

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

Golden Jubilee Myanmar Health Research Congress held



The Golden Jubilee Myanmar Health Research Congress attendees hear the video message delivered by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the event held in Yangon on 21 February 2022.

THE opening ceremony of the 50th Myanmar Health Research Congress was virtually organized in Yangon yesterday.

First, Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing delivered an opening speech via video message.

(The opening speech delivered by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing is separately reported on page 3).

Then, Union Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win said according to the guidance of SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, it should make efforts

to expand the research culture among the health workers and the researchers should follow the research ethics accordingly. Holding the research congresses successively can improve health awareness and healthcare standards and the health experts who apply the research practically can discuss. It can also support the promotion of Myanmar's healthcare.

The current congress was conducted under the theme of Response to COVID-19 in Myanmar: Reflection after the Third Wave to highlight the efforts of the Health Ministry under the guidance of the SAC, supports of private sectors and public participation in the fight against

the third wave of COVID-19.

The seminars will be also held by researchers and experts from their respective fields and it will bring benefits to the public healthcare and medical sectors.

Then, Director-General Prof Dr Zaw Than Tun of the Department of Medical Research delivered a greeting speech.

Afterwards, the video clips of the retired Directors-General, who developed the Department of Medical Research, honouring the Golden Jubilee were played and the officials took commemorative photos.

Then, the inauguration of statutes of Prof Dr Mya Tu and Prof Dr Aung Than Ba Tu, who

initially developed the department, to mark the 50th Myanmar Health Research Congress was held and attended by the directors-general of departments concerned under the Ministry of Health, rectors, medical researchers, paper researchers and local/foreign experts online.

At noon, officials continued the discussion under the topic of the Symposium on Experiences encountered during the Third Wave of COVID-19 in Myanmar. Deputy Minister for Health Prof Dr Aye Tun, Director-General Prof Dr Soe Lwin Nyein (retired) of the Public Health Department presided over the event and officials from different fields such as infectious dis-

ease, lab tests, treatment and hospital management clarified the activities and experiences in undertaking the COVID-19 preventive measures during the third wave.

The congress will be held from 21 to 25 February. About 400 researchers from local and foreign, including experts from the ROK and the Philippines, join the event and will read out 69 research papers and 27 research posters.

The four prizes for the best Basic Research, Applied Research, Health Systems Research and one best poster will be awarded and a young researcher award will be also presented. — MNA

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Objectives of 77th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

1. THE Tatmadaw to participate in the leading role of national politics for the emergence of the Union based on democracy and federalism while safeguarding the Constitution (2008) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
2. The Tatmadaw to take responsibility for substantial contribution to measures of peace and prosperity of the country and food sufficiency as a national task the government primarily emphasizes
3. The Tatmadaw to join hands with all ethnic national people in the national reconciliation and peace processes
4. The Tatmadaw to provide necessary assistance for convening a free and fair multiparty democracy general election for ensuring the emergence of the Union based on democracy and federalism upon completion of endeavours in accord with the provisions of the State of Emergency
5. To build a powerful, capable and modern patriotic Tatmadaw to protect the national interest of the State

Tatmadaw Navy to attend Multilateral Naval Exercise (MILAN-2022) in India

A warship named Sinphyushin led by Commander Commadore Kyaw Kyaw Htoo from the Danyawady Naval Region Command Headquarters of the Tatmadaw (Navy) left for Visakhapatnam, India from No 3 Naval Jetty (Thilawa) yesterday evening to attend the Multilateral Naval Exercise (MILAN-2022).

The warship was seen off by Commander Rear-Admiral Htein Win from Central Naval Command Headquarters, and officers and other ranks from the Navy and their families.

The Multilateral Naval Exercise (MILAN-2022) will be held in Visakhapatnam, India from 25 February to 4 March.

A total of 24 warships from 16 countries, including India, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Australia, the United States, Britain, South Korea, Japan, France and Seychelles, will join the activity and seminar. —MNA

The naval ship "Sinphyushin" leaves for Visakhapatnam, India.



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

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.

Regarding the "request for money from departmental organizations in conducting trade", the following numbers can be reached to safely report such information.

Auto telephone number - 067 409 881
Mobile phone - 09 699611116
Fax - 067 409 887
Email address - antiillegaltradeoffice@gmail.com

Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

Public Notice

1. The Anti-Corruption Commission has established corruption prevention units within ministries to effectively curb corruption.
2. The ACC used SMS on the mobile phone to ask the public who seek services at an office of the department of the relevant ministries via Short Code No "1111" for feedbacks, including the Public Feedback Programme-PFP.
3. According to the PFP, the right replies of the citizens via Short Code No "1111" will provide the quality of services of each department and the requirements for corruption prevention to be fixed.
4. Therefore, the public should make a reply to the questions of the ACC and

corruption prevention units of the ministries via SMS at Short Code No "1111" and such doing is a supportive measure for PFP, and the people are urged to cooperate in the operations.

Anti-Corruption Commission

Answer "1111" to fight against corruption
Answer "1111" to improve services
Let's work together to eliminate corruption towards
prosperity

2,897 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 21 February, total figure rises to 568,564

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 568,564 after 2,897 new cases were reported on 21 February 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 524,880 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 19,338 after 7 died.—MNA

The speech delivered by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing sent to the opening ceremony of the Golden Jubilee Myanmar Health Research Congress

Mingalaba!

First of all, I'd like to extend greetings with a warm wish to all guests attending today's "Golden Jubilee Myanmar Health Research Congress" to be in good mental and physical health.

The Myanmar Health Research Congress is held on a yearly basis, aimed at keeping abreast of global countries in conducting the health research measures of Myanmar. Now is the 50th time. The congress which started in 1965 was not held in some years. So, its golden jubilee conference falls this year.

I know as the congress is organized during the period of outbreak of COVID-19, relevant departments under the Ministry of Health divide the duties and functions for successfully holding the virtual congress in systematic arrangements through the formation of a working committee and subcommittees.

The evidence-based research findings are sure to contribute much to the adoption of proper health policies in conformity with the era and system of the nation, more benefiting the health process and creation of the universal health coverage of Myanmar.

As Myanmar's life expectancy is about 67.42 years which is lower than that of regional countries. It is necessary to expose the root cause of the low life expectancy based on the research works and to emerge the national level health policies in conformity with the era and system of the country.

It is necessary to expose the strong and weak points of the health care services for ensuring the emergence of a better health system in order to contribute to the ministry and the State. Greater efforts must be expedited for regularly releasing the data related to the health research congresses, research paper-reading sessions and research findings to the people.

Cooperation must be made with the international community in conducting the research on infectious diseases such as COVID-19 and non-infectious chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and cancer.

Especially, it is necessary to disseminate findings of applied health research to the people in various ways and means for



having basic health conditions and healthy longevity.

Those from medical and related universities under the Ministry of Health, hospitals, disease control projects and basic health staff are to join hands in conducting the health research works in cooperation with relevant ministries, UN agencies and NGOs and INGOs if necessary. Especially, emphasis must be placed on beefing up the research capacity of those from medical and related universities.

They need to cooperate with veteran traditional medicine practitioners and those from Traditional Medicine Department to secure firm research results in order to benefit the people through applied traditional medicines and to help penetration of Myanmar's traditional medical science and traditional medicines into the international community.

The Senior General said he knew progress in research works to take preventive and treatment measures against COVID-19 with the use of traditional medicines. If the firm and exact data come out from the research works, treatment using traditional medicines can be given to the COVID-19 patients, bringing many benefits to the people. Researchers who draw the evidence-based policymaking and health projects depending on the firm and correct results of re-

search need to comprehensively understand the importance of the research results and strictly abide by the research ethics. Hence, they have to continuously study research ethics. They have to turn out the youths and scholars wishing to do research works or carry out the tasks based on research results in the country.

Efforts were made by the Medical Research Department to study the whole genetic pro-

posing more data related to the Omicron variant, the latest virus of COVID-19.

As a gesture of honouring the golden jubilee term, the Myanmar Health Research Registry online website was established, and more than 10,000 items of health research works were recorded. As part of the results of the efforts of health researchers from the Ministry of Health based on cooperation with the

As doing research aims to take good results, all stakeholders related to the health sector are to join hands with a concept that they all are doing for the State, in efforts to promote the national health sector of Myanmar based on the findings of the research works.

gramme of the COVID-19 virus since its arrival in Myanmar on 23 March 2020. So, their mission has already been accomplished. Moreover, they could continuously monitor and put records on different steps of the genetic progress of the COVID-19 virus. Now, experts are striving for ex-

international community, the Department of Medical Research was recognized as the WHO Collaborating Centre by the World Health Organization in 2003.

Moreover, the Department of Medical Research cooperated with Korea to produce Hepatitis (B) vaccine at home. And, tech-

nologies were transferred to the Ministry of Industry. Since 1996, the Ministry of Industry has been manufacturing Hepatitis (B) vaccine. I know that the department cooperates with the international community in researching the production of quality anti-snake venom.

I know the congress theme is Response to COVID-19 in Myanmar: Reflections after the Third Wave. Such a theme was chosen for highlighting the importance of cooperation with might and main for the people in individuals in taking preventive and control measures of the COVID-19 based on the experiences of success in harmonious cooperation between the State and the people.

In conclusion, the research culture of youths must be nurtured by holding the research congress. It is necessary to adopt the short- and long-term plans to do health research works benefiting the State and the people. The international level research works are to have risen, and results from research must be recorded in a systematic way to uplift the health research level of the State by publishing internationally recognized journals and publications.

Likewise, the applied research works on medical services and health management/administration must be raised for the people to conveniently and safely receive qualified medical treatment.

As doing research aims to take good results, all stakeholders related to the health sector are to join hands with a concept that they all are doing for the State, in efforts to promote the national health sector of Myanmar based on the findings of the research works.

Our government will especially encourage the research works as the research and development are interrelated. I'd like to conclude my speech with a wish for the emergence of sound foundations from the current congress to enable all the people to enjoy the fruits of reachable qualified healthcare service system in order to raise the life expectancy of our country and to enhance the standard of health care services in the country.

Thank you all.



SAC members meet Chin State Government, officials in Haka



SAC members MoD Union Minister General Mya Tun Oo and U Moungh Har meet cabinet members of the Chin state government and department officials in Haka on 21 February.

MEMBERS of the State Administration Council Union Minister for Defence General Mya Tun Oo and U Moungh Har met cabinet members of the

Chin state government and the state-level, district-level and township-level departmental officials on 20 February.

At the meeting, Union Min-

ister General Mya Tun Oo said it has been over one year that the State Administration Council has taken the responsibility of the State, adding that it is

performing its duty under the State Constitution (2008) with the five-point roadmap and nine objectives for the stability and development of the State.

He acknowledged and encouraged that civil servants are fulfilling their duties with individual spirit in such a time, calling for unity for the development and interests of the nation. Afterwards, U Moungh Har addressed the meeting.

Chin State Chief Minister U Ngun Sann Aung, State Natural Resources Minister U Kyaw Nyein and officials explained the regional facts of Chin State, implementations for regional development, construction and maintenance of roads and bridges, citizenship scrutiny card issuance to local ethnic people through the Pankhinn project, agricultural activities, and requirements for electricity, education and

healthcare.

Upon the presentation, the SAC member Union minister said the Head of State has instructed officials to carry out development activities for the agriculture and livestock sector as seventy per cent of the country's population lives in rural areas and is engaged in agriculture.

He said it is necessary to expand the acreage, use good quality seeds, improve agricultural land and access to water, and cultivate with good methods. In order to increase local income, it is necessary to produce more avocados, oranges and coffee, he said.

The Union minister instructed them to make effort to do cattle rearing by cage system and to do more livestock farming for local food security and coordinated as required. —MNA

SAC members support inter-state/region women's aerobic competition held in Nay Pyi Taw

AIMING to raise the standard of health and fitness of the whole nation, promote inter-ethnic friendship and the emergence of a new generation of athletes in 2022, the Inter-state/region Women's Aerobic Competition was held yesterday under the COVID-19 rules and regulations at Wunna Theikdi Gymnasium in Nay Pyi Taw.

Members of the State Administration Council Daw Aye Nu Sein, Jeng Phang Naw Taung and Saw Daniel, Union Minister for National Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi, Deputy Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs U Myo Hlaing, departmental officials and staff attended to support the competition.



The SAC members watch the Inter-state/region Women's Aerobic Competition in Nay Pyi Taw on 21 February 2022.

Firstly, Deputy Minister U Myo Hlaing delivered a speech, and the members of the State Administration Council and the deputy minister cordially greeted

athletes who will compete in the competitions and watched the five-a-side aerobics competitions.

Yesterday, the five-a-side aerobics competition, three-a-

side aerobics competition and individual aerobic competition were held, and it will continue until 22 February at the stadium. A total of 13 teams with 155

athletes will participate in the competitions. It is also reported that anyone interested in sports is invited to come and watch it for free. —MNA



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

Tatmadaw is a guardian for implementing multiparty democracy

ALL need to carry out all tasks with their capability holding a concept that Tatmadaw is a guardian for implementing multiparty democracy to be firm and maintain all situations of the State.

(Excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in meeting with officers, other ranks and families of Mongpyin Station of Triangle Region Command and Kholan Station of Eastern Central Command on 18-2-2022)

SAC members meet health workers of Haka General Hospital, region Police Force, Tatmadaw members

STATE Administration Council Members Union Minister for Defence General Mya Tun Oo and U MOUNG HAR, who arrived in Haka Township of Chin State, met health workers at Haka General Hospital together with Chin State Chief Minister U Ngun Sann Aung, Deputy Commander of North-West Command Brig-Gen Myo Htut Hlaing, state cabinet members and other officials yesterday.

During the meeting, the Union minister appreciated the concerted efforts of health workers and Tatmadaw medics who dutifully served in COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities together with public participation despite the challenges, and called on to present their difficulties.

Then, Haka General Hospital Medical Superintendent Dr Maung Maung Win reported



SAC members MoD Union Minister General Mya Tun Oo and U MOUNG HAR meet Health workers, the Police Force and Tatmadaw members in Haka of Chin State on 21 February 2022.

on the needs of hospital equipment and administrative sectors.

The state chief minister and township Public Health and Medical Services Department head Dr Aung Myint Oo presented the requirements

and the Union minister left the necessary things.

Then, the Union minister and party handed over the aids for the hospital staff and patients to the medical superintendent.

Then, the Union minister

and party inspected the construction site of an oxygen plant and oxygen storage with 40-litre oxygen cylinders.

They then visited the Chin State Police Force office in Haka and met the police members. They also paid homage to

Mountain Buddhist Missionary Sayadaw Baddhanta Dr Tejosara and donated.

They finally arrived at local battalion in Haka and met with Tatmadaw members and families and provided food aids. — MNA

Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister for International Cooperation attends the public hearing related to Preliminary Objections raised by Myanmar

THE Gambia filed an application against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on 11 November 2019, accusing Myanmar of violating the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Myanmar submitted preliminary objections that the Court lacks jurisdiction to deal with the merits of the case or the entirety of the application is inadmissible to the Court on 20 January 2021. The International Court of Justice is holding a public hearing related to the preliminary objections raised by Myanmar from 21 February to 28 February 2022, at the Peace Palace, in The Hague, the Netherlands.

During the public hearing, Myanmar presented its first round of oral arguments on 21 February 2022. In the first round, the Agent of Myanmar, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Ko Ko Hlaing presented the opening statement and international advocates and counsels argued before the court regarding the Preliminary Objections raised by Myanmar.

Myanmar will make its second round of oral arguments on 25 February 2022 and Gambia will present its first round of oral arguments on 23 February 2022 and second round of oral arguments on 28 February 2022 respectively.

Together with the Agent, the Alternate Agent of Myanmar, Union Minister for Legal Affairs Attorney-General of the Union Dr Thida Oo also attends the public hearing at the Peace Palace, in The Hague.— MNA

UEC holds launching of pilot project to verify ground population census for accurate basic voter lists in Lewe Township

THE Union Election Commission makes concerted efforts in electoral processes following the 5th goal of the five-point road map of the State Administration Council—upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held under the 2008 Constitution.

The opening ceremony of the pilot project to verify the ground population census for the accuracy of the basic voter lists of Lewe Township was organized in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The ceremony was attended by UEC member U Than Tun and members, officials of the Nay Pyi Taw Council and the Nay Pyi Taw Development Committee, the UEC office, district and town-

ship administrators, the district Immigration and Population Department head, the township Immigration and Population Department head, staff officers and staff of Union Territory, District and Township election sub-commissions, ward/village-tract administrators, 100-house elders and 10-house elders.

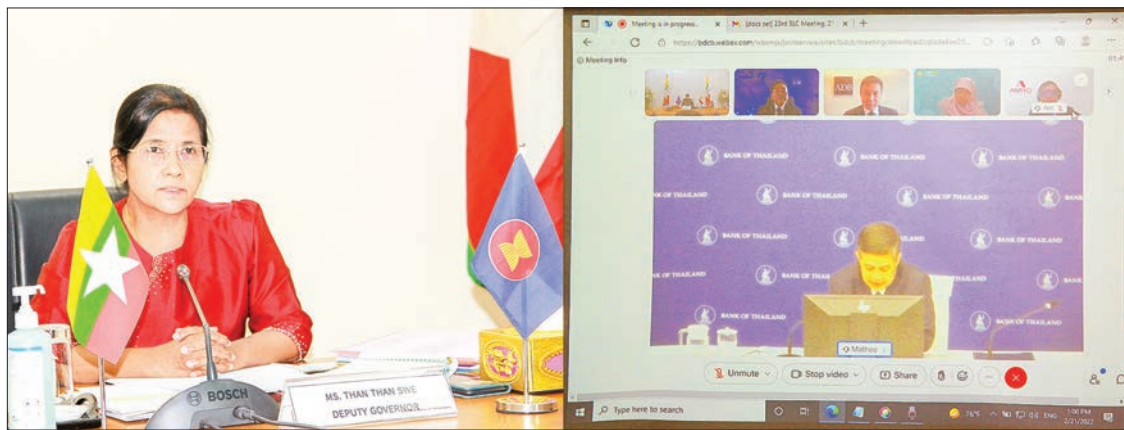
First, UEC member U Than Tun made an opening speech and the UEC members and participants inspected the work processes of respective ward/village-tract officials.

The work groups will use computer technologies to verify the accuracy of the basic voter list of 129,403 people in seven wards and 60 village-tracts in Lewe Township. — MNA



UEC member U Than Tun gives the opening remark at the event.

23rd ASEAN Senior Level Committee Meeting on Financial Integration held



THE meeting of the 23rd ASEAN Senior Level Committee - SLC on Financial Integration was held at 12:30 pm yesterday with a video conference system.

The meeting was attended by the Deputy-Governors of the

Central Bank of ASEAN, Deputy-Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar Daw Than Than Swe and senior officials.

First, the ASEAN + 3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) presented Global and Regional Macroeconom-

ic Outlook and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) also presented regional financial developments.

The Deputy-Governors of the Central Bank of ASEAN exchanged views on the submissions.

Next, the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) discussed the latest developments in the ASEAN Financial Integration Process.

Then, SLC Task Force Co-chairs discussed business developments related to Sustainable Finance and ASEAN Cybersecurity Resilience and Information Sharing Platform (CRISP) activities under the ASEAN High-Level Committee on ASEAN Financial Integration (SLC) such as Regional Macroeconomic and Financial Risks.

Then, the co-chairs of the ASEAN Working Committees stated development factors of the ASEAN Working Committees: ASEAN Banking In-

tegration Framework (ABIF), Capital Account Liberalization (CAL), Capital Market Development (CMD), Financial Inclusion (FINC), Financial Services Liberalization (FSL), Payment and Settlement Systems (PSS), and Steering Committee on Capacity Building (SCCB) respectively.

The Deputy-Governors of the Central Bank of ASEAN guided the submissions.

Next, ASEAN Bankers' Association (ABA) updated on TF Interoperable Data Framework and the Central Bank of Myanmar, the ASEAN Swap Arrangement and rotating Agent Bank, also briefed the Updated-on ASEAN Swap Arrangement. — MNA

Seed Fair 2022 features ICT in agriculture talk show on fourth day

TO increase efficiency in agriculture, the talk show entitled "Let's use ICT for Agricultural Development" was marked on the fourth day of Seed Fair 2022 (21 February).

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a pivotal role in modern agriculture as it enhances the farmer's market access and pricing power through digital trading platforms. Moreover, the Call Centre is available for agricultural technology. Young Social Innovators (YSI) also discussed the service provided by the Agriculture Department. The

visitors, farmers, the officials concerned, representatives from the private companies and those observers who virtually joined the event from the regions and states also raised the questions and YSI, agricultural experts, answered the questions and discussed closely with them.

Dr Ye Tint Tun, director-general of the Agriculture Department also honoured the commemorative gifts to the YSI engaged in the discussion.

The Seed Fair 2022 is being held at the Institute of Agriculture in Pyinmana Township, Nay Pyi Taw. The highschool

students from the Nay Pyi Taw council Area visited the Fair and purchased the seedlings of the vegetable and fruits for the planting in the backyard. Moreover, the director-general also presented the vegetable seeds to them as presents.

The final day of Seed Fair 2022 (22 February) will showcase the talk show for the development of the seed sector and the officials of the Agriculture Department, the seed companies and on-farm seed producers will join the discussion and so, those enthusiastic are invited to participate in this. — MNA



Students are seen visiting the Seed Fair 2022 on the fourth day yesterday.

Fourth day of Seed Fair Week 2022 held in Pyinmana

THE fourth day of the Seed Fair Week 2022 organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation was held yesterday at the Institute of Agriculture in Pyinmana Township.

The fair featured 35 exhibitions displayed by the Myanmar Seed Association and seed companies, including grains, legumes, oilseeds and vegetables and fruit seeds, and seedlings, produced from the research farms, pure breeding grounds, and private galleries and plantations.

The fair was attended by agricultural farmers, those who are interested in agriculture,

representatives from seed companies from regions and states, including Nay Pyi Taw, young entrepreneurs, and high school students from Pyinmana.

The fair was conducted with the purpose of enriching people in a continuous chain by using good and pure seeds, according to Director-General Dr Ye Tint Tun of the Department of Agriculture.

“There will be no sustainable success unless good seeds are used to grow any crop, and it is also necessary to cultivate crops that are in demand in the market,” he said.

“With the use of good and pure seeds, the yield will be

increased, the market will be stable and prices will improve; if farmers’ incomes increase, our goal of socio-economic development is certain,” he continued.

Farmer U Par who came to the workshop said, “I grow eggplant, sesame and sunflower. I came here to get good and pure seeds and I also bought eggplant seeds and sunflower seeds. One of the reasons I came here is also to see crops that I have never seen before. Therefore, I would like to invite farmers like me to come and see good and pure seeds and other seeds that are suitable for their regions.”

The fair also conduct-

ed panel discussions, farmer seminars and technology-based agricultural education.

U Kyaw Zin Win, a young entrepreneur who participated in the discussion “Let’s use ICT for agriculture education” said, “I discussed where and how farmers can get our agricultural technologies, and what devices and technologies are available.”

During the COVID-19 period while farmers’ education and agricultural education staff could not access the fields, farmers can use the mobile application and websites of the Ministry, as well as they can contact call centres to ask questions, he was quoted as saying.



Dr Ye Tint Htun.



U Par.



U Kyaw Zin Win.



Students take keen interests at the Seed Fair 2022 on the fourth day yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw. PHOTO: KO KO HTEIN

“Farmers will be able to quickly and easily find out the technologies they want to know,” he said.

The fair will be held until 22 February under the theme “Let’s use pure and good seeds for the socio-economic development”. — Naing Naing Win/GNLM

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, consumer goods confiscated

SUPERVISED by the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee, effective action is being taken to prevent illegal trades under the law.

On 18 February, a combined inspection team under the management of the Yangon Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force and the Region Forest Department

jointly seized 6.9130 tonnes of illegal teak (estimated at K2,073,900) in Hmawby Township and are taking action under the Forest Law. In addition, a joint team at the Mayanchaung Permanent checkpoint conducted the inspections yesterday in Mon State.

Fifty sets of commodes (estimated at K2,400,300), 140 baby strollers (estimated at K1,244,600) and 90 baby walkers (estimated at K800,100) were confiscated as all the items could not have been submitted with any official documents and brought more than declared quantities in the import declaration. Action is taken under the Customs Law.



Confiscated timbers.



19/02/2022

Similarly, under the management of the Bago Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force, the Bago Region Forest Department and combined teams reportedly inspected a total of 16.8180 tonnes of illegal timbers (estimated value of K3,903,280) in the Bago District

Forest Reserve and are taking action under the Forest Law.

As a result, a total of four arrests (estimated value of K10,422,180) was made on 18 and 21 February, stated the Steering Committee for Combating Illegal Trade. — MNA

Promote State economy through increased manufacturing

NOT only the Union government of Myanmar but also state and regional governments need to well nurture human resources of the workable age people by creating the chances for them to participate in the manufacturing industries so as to promote the State economy.

Currently, Myanmar cannot effectively utilize the human resources for the development of the nation. Especially, only when agricultural and livestock farms, micro-, small-, medium- and heavy-industries must be established at home will the employment opportunities be created for local people.

Consequently, the public consumable rate will increase. Raising the local consumable rate shows the booming of the domestic market as well as the economic growth of the nation. It is because the local consumable rate is based on the development of manufacturing industries and the increased income from production.

All Myanmar people must be capable of deploying and utilizing human resources in man, money and material management processes. All the people must have strong confidence and put their reliance on owned natural and human resources in order to manufacture quality products which must be able to compete with imported goods in the domestic market for public consumption.

Up to now, authorities concerned and businesspersons do not encourage the operation of industries to manufacture the products but emphasize the import of goods from the international market in both legal and illegal manners. As such, manufacturing industries at home has been facing loss for a long time.

Practically, when the imported goods occupy the market share setting aside similar products from local industries, not only the business people from the local industries but all the workers relying on the production chains face a tremendous loss for their lives.

That is why it is necessary to adopt the policy on the import of goods to protect the interests of local manufacturers and employees. While taking action against those carrying the imported goods without customs duty through the illegal routes and

the undisciplined service personnel under the law, the authorities need to encourage the domestic manufacturing industries for the development of production.

Moreover, the appropriate business environments must be created for local businesspersons and workers with the plans to solve the financial and technical problems, enhance the work capacity, grant the tax exemption, establish the markets and arrange the trading networks through the Internet. Indeed, it is necessary to establish the domestic manufacturing industries and their development as a national duty.

All Myanmar people must be capable of deploying and utilizing human resources in man, money and material management processes. All the people must have strong confidence and put their reliance on owned natural and human resources in order to manufacture quality products which must be able to compete with imported goods in the domestic market for public consumption.



Japan's top COVID adviser says worth discussing new isolation period

Japan's top coronavirus adviser Shigeru Omi said Sunday it is time to start considering further shortening the quarantine period for people who have been in close contact with COVID-19 patients.

ADVISER Omi suggested the time for isolation, currently seven days for ordinary people and five days for essential workers, could be cut as the Omicron variant of the virus is known to have a shorter incubation period.

"I think it's time to start a discussion to make it more flexible," Omi said during an NHK television programme.

Another wave of COVID-19 infections

For more than a month, Japan has been struggling to tackle another wave of COVID-19 infections driven by the rapid spread of Omicron.

But the Japanese government has relaxed restrictions step by step in light of scientific

evidence on the variant and its desire to strike a balance between curbing infections and maintaining functions in society.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Thursday that Japan will ease COVID-19 border controls in March by raising the daily limit on entrants and reducing the quarantine period to three days from seven days for both Japanese and foreign nationals.

Japan's entry ban on nonresident foreigners, effective from late November, has triggered a barrage of criticism from business leaders and students for being too tough and not based on science.

Starting next month, Japan's ceiling for new entrants will be set at 5,000 per day, up from the current 3,500. Within the daily

cap, foreign nationals will also be able to enter the country for purposes other than tourism.

Kishida's announcement came after he decided in late January to further shorten the quarantine period for close contacts of COVID-19 cases to seven days.

Reduced the period

Before that in mid-January, the government reduced the period from 14 days to 10 days, but the business community among others was calling for it to be cut further by taking into account Omicron's characteristics.

However, the daily number of deaths from COVID-19 topped 200 for the fifth day in a row Saturday, staying near a record high, while the country reported 81,621



A near-deserted Naha Airport is seen on 8 January amid a coronavirus outbreak in Japan's Okinawa Prefecture. PHOTO: KYODO

new infection cases.

The government has recently extended quasi-state of emergency measures until 6 March in 17 prefectures, including Osaka, Kyoto and Fukuoka, as the in-

fection numbers remain at high levels and hospital beds are increasingly filled with patients in many areas.

The extension means that 31 of Japan's 47 prefectures will re-

main under the emergency steps, which include allowing governors to request that restaurants and bars close early and stop serving alcohol.

During the same TV programme on Sunday, Toshio Nakagawa, president of the Japan Medical Association, also warned against optimism. He said it is highly likely that community infections caused by a subvariant of Omicron known as BA.2, which is said to be more transmissible than the original strain, are increasing.

"It may be that (the number of infected people) will start to increase rather than gradually decrease," Nakagawa said.

SOURCE: KYODO

Researchers discover pre-primary education played important role in preventing COVID learning losses

A new study has shown that pre-primary education is essential in preventing 'alarming' learning losses due to COVID. The research was undertaken by a team from the University of Cambridge, Addis Ababa University and the Ethiopian Policy Studies Institute. The report was part of a five-year study, commissioned through the World Bank's Early Learning Partnership.

The researchers urged aid organizations and governments in sub-Saharan Africa to strengthen their plans for emergency pre-primary education, which evidence suggested, prevented 'alarming' learning losses in the region during COVID school closures.

Learning losses

In a study of more than 2,600 children in Ethiopia, researchers found that among pupils who entered primary education immediately after schools reopened, learning losses were far less severe if they had been in pre-primary education prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. The learning deficit among children without this pre-primary experience was

four times greater.

Despite this, the study also showed that pre-primary education was the most neglected part of the Ethiopian government's COVID education response. One aid donor characterized its remote learning plan for this age group as: "a vacuum, with no-one accountable".

Professor Pauline Rose, Director of the Research for Equitable Access and Learning (REAL) Centre at the Faculty of Educa-

tion, University of Cambridge, said, "Our findings from Ethiopia are almost certainly symptomatic of a wider pattern. Across sub-Saharan Africa, pre-primary education does not seem to have figured significantly in how education Ministries responded to the pandemic."

"It clearly plays a vital, protective role in limiting learning losses. With new variants of the virus emerging, school disruption could easily happen again. Plans should

be put in place now to ensure that pre-primary age groups are not neglected."

Schools closed

Ethiopia's schools closed for about eight months from March 2020, affecting more than 26 million pupils, including 3.2 million of pre-primary age. The study examined both the impact on children's primary school readiness and the value of pre-primary education in this context.

First, the researchers tracked the progress of 2,600 children who were of pre-primary school age in the academic year 2019/20 and became eligible to start primary school in 2020/21. The intervening period coincided with when school-based learning was interrupted.

The pupils took early numeracy tests at the start of each academic year. Researchers then compared the test scores of children who had attended "O-Class" (a pre-primary programme run by the Ethiopian government) and those who did not attend pre-primary school at all.

O-Class group

Even though COVID-19 meant that the O-Class group spent far

less time in the classroom than expected, they still performed much better in both numeracy tests. Their average scores rose from 46 per cent, at the start of O-Class, to 64 per cent as they entered primary school in 2020/21. The scores of those who had not attended pre-primary school rose from 26 per cent to 46 per cent.

While this showed that all children made some progress, it also suggested that those without formal pre-primary education were a full year behind their peers by the time they started primary school. Even when the researchers controlled for potentially confounding factors, such as prior attainment, parental literacy, household wealth and where they live; the O-Class children were still eight percentage points ahead.

The headline results masked deeper inequalities. Within O-Class, learning gains were significantly greater among boys, those from wealthier families, and those with literate caregivers.

To establish how much learning was lost during the pandemic, the study then compared the group's test scores at the point



Major efforts are needed to mitigate the learning loss of children who return to school in the post-COVID-19 recovery phase. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Myanmar Gazette

Appointment of Head of Service Organization

THE State Administration Council has appointed U Min Han Soe, Deputy Director-General of the Foreign Exchange Management Department of the Central Bank of Myanmar, as Director-General of the Financial Institutions Supervision Department of the Central Bank of Myanmar on probation from the date he assumes charge of his duties.

Appointment of Nigerian Ambassador to Myanmar agreed on

THE Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the proposed appointment of Mr Ovikuruoma O. Djebah as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar with residence in Bangkok.

Mr Ovikuruoma O. Djebah obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Theatre Arts (BA) from the University of Calabar, Cross River in Nigeria. He also earned Master's degrees in International Law and Diplomacy (MILD) from the University of Lagos in Nigeria and Global Journalism (MA) from Orebro University in Sweden respectively. From 1990 to 2000, he worked at the AKWA IBOM State Newspapers Corporation, and also worked as News Reporter at the CLASSIQUE Magazine, Senior Correspondent (Writer) at THE NEWS and TEMPO Magazine and Reporter for Business, Political and Developments at the Guardian Newspaper. He served as the Group Political Editor and Deputy Editor and Member of the Board of Editors at the THISDAY Newspaper in Lagos, Nigeria from December 2000 to August 2007. He was appointed as Honourable Commissioner for Information in August 2007. He served as Senior Adviser to the Governor on Foreign Relations of Delta State Government of Nigeria from 2011 to 2015 and he became Founder and Chairman at The New Diplomat Newspaper in Nigeria in June 2015. Since June 2021, he has been serving as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the Kingdom of Thailand.

Mr Ovikuruoma O. Djebah is married with two children.

Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 21 February 2022)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is generally fair over the West central Bay and a few cloud to partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 22 February 2022: Weather will be partly cloudy in Kayin, Mon states. Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Kachin state, fairly widespread in upper Sagaing region and southern Shan state, scattered in Mandalay, Taninthayi regions and (northern and eastern) Shan state and isolated in the remaining regions and states. Degree of certainty is (80%).

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: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Shan state.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22 February 2022: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22 February 2022: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 22 February 2022: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (80%).

SOURCE: ANI

Paddy worth approximately K700,000 per 100 baskets

THE price of paddy touched a high of approximately K700,000 per 100 baskets, said U Than Oo, the secretary of the Bayintnaung rice wholesale market.

The monsoon rice inventory is down at present. However, the newly harvested summer paddy is going to flood the market.

At the moment, summer paddy is gradually flowing into the market. Earlier, summer paddy was sent to domestic buyers only. It is now delivered to the export market for raw materials, he was quoted as saying.

“Summer paddy is shipped to the export market as raw materials. It is priced around K30,000 per 108-pound bag. As the supply exceeds the demand in the domestic market, it is shipped to the external market. Yet the price slightly declines to K27,500 per bag,” U Than Oo elaborated.

The price of paddy is likely to fall if the market sees an ex-



The government's leading committee for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Interests of Farmers set the floor price for paddy at K540,000 per 100 baskets for 2021 monsoon paddy and 2022 summer paddy.

cess amount of summer paddy inventory, he continued.

The government's leading committee for the Protection

and Promotion of the Rights and Interests of Farmers set the floor price for paddy at K540,000 per 100 baskets for 2021 monsoon

paddy and 2022 summer paddy. The Committee on Protection and Promotion of Rights and Interests of Farmers, fol-

lowing the provisions of the Law of Protection of the Farmer Rights and Enhancement of their Benefits, set the floor price of the paddy which meets the prescribed criteria: 14-per-cent moisture content and a fixed percentage of impurities such as sand, weed, and small stones is set at K540,000 per 100 baskets (one basket is equivalent to 46 pounds).

The traders are notified of purchasing the paddy at K540,000 if the market price falls below the floor price.

Those who face difficulties in selling them at the floor price in minimum can contact the Myanmar Rice Federation through 01-2301128, 01-2301129 and 01-218266).

There are nearly 18 million acres of monsoon and summer paddy in Myanmar every year, according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation. — NN/GNLM

Eggplant cultivation succeeds in Pwintphyu township



The local farmers from Pwintphyu township, Magway region rely on groundwater and Mone creek water to grow a variety of vegetables such as eggplant, bitter gourd, cabbage, tomato, radish, tomato, onion, garlic, cucumber, gourd and pumpkin on a commercial scale.

A farmer from the villages along the Mone creek and Thanbo village, Pwintphyu township, Magway region is successfully growing eggplant using underground water and earning good price, according to the farmers from Thanbo village, Pwintphyu township.

“The eggplant plantation in our village area is thriving. Consequently, the local farmers are cultivating the eggplant commercially using underground water. The eggplant crops are more earning good price than other crops. The eggplant price is ranging between K250-K300

per fruit depending upon its sizes. The eggplant seeds are being cultivated in line. There will be no damage when the eggplant is growing with bamboo poles to keep plants upright and fruit clean and intact. The brown eggplant is popular because they taste better than other eggplant species. That is the reason, brown eggplants are highly demanded by the commodity traders from Minbu town. The fruits are harvested every two days and yield about 300 or 400 fruits. Therefore, I would like to urge other growers to cultivate eggplants as it

successful vegetable crops with handsome prices,” said a local grower from Thanbo village in Pwintphyu township.

The local farmers from Pwintphyu township, Magway region rely on groundwater and Mone creek water to grow a variety of vegetables such as eggplant, bitter gourd, cabbage, tomato, radish, tomato, onion, garlic, cucumber, gourd and pumpkin on a commercial scale.

This year, the eggplant business has been successful and is earning extra family income, it is learnt. —Ye Win Naing (NyaungU)/GNLM

Manageable tomato production earns regular income for farmers in Natmauk

THE local farmers from West Lekkokpin village, Natmauk township, Magway region are growing the tomato using underground water on a manageable scale and earning regular income for their families.

Tomatoes, a staple food in their fields, are grown by groundwater after the rain.

“There are two types of tomato species such as Myanmar and Taiwan tomato species. Now, we are growing Myanmar tomato species. The tomatoes are

planted on patches spaced about three feet apart. It needs to be watered every three days. The fruit is highly yielded right now. Earlier, the price of onion was sold for K1,000 per viss. Now, the price fetched only K350 per viss. We want to get a good price when the fruit is abundantly harvested.

The tomato is conveyed retail and wholesale to Myoma market daily, said a tomato grower from West Lekkokpin village. — Thin Thin Myat/GNLM



The local farmers from West Lekkokpin village, Natmauk township, Magway region are growing the tomato using underground water on a manageable scale and earning regular income for their families.

Queen Elizabeth II tests positive for Covid

NEWS IN BRIEF

BRITAIN'S 95-year-old Queen Elizabeth II tested positive for Covid-19 on Sunday but her symptoms are "mild" and she intends to continue with light duties at her Windsor Castle residence, aides said.

"Buckingham Palace confirm that the queen has today tested positive for Covid," a statement from the palace said.

"Her Majesty is experiencing mild cold-like symptoms but expects to continue light duties at Windsor over the coming week," it said.

"She will continue to receive medical attention and will follow

all the appropriate guidelines."

Heir to the throne Princes Charles, aged 73, earlier this month cancelled an event after contracting coronavirus a second time. A source said he had met the Queen just days before.

The queen, now celebrating her Platinum Jubilee year, is the world's oldest and longest-reigning monarch. Health concerns first rose to prominence last October when she spent the night in hospital for an unspecified ailment. She was subsequently advised to rest by her doctors and reduced her engagements.—AFP ■



Britain's 95-year-old Queen Elizabeth II tested positive for Covid-19 on Sunday but her symptoms are "mild" and she intends to continue with light duties at her Windsor Castle residence, aides said. PHOTO: AFP

Israeli minister cancels UAE visit after testing positive for COVID-19

ISRAEL'S Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Oded Forer had to cancel his planned trip to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), after he had tested positive for COVID-19, the official announced in a tweet.

He was scheduled to attend events held during the food, agriculture and livelihoods Week, which was launched Friday at the Dubai Expo 2020 and featured a three-day Israeli conference starting Sunday. The minister was to sign a wide range of agreements at the UAE, alongside holding meetings with other agriculture ministers, according to the Israeli conference's website.—Xinhua ■

Omicron subvariant concerns researchers



The Osaka Prefectural Government on 20 December 2021 confirmed the nation's first community transmission of the omicron variant of the coronavirus. PHOTO: KYODO

THE BA.2 virus — a subvariant of the Omicron coronavirus variant — isn't just spreading faster than its distant cousin, it may also

cause more severe disease and appears capable of thwarting some of the key weapons we have against Covid-19, new research suggests. New lab experiments from Japan show that BA.2 may have features that make it as capable of causing serious illness as older variants of Covid-19, including Delta.

And like Omicron, it appears to largely escape the immunity created by vaccines. A booster shot restores protection, making illness after infection about 74% less likely.

BA.2 is also resistant to some treatments, including sotrovimab, the monoclonal antibody that's currently being used

against Omicron.

The findings were posted Wednesday as a preprint study on the bioRxiv server, before peer review. Normally, before a study is published in medical journal, it is scrutinized by independent experts. Preprints allow research to be shared more quickly, but they are posted before that additional layer of review. "It might be, from a human's perspective, a worse virus than BA.1 and might be able to transmit better and cause worse disease," says Dr Daniel Rhoads, section head of microbiology at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio. Rhoads reviewed the study but was not involved in the research.—Kyodo ■

Thailand logs 18,953 new COVID-19 cases

THAILAND on Sunday reported 18,953 new COVID-19 cases during the last 24 hours, with the daily case tally rising for the fifth consecutive day to reach its highest level since 22 August 2021, official data showed.

The new cases brought the number of total infections in the Southeast Asian country to more than 2.71 million, according to the Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA), the country's COVID-19 task force.—Xinhua ■

US suffers more than 1 mln excess deaths during pandemic: The Guardian

THERE have been more than 1 million excess deaths in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic, The Guardian said in a recent report.

The deaths are mainly attributable to COVID-19, as well as conditions that may have resulted from delayed medical care and overwhelmed health systems, the report quoted figures from the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as saying.

At least 923,000 Americans have died from confirmed COVID-19 cases, according to the US CDC. Other causes of death above the normally expected number include heart disease, hypertension and Alzheimer's disease.

Excess deaths are also known as untimely or "early"



People walk on the street on Times Square in New York, the United States, 14 February 2022. PHOTO: XINHUA/WANG YING

deaths, The Guardian explained, adding while the majority of excess deaths in the United States occurred among those 65 and old-

er, many of those Americans had many years left to live. Excess deaths are calculated based on previous years' fatalities. In 2019,

there were 2.8 million deaths in the United States. In 2020, it was approximately 3.3 million, the report noted.—Xinhua ■

Chances slim for easing of China's "zero COVID policy" after Olympics

HOPES among residents of Beijing are increasing that the government may move to ease the strict enforcement of its "zero COVID policy" after Sunday's end of the Winter Olympics in the capital, but with a key ruling party gathering slated for later this year, the opposite could be the case.

At the Communist Party's twice-a-decade congress in fall, Chinese President Xi Jinping is set to secure a controversial third term as the country's leader, which would allow him to lay the groundwork to hold on to power for life.—Kyodo ■

Pakistan supports IT sector to promote economic, scientific development: president

PAKISTAN'S President Arif Alvi said on Sunday that the government has been taking measures to support the country's information technology (IT) sector to promote economic and scientific development.

"The incumbent government is extending all kinds of support to the IT sector of the country and various laws have been made to facilitate the growth of the sector," Alvi said while addressing a ceremony related to the Presidential Initiative for Artificial Intelligence and Computing in

the southern port city of Karachi.

Noting that countries which focus on artificial intelligence and computing are developing rapidly, the president said that the Pakistani youth should focus on the information technology education to make use of the opportunities in the sector across the world.

He said that to help the young people, the Pakistani government has initiated several programmes, such as the digital skill programme which is free and imparting IT education

through online classes.

After completing the education, the students would not only have job choices but also entrepreneurship opportunities, said the president, adding that the government would provide them with financial support for starting entrepreneurship.— Xinhua ■

Pakistani government has initiated several programmes, such as the digital skill program which is free and imparting IT education through online classes. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**



Australian retail spending posts rebound



Photo taken on 17 March 2020 shows the seniors shopping at a Woolworths supermarket in Canberra, Australia. **PHOTO: XINHUA/CHU CHE**

SPENDING data released by the Australian Retailers Association (ARA) on Monday has shown

a healthy retail sector that has seemingly managed to weather the storm of Australia's Omicron

crisis.

The peak retail body showed that retail spending in January was up nearly 5 per cent from 2021 and over 14 per cent from before the onset of the pandemic.

Sales growth was highest for household goods, which increased by 10.5 per cent from the previous year followed by clothing, which saw an increase of 8.5 per cent. However, department stores saw continued negative growth of 2.7 per cent in January as people continued to shy away from crowds. "Overall, we've had a soft landing from Omicron and the impacts on sales have not been as severe as we originally feared," said ARA CEO Paul Zahra.— AFP ■

Fast-fashion fallout: young people in UK spurred into sewing

FROM jogging outfits to summer dresses, Lea Baecker has stitched together most of her wardrobe herself from inside her London flat, part of a burgeoning number of young amateur seamstresses.

Like many others in the growing horde of sew-it-yourself enthusiasts, she has grown increasingly disillusioned with the retail clothing industry, viewing it as too destructive.

"My main motivation was not having to buy ready-to-wear clothes anymore because I didn't want to support fast fashion," Baecker, 29, told AFP, referring to clothes made and sold cheaply to be thrown away after minimal use.

The doctoral student in neuroscience only started



Sew-it-yourself enthusiasts have grown increasingly disillusioned with the retail clothing industry, viewing it as too destructive. **PHOTO: AFP**

sewing in 2018, beginning with small bags before moving on to clothes.

Four years on, she estimates about 80 per cent of clothes in her wardrobe are homemade, from pyjamas to

long fleece coats, as well as jeans made with denim scraps scalped from relatives. Baecker now buys new clothes "very rarely", she added, wearing one of her self-made long, hand-sewn dresses.— AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel's economy minister visits Morocco to cement trade ties

AN Israeli minister arrived in Morocco on Sunday for a visit aimed at developing economic and trade ties, in the latest sign of expanding cooperation after the countries normalized relations in 2020.

Economy Minister Orna Barbivai is due to sign "a historic cooperation agreement" aiming to establish "the economic foundations of trade relations between Morocco and Israel", her ministry said in a statement.

She is scheduled to visit Rabat, economic capital Casablanca and tourist hub Marrakesh, to tour Israeli textile and agricultural companies and to meet ministers and business representatives on the four-day trip.

"Morocco has great importance for Israel diplomatically, economically and culturally," she said before the visit, on which she is accompanied by her Moroccan-born husband.

Bilateral trade amounted to about \$130 million last year.

The trip comes less than three months after Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz made an unprecedented visit in November, signing a security pact that angered Morocco's neighbour and rival Algeria, and the Palestinians.

After his visit, Israeli and Moroccan media reported Rabat's purchase of Israeli defence technology.

Israel and Morocco had initially established relations in the 1990s, but Rabat broke them off at the start of the second Palestinian intifada (uprising) in 2000.— AFP ■

'Swissleaks' investigation targets Credit Suisse bank

CREDIT Suisse bank, still reeling from losing billions of dollars last year, faced a fresh challenge Sunday: allegations from an international investigation that it had handled dirty money for decades.

A cross-border media investigation broke Sunday claiming that Switzerland's second-largest bank had held tens of billions of dollars of ill-gotten funds, claims based on an insider's massive data leak.

Credit Suisse rejected the "allegations and insinuations" in a statement Sunday, saying that many of the issues raised were historical, some dating back as far as the 1940s.

The investigation, coordinated by the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), unites 47 different media outlets worldwide including France's Le Monde and The Guardian in Britain.

This latest project, dubbed "SwissLeaks" by the OCCRP, arose out of a leak of data to Germany's Sueddeutsche Zeitung newspapers a little over a year ago.— AFP ■

Japan economy tense on commodity hikes by Ukraine invasion fears

RUSSIA'S military build-up around Ukraine's border is stoking fears about its potential impact on the economy of import-reliant Japan amid speculation a Russian invasion may further pressure elevated crude oil and commodity prices.

The Ukraine crisis has also brought uncertainties to Tokyo's stock market, with some brokers expecting a Moscow-led offensive to send the benchmark Nikkei Stock Average below the



File photo taken 10 October 2021 shows a fuel dispenser at a gas station in Saitama near Tokyo. PHOTO: KYODO

26,000 mark from recent levels of around 27,000.

The United States and allies have warned

Russia that they will impose sanctions in the event of an incursion, a development that could prompt Moscow to cut gas, oil and other energy supplies in retaliation and spur inflation.

"The geopolitical tensions are attributable to recent rises in commodity prices as well as inflation," said Norihiro Fujito, senior investment strategist at Mitsubishi UFJ Morgan Stanley Securities Co.

"Japanese compa-

nies' profit margins could narrow, as it is challenging for firms to greatly raise prices to make up for increasing costs," Fujito said. "The Ukraine crisis may force some companies to revise downward their profit outlook for fiscal 2022 starting in April."

While President Joe Biden and other top US officials have not ruled out imminent Russian military action on Ukraine, analysts are watching whether a planned meeting between US Secretary

of State Antony Blinken and Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov on Thursday could lower tensions over Ukraine. In a meeting Saturday in Munich, foreign ministers from the Group of Seven nations of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States expressed opposition to any attempt to alter the status quo in Ukraine by force and urged Russia to address the crisis through diplomatic means. — Kyodo ■

Moroccans protest against high prices

PROTESTS broke out in several Moroccan cities on Sunday as people rallied against rising prices and to commemorate the eleventh anniversary of demonstrations that called for reform.

In the capital Rabat, dozens of protesters decried the high cost of basic goods and shouted slogans

harking back to the "20 February Movement", an AFP correspondent said.

The pro-reform and anti-corruption movement was born out of the Arab Spring uprisings that rocked the Middle East in 2011.

Dozens also rallied in Casablanca and Tangiers, according to videos posted

on social media.

Drought has hurt the country's economy and Moroccans are also feeling the pinch from high fuel prices.

Some 3.8 billion dirhams (over \$400 million) is needed for flour subsidies alone in 2022, according to an economy ministry official. —AFP ■



A vendor wearing a face mask weighs bananas at the central market in Morocco's capital, Rabat, on 6 May 2020. PHOTO: AFP

China ships 26.32 mln 5G phones in January

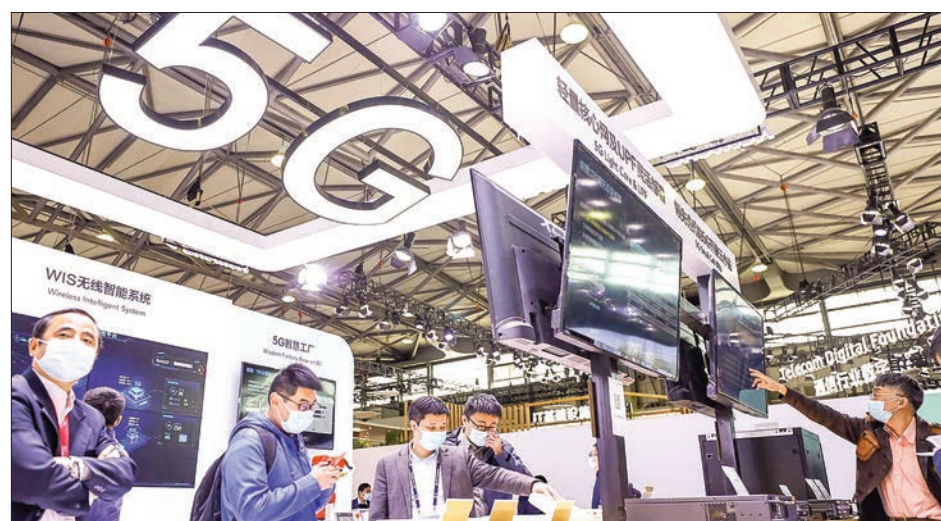


Photo taken on 23 February 2021 shows a view of the Mobile World Congress (MWC) Shanghai 2021 in east China's Shanghai. PHOTO: XINHUA

SHIPMENTS of 5G phones in China went down 3.5 per cent year on year to over 26.32 million units in January this year, data from the China Academy of Information and Communications Technology (CAICT) showed.

The volume account-

ed for 79.7 per cent of the country's total mobile phone shipments during the period, said the CAICT, a research institute under the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

In January, a total of 15 newly-released mo-

bile phone models were 5G phones, accounting for 50 per cent of all the newly-released handset models.

The data showed that China shipped 266 million units of 5G phones in 2021, surging by 63.5 per cent from 2020. — Xinhua ■

S.Korea's foreign currency deposit falls in January

SOUTH Korea's foreign currency deposit fell last month on corporate overseas investment and individuals' sale of the US dollar fund amid the strong dollar trend, central bank data showed Monday. Foreign currency deposit came in at 93.17 billion US dollars at the end of January, down 4.1 billion dollars from a month earlier, according to the Bank of Korea (BOK).

It kept a downward trend for the second straight month as companies withdrew foreign currencies to pay for import while increasing overseas investment.

Individuals sold the dollar fund amid the dollar's ascent to the local currency. The won/dollar exchange rate averaged 1,195.3 won per dollar in January, up 11.5 won from the previous month. Foreign currency deposit, owned by companies, went down 2.86 billion dollars from a month earlier to 75.64 billion dollars at the end of January, while individuals-possessed deposit fell 1.24 billion dollars to 17.53 billion dollars. — Xinhua ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V AEGEAN EXPRESS VOY.NO. (228N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V AEGEAN EXPRESS VOY.NO. (228N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **22-2-2022** 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
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CONTINENTAL SHIPPING LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V BLPL BLESSING VOY.NO. (2203S/W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BLPL BLESSING VOY.NO. (2203S/W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **22-2-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S BLPL SHIPPING LINE

NEWS
IN BRIEF

Algeria's 60 years of complex relations with former occupier France

IN the 60 years since Algeria won independence from France, it has gone through multiple crises with its former occupier, often fuelled by domestic politics.

Yet the two sides had surprisingly good relations for the first four decades, and it was only in the 1990s that things started to fall apart, experts say.

"Generally, despite appearances and criticism, there has been a stable, very balanced relationship," said Luis Martinez, a Maghreb researcher at Sciences Po university in Paris.

That is despite the devastation caused by the eight-year war of independence that finally led to the signing of the Evian accords on 18 March 1962, ending the conflict. — AFP ■

UAE warns of drone threat as it opens defence conference

THE United Arab Emirates warned Sunday of the rising threat of drone attacks, such as those launched against it by Yemen's Huthi rebels, at a defence industry conference on unmanned systems.

"We have to unite to prevent the use of drones from threatening civilian safety and destroying economic institutions," said Mohammed bin Ahmad al-Bawardi, UAE's minister of state for defence affairs.

The Unmanned Systems Exhibition (UMEX) kicked off in Abu Dhabi, with regional and Western military and industry representatives, including from the United States, Britain and France.

While the event will showcase the latest in high-tech drone technology, the host country warned that such weapons are becoming cheaper and more widespread. They are now part of the arsenals of "terrorist groups that use the systems to terrorize civilians or to impact the global system in a negative way," said the UAE's minister of state for artificial intelligence, Omar bin Sultan al-Olama. — AFP ■

Police reclaim Canada capital after trucker siege ends

THE last big rigs were towed Sunday out of Canada's capital, where the streets were quiet for the first time in almost a month after a massive police operation ended a drawn-out siege by protesters opposing Covid health rules.

A major clean-up was underway in Ottawa's snowy downtown, where police in riot gear had faced off with trucker-led demonstrators for two full days, finally driving them out of their protest hub outside parliament.

"I'm very happy to have my city back," Jeff Lindley, who lives and works downtown, told AFP. "It's so much better today, calmer and quieter without the ominous presence of all the trucks



A protester's truck is towed away after police cleared Ottawa streets of demonstrators. PHOTO: AFP

and protesters."

Ottawa interim police Chief Steve Bell told a news conference "many of the unlawful pro-

testers are gone".

But he added, "We're not done this operation yet," explaining that authorities were

on watch to "make sure that nobody returns to occupy our streets again".

A few protesters stayed late into Saturday night, singing '80s protest anthems and setting off fireworks outside a hastily erected four-metre-high (13-foot) security fence surrounding the parliamentary precinct.

But the last gasp protest-turned-street-party fizzled as a deep freeze gripped the city. **'Cops everywhere'**

Early Sunday, police were manning checkpoints restricting access to a 500-acre (200-hectare) downtown area, while a sizeable force remained on standby to defend the ground reclaimed from the truckers. — AFP ■

Trump's new social media app plans slow rollout starting Monday

DONALD Trump's new social media platform "Truth Social" is planning a gradual rollout this week and should be "fully operational" by late March, potentially raising the former president's profile more than a year after he was banned by major social media.

"This week, we will begin to roll out to people on the Apple App store," said Devin Nunes, CEO of the Trump Media & Technology Group (TMTG), the new app's parent company. The former Republican congressman was speaking Sunday on conservative Fox News.

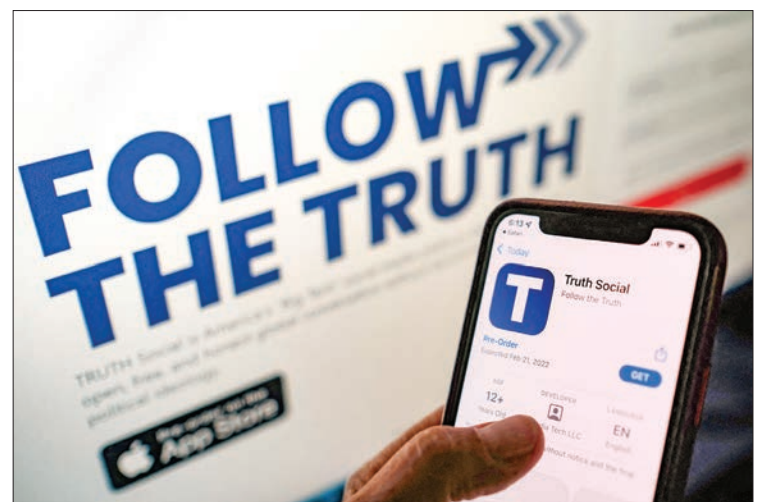
"I think, by the end of March, we're going to be fully operation-

al — at least within the United States," added Nunes, who resigned from the US House to lead the Trump group.

Trump has described Truth Social as an alternative to Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, all of which banned him following the assault on the US Capitol by his supporters on 6 January 2021.

The former president has been accused of inciting his followers to use force in a bid to overturn the result of the 2020 election.

On Sunday, the App Store was allowing visitors to pre-order Truth Social starting Monday, the Presidents Day holiday in the United States. "It's actu-



Donald Trump's new social media platform "Truth Social" is planning a gradual rollout this week and should be "fully operational" by late March. PHOTO: AFP

ally very moving for me to see people that are on the platform

that have had their voice cancelled," Nunes said. — AFP ■

Zimbabwe opposition accuses state of rigging elections



Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) party supporters gathered at Zimbabwe Grounds where party leader Nelson Chamisa gave the keynote address for the launch the new party in Harare. PHOTO: AFP

ZIMBABWE'S opposition on Sunday accused state powers of attempting to rig next month's elections by manipulating the

electoral roll.

Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) leader Nelson Chamisa said government security agents warned him of a rigging plot and that the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission had been confronted over a "shambolic" voters' roll.

The ZEC is accused of changing voters from one polling district to another without their knowledge and of working with Zimbabwe's national intelligence agency to manipulate the vote.

"We should vote in numbers because it is difficult to rig when the turnout is huge," Chamisa, a veteran opposition politician,

told his supporters at his party's campaign launch in the capital Harare.

"We are scrutinising the voters' roll. If they don't allow that we go to the courts. If the courts fail, we will go on the streets to demonstrate." Zimbabwe will vote in local and parliamentary by-elections on 26 March seen as a dress rehearsal for general elections in 2023 at which President Emmerson Mnangagwa's ruling Zanu-PF party seeks to gain a parliamentary majority. The southern African nation has endured a rocky path of disputed elections since 2000. — AFP ■

Biden, Putin agree in principle to hold summit amid Ukraine tension

US President Joe Biden and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin have agreed “in principle” to hold a summit, the French government said Sunday, an announcement that came amid mounting fears over Moscow’s possible invasion of Ukraine.

Discussions on the envisioned meeting will take place when US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov

meet on Thursday, according to the office of French President Emmanuel Macron.

A summit can only be held on condition that Russia does not invade Ukraine, it added.—
Kyodo ■

A serviceman from Ukrainian Military Forces walks near Novognativka village, Donetsk region. **PHOTO: AFP / ANATOLII STEPANOV**



NEWS IN BRIEF

Japan PM Kishida to join virtual G-7 summit over Ukraine crisis

PRIME Minister Fumio Kishida will join a virtual meeting of the Group of Seven industrialized nations this week in an effort to defuse tensions over Ukraine, which is under threat of a possible invasion by Russia, the Japanese government said Monday.

Kishida vowed to resolve the crisis in coordination with the G-7 and other members of the international community, telling a Diet session, “While the situation remains critical, Japan will continue to make diplomatic efforts with other countries to ease tensions”.

Announcing Kishida’s participation in the Thursday summit, to be hosted by Germany, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said, “It is critically important for the G-7, which shares universal values such as freedom, democracy and rule of law, to unite and lead the global community.”—
Kyodo ■

Russian forces to stay in Belarus as Ukraine braced for war



A Russian tank leaves the border after joint exercises of the armed forces of Russia and Belarus. **PHOTO: AFP**

RUSSIAN military exercises in Belarus will continue, Minsk announced Sunday, leaving Moscow with a large force near

the northern Ukraine border as Western powers warn of an imminent invasion.

Russian military exercises

in Belarus will continue, Minsk announced Sunday, leaving Moscow with a large force near the northern Ukraine border as Western powers warn of an imminent invasion.

The announcement came as French President Emmanuel Macron called Russia’s Vladimir Putin for talks the Elysee described as “the last possible and necessary efforts to avoid a major conflict in Ukraine”.

Moscow had previously said the 30,000 troops it has in Belarus were simply carrying out readiness drills with its ally, which would be finished by 20 February allowing the Russians

to head back to their bases.

But, as the day arrived for the operation to end, the Belarus defence ministry said Putin and Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko had decided to “continue inspections”, citing increased military activity on their shared borders and an alleged “escalation” in east Ukraine.

The move will be seen as a further tightening of the screws on Ukraine, already facing increased shelling from Russian-backed separatist rebels and a force of what Western capitals says is more than 150,000 Russian personnel on its borders.—
AFP ■

Tensions mount behind scenes as Biden ponders Supreme Court pick

INTENSIVE vetting, lobbying and even a bit of skullduggery are underway as President Joe Biden prepares to unveil his nomination for the upcoming vacancy on the US Supreme Court.

Biden, a Democrat, has pledged to nominate the first Black woman to sit on the nation’s highest court and to reveal his choice before the end of February.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki was asked this week about the behind-the-scenes jockeying for the coveted slot on the nine-member bench. She noted that the 79-year-old Biden is no novice when it comes to placing justices on the Supreme Court. “As the former chairman of the Judiciary Committee, as the former vice president, I believe he’s probably overseen or been engaged with more Supreme Court nominee processes than anyone in history,” she said.—
AFP ■

Nepal police fire tear gas as MPs debate US grant

NEPAL police fired rubber bullets and tear gas on Sunday as hundreds protested against a \$500-million US grant going before parliament that has become a bone of contention between China and the United States.

Nepal signed the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) pact in 2017 to fund infrastructure projects but its ratification has been in limbo because of divisions within political parties, including the ruling coalition.

Several people were injured in the latest day of angry demonstrations outside parliament as the government put the bill before lawmakers ahead of a deadline of 28 February to pass it.

“Although they agreed to present the agreement in the parliament, it’s still not clear whether all coalition partners will cast their vote in favour... Our efforts will continue to convince them,” Prakash Sha-



Several people were injured in the latest day of angry demonstrations outside parliament as the government put the bill before lawmakers ahead of a deadline of 28 February to pass it. **PHOTO: AFP**

ran Mahat, spokesperson for the ruling Nepali Congress party, told AFP.

There is major opposition from Prime Minister Sher Ba-

hadur Deuba’s coalition partners including Maoist politicians — seen as traditionally close to China — who say it undermines Nepal’s sovereignty.

Indian daily the Hindustan Times reported on Tuesday that Washington believes China is behind a disinformation campaign against the pact.—
AFP ■

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

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

2. Economic affairs

- (a) To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern techniques and strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.

- (b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
- (c) To promote and support local businesses to create employment opportunities and increase domestic production.

3. Social affairs

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

Myanmar team falls in ASEAN Futsal Championship's Group B



Myanmar Futsal player Aung Zin Oo (white) poises to shoot the ball during the third-place match against Viet Nam at the Futsal HDBank Championship Southeast Asia 2019 in Phu Tho Stadium, Ho Chi Minh City, on 27 October 2019. **PHOTO: MFF**

THE ASEAN Football Federation held a draw-lots ceremony for the group stage of the 2022

ASEAN Futsal Championship on 21 February, with the Myanmar team in Group B.

A total of nine teams will compete in the tournament with four teams in Group B

while another five in Group A.

According to the draw-lots event, group A includes the host Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Brunei Darussalam while Viet Nam, Myanmar, Timor-Leste and Australia are placed in Group B.

The tournament will be held from 3 to 12 April at Huamark Indoor Stadium in Bangkok, Thailand.

The ASEAN Football Federation (MFF) will no longer host the ASEAN Zone Futsal Championship to be held in Kuwait in September this year and thus the three winners from this tourney will qualify for the AFC Futsal Championship.

The ASEAN Football Federation hosted the ASEAN Futsal Championship in 2001, and the Myanmar team has

been competing since 2006.

Team Myanmar won a silver medal once and bronze medals twice in the past.

The highest achievement was reaching the finals for the first time in 2016 and was coached by Myanmar coach U Htay Myint.

The Myanmar team will compete in the ASEAN Futsal Championship to be held in April. The 22-man preliminary squad has been under training since January for the 31st SEA Games in May.

The team is coached by Thai national Boonlert Charoenwong and will compete in the NSDF Futsal Invitation 2022 in Thailand in March in preparation for the upcoming two tournaments. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Asian golf great Kyi Hla Han dies aged 61

KYI Hla Han, one of the biggest figures in Asian golf both as a player and an official, has died, it was announced on Monday. The 61-year-old former Asian Tour number one and executive chairman died in Singapore on Saturday due to complications arising from cancer treatment.

“Asian golf has lost one of its greatest players, its greatest personalities and its greatest leaders,” Cho Minn Thant, commissioner and chief executive of the Asian Tour said in a statement. “We will forever remember Kyi Hla.” Kyi Hla Han, who represented Myanmar in five World Cups and was pivotal in the growth of Asian golf after his retirement from competition in 2004, was described in the statement as “one of the most iconic figures in Asian golf”.

Tributes began to come in from Asia and beyond with former European Ryder Cup captain Thomas Bjorn tweeting: “This is real sad news. Kyi Hla, I will miss your friendly ways and our great discussions. Gone way too soon. — AFP ■

China keeps promises as Winter Olympics draws to triumphant close



Athletes parade during the closing ceremony of the Beijing 2022 Olympic Winter Games at the National Stadium in Beijing, capital of China, 20 February 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA/LIGA**

THE Olympic flame has been extinguished, bringing down the curtain on the Beijing 2022 Winter

Games, but the passion still lingers from the sports gala that has enlivened and inspired the world amid

the pandemic.

After all 109 medal events had been decided, the closing ceremony was held on Sunday at the National Stadium in Beijing, the first ever city to have hosted both the Summer and Winter Olympics. The Olympic baton now has been passed to the Italian cities Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, which will host the 2026 Winter Games.

The 2022 Winter Olympics stands out as it both provided a stage for the world's top winter sports athletes and also highlighted China's efforts to host a safe and sustainable global-scale event. — Xinhua ■