing Olympics and is included on the list released Friday.

The dignitaries will attend the 4 February opening ceremony, a welcome banquet and "relevant bilateral activities" with Xi, CCTV reported.

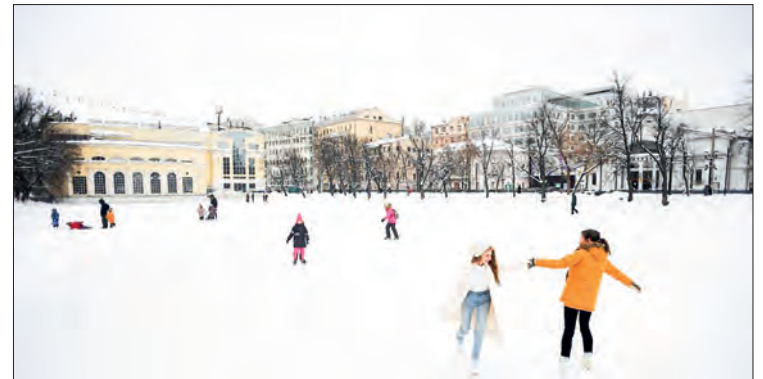
Their presence comes despite the US-led diplomatic boycott by countries including Britain, Canada, Australia and Denmark over China's rights record. Other nations such as Japan are not sending officials and have voiced concerns about human rights in China while steering clear of formally announcing they are part of the boycott.—AFP ■

Russia loses a million people in historic population fall

RUSSIA'S population declined by more than one million people in 2021, the statistics agency Rosstat reported Friday, a historic drop not seen since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Ongoing demographic woes have been exacerbated by the pandemic with Rosstat figures showing more than 660,000 had died with coronavirus since health officials recorded the first case in the country. The new figures continue a downward trend from the previous year when Russia's population fell by more than half a million.

The Covid-related fatalities figures published monthly



Russia has struggled to curb the coronavirus pandemic due to a slow vaccination drive; new figures show the country's ongoing demographic woes have been exacerbated by the deadly health crisis. People skate on a frozen pond in downtown Moscow. PHOTO: NATALIA KOLESNIKOV/AFP

by Rosstat are far higher than death figures released by a separate government website,

which is dedicated to tracking the pandemic in the country.—AFP ■

Six stand trial for spectacular German museum jewel heist

SIX members of a notorious criminal gang go on trial in Germany on Friday over a spectacular heist in which 18th-century jewels were snatched from a state museum in Dresden.

The suspects, aged 22 to 28, are accused of gang robbery and arson after the brazen night raid on the Green Vault museum in Dresden's Royal Palace on 25

November 2019.

To this day, there is still no trace of the jewels, including a sword with a diamond-encrusted hilt and a shoulderpiece which contains the famous 49-carat Dresden white diamond.

While charging the men last year, prosecutors described the museum pieces as "extremely important in terms of art and

cultural history".

The robbers took just eight minutes, cutting the power and breaking in through a window with which they had previously tampered. Two men armed with an axe then stormed into the showroom and stole the jewels before fleeing in a car, which they torched in an underground car park.—AFP ■



Founded by Augustus, Elector of Saxony, in 1723, the Green Vault is one of Europe's oldest museums. PHOTO: DPA/AFP

Biden to send troops to eastern Europe amid Ukraine diplomacy push



Ukrainian Territorial Defence Forces, the military reserve of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, take part in a military exercise near Kiev on 25 December 2021. PHOTO: AFP

US President Joe Biden sought to maintain pressure on Russian leader Vladimir Putin over Ukraine Friday, announcing a small troop deployment to east-

ern Europe even as top Pentagon officials backed a renewed push for diplomacy.

As President Volodymyr Zelensky urged Western leaders

to avoid stirring “panic” over the massive Russian troop buildup on his country’s borders, Putin and French President Emmanuel Macron agreed on the need for

de-escalation.

Neither Putin nor his European and American counterparts had until now appeared ready to give ground in the weeks-long crisis, the worst in decades between Russia and the West.

But according to a Macron aide, Putin told the French leader in a call lasting more than an hour that he had “no offensive plans”.

In Washington, Biden nevertheless said he would soon send a small number of US troops to bolster the NATO presence in eastern Europe as tensions remain heightened.

The United States already has tens of thousands of troops stationed across mostly Western Europe. At the Pentagon, top officials urged a focus on diplomacy while saying that Russia now had enough troops and equipment in place to threaten the whole of Ukraine.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

British PM Johnson eyeing visit to Japan in mid-Feb

BRITISH Prime Minister Boris Johnson plans to visit Japan in mid-February for talks with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, sources familiar with the matter said Saturday. During Johnson’s planned trip on 15 and 16 February, the two leaders are likely to agree to enhance security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, where China has become increasingly assertive in its territorial claims in the East and South China seas, the sources said.

It would be Johnson’s first visit to Japan since taking office in 2019. But the two governments may change the dates of the trip depending on the level of coronavirus infections in the two countries and Johnson’s political fate, which is threatened over alleged COVID-19 lockdown-breaking parties in Downing Street. If the visit is realized, Kishida and Johnson are expected to call for speeding up negotiations on the Reciprocal Access Agreement, aimed at enhancing interoperability and coordination between Japan’s Self-Defence Forces and Britain’s military, according to the sources.—Kyodo ■

Campaigning wraps up for tight Portugal snap election

CAMPAIGNING wrapped up in Portugal Friday ahead of a tightly-fought weekend general election, with polls pointing to a hung parliament and huge gains by the far-right.

Prime Minister Antonio Costa’s Socialists, in office since 2015, are running neck-and-neck with the main opposition centre-right PSD party, according to final surveys published on Friday.

The polls suggest neither party will achieve a parliamentary majority at a crucial time when the nation of some 10 million people is trying to boost its tourism-dependent economy

which has been badly hit by the coronavirus pandemic.

A stable government is needed if Portugal is to make the most of a 16.6-billion-euro (\$18.7 billion) package of EU recovery funds it is due to receive by 2026.

Sunday’s snap polls were called in November, a month after two far-left parties that had propped up Costa’s minority government sided with right-wing parties to reject his 2022 draft budget. The Socialists then had a 13-percentage-point lead over the PSD, which has moved more to the centre since former Porto mayor Rui Rio, 64, took over the party.—AFP ■



An Iniciativa Liberal party billboard caricaturing Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa is seen at Saldanha in Lisbon on 16 January 2022. Portugal kicked off campaigning for a snap election on 30 January with Socialist incumbent Antonio Costa favoured to win, albeit facing a struggle to obtain a working majority. PHOTO: AFP

Iran nuke talks paused, political decisions needed: EU

TALKS on the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), were paused temporarily, the European Union (EU) said on Friday, reported Xinhua.

The European External Action Service (EEAS) said in a statement that the 8th round of negotiations in Vienna will “take a break,” giving participants time to go back to their capitals for consultations with their respective governments. “The talks will reconvene next week,” it said. “Participants will continue the discussions on the prospect of a possible return of the United States to the JCPOA and how to ensure the full and effective implementation of the agreement by all sides.” Enrique Mora, EEAS Deputy Secretary-General, tweeted that participants will go back to their capitals “for consultations and instructions” to come back next week.—Xinhua ■

Ocean Viking migrant ship released by Italian port



Migrants on board the humanitarian aid boat Ocean Viking, chartered by charity group SOS Mediterranee, arrive on 6 July 2020 in the harbour of Porto Empedocle on the island of Sicily. PHOTO: GIOVANNI ISOLINO/AFP/FILE

MIGRANT search and rescue group SOS Mediterranee said on Thursday it planned to return to Mediterranean waters after Italian authorities released its Ocean Viking ship following inspections.

The ship was detained on January 11 at the Sicilian port of Trapani after Italy’s coastguard cited various technical “irregularities” potentially compromising safety for those on board.

“We are preparing to resume our search and rescue operation in the central Mediterranean as

soon as possible,” SOS Mediterranee said in a statement.

It said all the issues cited by port authorities had been corrected. The detention came a year after the ship was blocked for five months over separate alleged safety issues. The group has complained that it is subject to “extreme scrutiny” by authorities. It said it had been subject to five earlier port controls since the group started operations in the Mediterranean in August 2019.—AFP ■

Myanmar women squad to prepare for SEA Games soon



Myanmar women football stars Khin Mar Lar Tun (left) and Saw Thaw Thaw (right) celebrate the victory at an international football match. **PHOTO: AFC**

THE Myanmar women's football team will soon be preparing for the 31st SEA Games to be held in May, according to the Myanmar Football Federation.

The team stopped training after the final round of the 2022 AFC Women's Cup in India and will launch preparations in February for the SEA Games.

The team has been training since the second half of 2021 to compete in international competitions, including the 2022 AFC Women's Cup in Kyrgyzstan in October and the final round of the 2022 AFC Women's Cup in India this month.

The Myanmar women's team will be training with pre-

liminary players based on the last Asian Cup women's team and will take about two months to prepare.

U Tin Myint Aung will continue to be the head coach of the team and will have to make the necessary preparations to succeed at the SEA Games due to his improved form at the last Asian Cup.

The Myanmar women's team has not played in any international qualifiers before the Asian Cup and AFC Asian Cup finals, so they will likely improve if they are allowed to play international qualifiers before the SEA Games.

The Myanmar women's

team tried to qualify for the international tournament but was cancelled due to the COVID-19 epidemic.

The 31st SEA Games women's football tournament kicks off in early May and will feature seven teams.

Women's football is not as competitive as all men's in Southeast Asia, and some underdeveloped women's football teams are not competing.

The Myanmar women's team has yet to win a gold medal at the SEA Games but the squad has won three silver medals and seven bronze medals, including one bronze at the 2019 SEA Games. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM ■

Howe expects more business as Newcastle close in on Guimaraes



Lyon's Brazilian midfielder Bruno Guimaraes (left) is reportedly set to join Newcastle. **PHOTO: JEFF PACHOUD/ AFP**

NEWCASTLE boss Eddie Howe said Friday that the club would remain active in the January transfer window as Brazilian

midfielder Bruno Guimaraes is reportedly set to join from Lyon.

Three months after a takeover from the Saudi sovereign

wealth fund the Magpies are flexing their financial muscles in a bid to avoid relegation from the Premier League. While Newcastle have won only two games all season and are in the relegation zone, they are only one point adrift of safety. Howe's squad has already been bolstered this month by the arrivals of English international Kieran Trippier and striker Chris Wood from relegation rivals Burnley. Guimaraes looks set to be next through the door at St. James' Park with a deal worth up to £40 million (\$54 million) reportedly agreed between the clubs for the 24-year-old, who is currently on international duty with Brazil.—AFP ■

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

- To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.
- To emphasize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
- To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy.

2. Economic affairs

- To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern techniques and strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.
- To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
- To promote and support local businesses to create employment opportunities and increase domestic production.

3. Social affairs

- To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
- To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National peoples and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national characteristics.
- To enhance the health, fitness and education quality of the entire nation.

Peru stun goal-shy Colombia, Venezuelan Rondon's treble sinks Bolivia



Second half substitute Edison Flores gave Peru a smash and grab 1-0 victory away to goal-shy Colombia as goalkeeper David Ospina's gaffe cost the hosts in Friday's World Cup qualifier. **PHOTO: AFP**

SECOND half substitute Edison Flores gave Peru a smash and grab 1-0 victory away to goal-shy Colombia as goalkeeper David Ospina's gaffe cost the hosts in Friday's World Cup qualifier.

Salomon Rondon scored a hat-trick as rock bottom Venezuela thrashed 10-man Bolivia 4-1. Peru barely had a shot on goal all match, but five minutes from time Ospina somehow let Flores's fierce effort from a tight

angle beat him at his near post as Peru snatched an unlikely victory on the counter attack.

Colombia had dominated throughout but failed to score for the sixth successive match—a run of more than 550 minutes.

The result propelled Peru into the final of four automatic qualification spots in the single South American table with three matches to play.—AFP ■