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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.

Myanmar delegation who attended public hearings of preliminary objections at ICJ welcomed back at Yangon International Airport

THE Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister for International Cooperation U Ko Ko Hlaing and Union Minister for Legal Affairs and Attorney-General of the Union Dr Thida Oo, who had attended the public hearings of the preliminary objections submitted by Myanmar to the International Court of Justice at the Peace Palace in The Hague of the Netherlands, arrived back in Yangon by air yesterday evening.

The Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing and Union Minister Dr Thida Oo was welcomed back by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Nyunt Win Swe, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs U Kyaw Myo Htut, region ministers and departmental officials at the Yangon International Airport.

Responsible persons from political parties, officials from the Myanmar Interfaith

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The Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing and Union Minister Dr Thida Oo arrives back at Yangon International Airport yesterday after attending the public hearings of the preliminary objections at the International Court of Justice.

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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

Vietnamese Buddhist Association presents donations to 50 monasteries in Bagan-NyaungU of Mandalay Region

AN association of Buddhists from Viet Nam on 1 March launched a donation ceremony dedicating to eradication of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Donations were made to 50 monasteries in the Bagan-NyaungU area, including Yadanabonsan Tawya Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery in Bagan.

First, the Vietnamese Buddhist Association observed the Five Precepts from monks.

The members of Sangha recited Radana Sutta and Metta Sutta to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other pandemics around the world.

The donors then shared their merits gained.

Foodstuffs, medical products and cash for nine prerequisites were donated to 50 monasteries

in the Bagan-NyaungU area.

“Buddhist from Viet Nam came here and donated alms to 45 monasteries and five Buddhist Learning Centres in the Bagan-NyaungU area to protect the world from the scourge of COVID-19 and other pandemics,” said Sayadaw U Sagara, Patron of the Yadanabonsan Tawya Dhamma Yeiktha Monastery.

“Most importantly, the monks and nuns in Myanmar want to protect the people of the world from the pandemic. It is also a charitable donation to receive the compassion of the monks. The donor association comes to Myanmar every year for doing such donations. This is the third time they have donated in Bagan-NyaungU. Yesterday, donations were made to 50 mon-



Donations from Viet Nam Buddhist association to members of the Sangha in progress.

asteries, including the one in old Bagan city and the one in new Bagan city. Fifty monks will receive the offerings at my monastery,” Sayadaw U Sagara added. — Ye Win Naing (NyaungU)/GNLM

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

1,902 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 2 March, total figure rises to 592,139

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **592,139** after **1,902** new cases were reported on 2 March 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **540,241** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **19,375** after **3** died.

COVID-19 vaccine is being injected to those of priority groups in regions and states for prevention and control of the disease. Up to 1-3-2022, a total of **23,652,432** people have been vaccinated. Of them, **21,033,436** people have been fully vaccinated and **2,618,996** people are yet to get the second shots.—MNA

Further State responsibilities to be discharged

- There are many examples of the consequences of the instability of the state in the world.
- Tatmadaw is not an institution for seeking its own sakes or for only one organization. It is an institution to protect all national people. It conducted defence services by cooperating with the people in successive eras and it faithfully served to be a firm multiparty democracy pathway for 10 years. I pledge that we will carry out it in line with such a process.
- If we review the situations, the desires of the local/foreign terrorists and their supporters lead to the absolute destruction of the country rather than democracy. The state defence is to protect the people and we cannot let the anarchy and we cannot neglect it. Therefore, we have to sacrifice in some places.

(Excerpt from the speech made by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on one-year State responsibilities discharged by the State Administration Council on 1-2-2022)

Myanmar delegation who attended public hearings ...

FROM PAGE-1
Friendship Organization (Central), the Young Men's Buddhist Association (YMBA) (Central), departmental personnel, Buddhist monks and people who support the Myanmar delegation welcomed back the My-

anmar delegation in arousing at the Yangon International Airport holding the flags of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the signboards bearing heartily welcome to Myanmar delegation for its brave efforts at the International Court of



Justice (ICJ) for the interests of the State and the people.

With regard to the case filed by The Gambia against Myanmar concerning the application of the convention on the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide at the ICJ, Myanmar presented the preliminary objection that the ICJ lacks jurisdiction or that the case is inadmissible at the court and that The Gambia lacks filing Myanmar to the International Court of Justice. The public

hearings related to the preliminary objections were held at The Hague of the Netherlands from 21 to 28 February.

At the hearings, Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing pleaded that the ICJ lacks jurisdiction or that the case is inadmissible before the court under the law. Counsels and advocates for Myanmar submitted their presentations with firm facts and data for the preliminary objections of Myanmar to the Court. —MNA

World Engineering Day 2022 observed in Yangon

THE World Engineering Day Myanmar Celebration jointly organized by the Myanmar Engineering Council and the Myanmar Federation of Engineers to commemorate World Engineering Day on 4 March 2022 was held online at 10 am yesterday as per the COVID-19 rules.

Union Minister for Construction U Shwe Lay, Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than, Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw, Prof Dr Gong Ke, President of the World Federation of Engineers Marlene Kaga and former presidents of the World Federa-



The MoC Union Minister joins the online World Engineering Day 2022 event.



tion of Engineers gave opening remarks.

Next, the second session of the ceremony named the World

Engineering Day Myanmar Celebration Plenary Session was held and chaired by FEIAP former President Dr Chuan Hean Teak

and led by local and foreign engineers to achieve sustainable, balanced and better development of future engineering. — MNA

MoH Union Minister addresses 10th annual general plenary meeting of Myanmar Private Hospitals Association

UNION Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win addressed the 10th Annual General Plenary Meeting of the Myanmar Private Hospitals Association which was virtually held yesterday morning.

While addressing the meeting, the Union minister said that the Private Hospitals Association is part of Myanmar's health-care system. He said the Ministry of Health enacted the Private Health Care Law on 5 April 2007, and it also enacted a law amending the Private Health Care Law

and promulgated the rules on private health care.

The ministry is supervising to develop of private health services under the Private Health Care Law, systematically participate as part of the national healthcare system, make effective use of the private sector's resources to provide health care to the people, let the public make their own choices to meet their health needs, and provide high quality and accountable services to the public at a reasonable cost.

The Central Committee on Private Health Care is issuing licences to private health companies under the provisions of the law, and 259 private hospitals have been under licence, he stated.

He acknowledged and expressed words of thanks for supporting the manpower and providing the necessary medical equipment and supplies, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, in the first, second, third and fourth waves of COVID-19.

He said that the Ministry

is conducting field inspections from time to time to ensure that the private health services are providing quality and affordable services to the people under the set rules and regulations, and failure to comply with the directives will result in disciplinary action under the law.

As the Ministry is allowing private hospitals and diagnostic laboratories to assist in COVID-19 preventive care and COVID-19 vaccination activities following the guidelines issued by the Ministry, there are 39 private

hospitals and diagnostic laboratories for COVID-19 test and care, and 36 private hospitals/clinics for COVID-19 vaccination have been allowed.

He said his Ministry will support the development of the private health sector as it is carrying out private sector development as per the state health policy. He also expressed his belief that the association would be able to improve the quality of private health care and provide quality health care to the public at a fair cost. — MNA

LBVD takes measures against animal diseases in domestic cattle farming in Yangon Region



There are 3,868 cows and 12,568 dairy cattle from 56 farms, 1,830 beef cattle from 37 farms and 1,830 buffalo from 56 farms in Yangon Region.

PHOTO: KANU

YANGON Region Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department (LBVD) is strictly

taking preventive measures for biosecurity to control the viral disease of animals to protect

the economic benefits of the cattle breeders in the Yangon region.

The infectious diseases pose risk to the livestock after the flood. Additionally, the seasonal conditions can affect animal disease behaviour and the livestock are vulnerable to the biodiversity changes as well.

"To contain the spread of infectious diseases for cattle, the survey is conducted in the places where endemicity of livestock diseases are substantially higher. The sample of ruminants is simultaneously sent to the

laboratory to test their changes are related to biodiversity changes or infectious diseases. This way, the department aims to protect the economic benefits of the breeders. Furthermore, awareness campaigns of animal diseases are being raised in the villages. Participation in the LBVD's vaccination programme is cooperation as prevention is better than cure. The department is implementing the preventive measures for the cattle," said Dr Min Nyunt Oo, deputy head of the Yangon region LBVD.

There are 3,868 cows and 12,568 dairy cattle from 56 farms,

1,830 beef cattle from 37 farms and 1,830 buffalo from 56 farms in Yangon Region. The department is distributing the frozen semen free of charge in an artificial insemination programme.

The LBVD is implementing research for successful dairy production, cultivation of the crops for grazing and producing the purebred dairy cattle that fit for the region at the Pyinmabin dairy cattle research centre and demonstration farm in Mingaladon Township. The biosecurity practices can bring about economic benefits in livestock breeding. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/GNLM

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MoHT Union Minister attends meeting on benefits of CLMVT forum, its continuation

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Htay Aung attended the coordination meeting on the benefits of the CLMVT Forum which includes Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Viet Nam, and Thailand, and the continuation of the forum through videoconferencing yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw. The meeting was chaired by the Kasetsart University of Thailand, and also attended by the directors-general and officials of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, and officials from the Myanmar Tourism Federation and its affiliate associations.

At the meeting, the Union minister said that the CLMVT Forum is part of the efforts of the Ministry of Commerce of Thailand to boost trade and investment cooperation among the CLMVT countries. He said as it is not only a forum for cooperation for the economic development of the countries, it can also enhance the regional cooperation



through the recommendations, knowledge and views of the government, private, international organizations and experts.

In addition, situations to be encountered in the post-COV-

ID-19 period between the CLMVT countries and strategies for cooperation in trade and investment were discussed and reviewed, he added.

The Union minister high-

lighted that the tourism sector is one of the key sectors that benefit not only CLMVT countries but also internationally for economic and social development. He said he believed that

the outcome of the forum will lead to sustainable development and benefits for the countries through clear guidelines and recommendations for public-private tourism cooperation and implementation, urging them to work together for a comprehensive forum that would come up with useful and supportive developments.

Afterwards, Dr Montchai Pinitjitsamut from the Kasetsart University of Thailand briefed all on the holding of the forum, and its benefits and outcomes. Myanmar officials shared their experiences of attending the forum, benefits for the public/private sector from the forum, tips for the successful continuation of the forum, the inclusion of tourism cooperation in the forum agenda and the need for tourism cooperation in the future.

It is reported that the Union minister made concluding remarks at the meeting. — MNA

Deputy Minister attends the Forty-First Meeting of the High-level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration

DEPUTY Minister U Than Aung Kyaw of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations attended the Forty-First Meeting of High-Level Task Force on the ASEAN Economic Integration (41st HLTF-EI) which was held via videoconference on 2 March 2022.

The meeting was chaired by Mr Rizal Affandi Lukman, Special Advisor to the Minister for the Strengthening of International Economic Cooperation, Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs, Indonesia. The High-Level Task Force on ASEAN Economic Integration Leads

from ASEAN Member States and representatives, Deputy Secretary-General and officials from ASEAN Secretariat also attended the meeting.

HLTF-EI leaders exchanged views and discussed the Priority Economic Deliverables (PEDs) for Cambodia's

ASEAN Chairmanship, the progress of the implementation of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF), the next steps in the implementation of Consolidated Strategy on the Fourth Industrial Revolution for ASEAN and Digital Transformation in ASEAN, the Bandar Seri Begawan Roadmap, latest update of the Framework for Circular Economy for the AEC and development of a concept note on ASEAN's strategy to achieve carbon neutrality.

HLTF-EI leaders also discussed and provided guidance on the preparatory work for the ASEAN Post-2025 Vision, recommendations of the report of the Mid-Term Review of the AEC Blueprint 2025, the modality to strengthen coordination on the cross sectoral work and the recommendations for the consideration of 28th ASEAN Economic Ministers' Retreat.

At the meeting, the deputy

minister congratulated Cambodia for the Chairmanship in 2022 and also supported the Priority Economic Deliverables (PEDs) under its Chairmanship. He reiterated to work closely with other ASEAN Member States for the successful completion of PEDs in a timely manner. The deputy minister updated Myanmar's implementation status on the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework regard with trade facilitation. He also made suggestion for applicable and affordable implementation in considering the level of development among ASEAN Member States when developing the implementation plan for the Framework for Circular Economy.

Dr Wah Wah Maung, SEOM Leader and the permanent secretary and senior officials from the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations also joined the meeting. — MNA



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MFBH command-and-control centre monitors disasters for prompt response



The Command-and-Control Centre of the Myanmar Fire Brigade Headquarters in action. **PHOTOS: KA NU**

IN order to respond to disasters such as fires, floods, earthquakes in a timely manner, the Myanmar Fire Brigade Headquarters in Mayangon Township, Yangon region, is monitoring from its Command-and-Control Centre.

The Command-and-Control Centre was established on 25 July 2011 and started its oper-

ation on 5 May 2013. Sixteen CCTV have been installed on tall buildings and towers in Yangon with the e-Watching Tower System to quickly detect fires and natural disasters in Yangon's urban areas. These cameras can be rotated 360 degrees and can be rotated up/down 80 degrees and zoomed 30 times with 24-hour surveillance from the

Command-and-Control Centre, helping to speed up the process.

With the onset of late winter and early summer, special attention should be paid to fire hazards, and the Myanmar Fire Brigade is working to minimize casualties in the event of a fire. In January 2022, there were 150 fires across the country, affecting more than 400 million kyats.

According to the Myanmar Fire Brigade, 254 fires broke out in February, costing more than 900 million kyats in those two months.

"In January and February this year, the damage caused by the fire increased more than last year. The increase in urban development and the development of industrial zones is a challenge for the fire, which is detrimental to the state and the people," said the Director of the Myanmar Fire Brigade Headquarters.

"With more than 2,000 fires

each year, therefore, we are working hard to reduce the cost of the incidents," he continued.

He added the need for a community-based fire safety system, and the centre is working in a timely manner to minimize the damages caused by the fire.

As fires at factories and garment factories are a loss for the State, employers and employees, people are urged to call 191 as soon as possible in case of fire. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/GNLM



Artistes granted pardon

ARTISTES who are being punished for violating the existing laws of the country — Paing Takhon (actor), Lu Min (actor), Pyay Ti Oo (actor), Eindra Kyaw Zin (actress) — were granted the pardon from punishment on 2 March 2022 in order for them to participate in

nation-building tasks with their performing arts.

It is also reported that Win Min Than (beauty blogger) was also pardoned for her remaining sentence under Section 505-A of the Penal Code, and the charges against Wine (film director) were closed. — MNA

58 people died of COVID-19 in February

IN Myanmar, about 58 people died from the COVID-19 virus in two weeks of February, according to data from the Ministry of Health.

There was a total of 58 COVID-19 deaths in February — one on 14, three on 15, four on 16, one on 17, three on 18, five on 19, four on 20, seven on 21, six on 22, five on 23, four on 24, three on 25, four on 26, five on 27 and three on 28, respectively.

Besides, there were no deaths reported in 21 days before the period from 24 January to 13 February.

When it comes to COVID-19 positivity rate in

February in the country, it was 2.15 per cent on 1, 0.53 per cent on 2, and 1.45 per cent on 3. Then, it increased gradually with 5.38 per cent on 10, 6.5 per cent on 11, 7.23 per cent on 12, 8.02 per cent on 15, 10.03 per cent on 19, 10.77 per cent on 22, 12.49 per cent on 25, 10.13 per cent on 26 and 8.32 per cent on 28, respectively. In January, Myanmar is reporting about one per cent new infection on average each day, the highest daily average reported on 31 January. From 1 January to 23 January, the country reported a total of 42 new COVID-19 deaths, indicated figures from the Ministry of Health. — Aye Maung/GNLM

CRIME NEWS

Authorities seize illegal timbers, foodstuffs, consumer goods, vehicles

SUPERVISED by the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee, action is being taken against illegal trades effectively under the law, and a total of 22 arrests (approximate value of K95,509,567) was made on 25, 26, 27, 28 February and 1 and 2 March.

On 25, 26 and 27 February, three vehicles (estimated value of K30,000,000) carrying 10.2984 tonnes of illegal timbers (estimated at K1,179,652) were arrested during the inspections in Yangon North District, and action is taken under the Forest Law.

On 28 February, 8.8386 tonnes of illegal timbers (esti-



Inspection is underway to seize illegal goods.

mated at K618,702) were seized in Gwa and Taungup townships in Rakhine state.

On 1 March, the customs team on duty at the Asia World Container Inspection Station in Yangon region seized ille-

gal fabrics (estimated value of K10,796,613) which were not listed in the import declaration, and action is taken under the Customs Law.

In addition, a combined inspection team conduct-

ed inspections on the Yangon-Myawady Road and arrested four unlicensed vehicles (estimated value of K11,500,000) and undocumented electric stoves (estimated value of K2,133,600) from a 22-wheel vehicle.

Illegal China-made agricultural products (estimated value K 1,880,000) were confiscated during the inspection at Yaypu Permanent Checkpoint in Shan State, and a vehicle (estimated value K13,000,000) carrying illegal sports items and mobile phone accessories (estimated value of K3,161,000) were arrested at the Chinshweh Trade Zone in Shan state.

Moreover, illegal and undocumented food items and home appliances (estimated value of K3,650,000) were seized from two passenger vehicles at Thanlwin bridge in Mon State. Authorities also confiscated illegal and ownerless food items (estimated value of K1,170,000) which were piled on the side of the road near Thwethauk village in Kyaikmaraw, Mon State.

On 1 and 2 March, one unlicensed vehicle, one motorcycle in Monywa Township and illegal COVID-19 test kits in Hkhamti Township, (total estimated value of K16,420,000) were confiscated under the Export and Import Law. — MNA

Rubber price reaches fresh peak of K1,200 per pound

THE prices of raw natural rubber hit a record price of K1,200 per pound in Thuwanawady town, Thaton Township, Mon State. Traders sell only sundried rubber at the moment without processing ribbed smoked sheets.

“This year, the price is pretty high. The rubber fetches up to K1,100 per pound at the beginning of the season and then, it slightly decreases to K950 per pound. Yet, the price has rebounded to K1,200, which is the highest in ten years. Rubber businesses are thriving this year,” said Nan Aye Aye Khaing, a rubber farmer working on a manageable scale in Wiyaw village.

“The price is high on the back of steady demand from Kawthoung city. The prices range between K1,015 and K1,230 per pound depending on rubber varieties,” Daw Htar Shwe, a seller from Theinseik Ward, Thuwanawady town quoted in her sayings.

All the stakeholders in the supply chain including rubber farmers and workers are doing well financially.



The National Enlightenment Institute (NEI), a non-profit organization based in Mon State, has been receiving technical assistance from PUM Netherlands Senior Experts to enhance the rubber industry since May 2021.

After the suspension of trade between Myanmar and China amidst the COVID-19 consequences last year, the trade channel has been reopened again in the present. Myanmar daily delivers rubber, various beans and pulses, dried plum, watermelon, muskmelon and other food commodities to China through the Kyinsankyawt border.

Mon State is the top producer of rubber in the country, accounting for over 240 million pounds of rubber per year, as per data of Mon State Agriculture Department.

The National Enlightenment Institute (NEI), a non-profit organization based in Mon State, has been receiving technical assistance from PUM Netherlands Senior Experts to enhance the

rubber industry since May 2021, according to Mawlamyine Commodity Centre.

Rubber is commonly produced in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago, and Yangon regions in Myanmar. As per 2018-2019 rubber season's data, there are over 1.628 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar, with Mon state accounting for 497,153 acres, fol-

lowed by Taninthayi region with 348,344 acres and Kayin state with 270,760 acres. About 300,000 tonnes of rubber is produced annually across the country. Seventy per cent of rubber produced in Myanmar goes to China. It is also shipped to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, the Republic of Korea, India, Japan, and other countries, according to the Myanmar Rubber Planters and Producers Association.

About 300,000 tonnes of rubber is produced annually across the country. Seventy per cent of rubber produced in Myanmar goes to China. It is also shipped to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Korea, India, Japan, and other countries.

Myanmar shipped 303,293 metric tons of rubber to the foreign trade partners and generated more than US\$449 million in revenue in the previous financial year 2020-2021, which is an increase of \$184.6 million worth of 89,880 MT compared to the FY2019-2020, according to Myanmar Customs Department's statistics. — Khun (Winpa), KK/GNLM

Rice bean fetching handsome price in Monywa on China's demand



The bean is shipped to China through Yangon. The Monywa market sees a daily inflow of approximately 400 bags.

CHINA'S demand drove the rice bean price up and it is abundantly flowing into the Monywa commodity depot.

“This year, rice beans are fetching handsome price of K50,000-51,000 per basket. They are mainly supplied from Kalay and Homalin areas to the Monywa market. It is a lack of local consumption. The bean is shipped to China through Yangon. The Monywa market sees a daily inflow of approximately 400 bags. The various beans are highly traded in the market,” said U Tin Ko Ko, in charge of the information and public relation of the Monywa commodity depot.

About 2,000-3,000 bags of various beans, including pigeon peas, chickpeas, butter beans

are entering the Monywa market.

“The regions above the Chindwin River such as Mawlaik, Kalay, Ayadaw, Yinmabin and Pale are supplying the beans to the Monywa market. The prices are on the rise. The prices of pigeon peas and black grams also slightly rise by K1,500-K2,000 per basket for now,” U Tin Ko Ko stated.

The Monywa market sees brisk trading with the buyers from Yangon, Mandalay and other regions. The black gram and pigeon peas are aimed at India's market, whereas the warehouse owners fill the inventory with chickpeas. Kidney beans are demanded in the Chinese market. — Lu Lay/GNLM

NyaungU growers get higher prices of chickpea than last year

THE chickpea growers in NyaungU township are very happy due to the rising price of chickpea price this year more than last year, according to chickpea growers.

The local farmers from NyaungU township are growing chickpea plantations in high volume when the river water is a low tide. Besides, they are also growing chickpea when the Ayeyawady and Chindwin rivers have risen. They do not cultivate a single variety. But they cultivated sunflower or other pulses

in addition to chickpea. The farmers consider chickpea to be the most profitable crop of their township due to its high demand and easily earning, said U Phoe Kyaw, a local chickpea grower from NyaungU township.

There are two types of chickpeas named big white chickpea and small white chickpea. The price of small white chickpea was pegged at K26,000 per basket last year, whereas the price spiked to over K28,000 per basket at present. The price of old big white chickpea was

ranged at K24,500 per basket bag, whereas the old chickpea price rose to over K26,500 per basket at present.

One basket of chickpea contains 19 visses. The growers who cultivate chickpea are now delighted at prices having substantially increased this year more than last year and the yield will be likely to grow up. The harvested chickpea and oil-producing sunflowers are sold at the Pakokku commodity depot, it is learnt. — Ko Htein (KPD)/GNLM



The price of small white chickpea was pegged at K26,000 per basket last year, whereas the price spiked to over K28,000 per basket at present.

Transform bitter experiences into strengths of life

EVERYBODY unavoidably would have faced bitter experiences as well as unacceptable events in their lives. But, the majority of people are weak in transforming the bitter experiences into the valuable strengths of their lives.

Everybody does not wish to encounter bitter experiences but these are unavoidable in accord with the schedules adopted in the vicious circle. They wish to welcome the sweet experiences and sweet days. Indeed, lives in a vicious circle are unexpected for all. So, if these bitters fall, they all shall try to overcome them.

However, all the persons need to consider how to overcome the bitters and black days with the least casualties. If they pass them with the least casualties, they are the best ones. They will be the top honours. But it is not a final result.

They all whether suffering impacts of the bitter experiences and on the black days of life need to have excellent skills how to utilize the bitters to have something special and how to transform these nightmares into their real lives. Genius persons can transform these bitters and black days into golden and glitter futures. It may be an amazing skill.

In this regard, all the persons must have the concentration to steadfastly face the desirable challenges. They should hold up the conscience and stable mindset in encountering the future without trembling and fear. They should not culture any downhearted thoughts. Although every event can be based on win and loss, they must consider things how to overcome the losses and how to manage wins if they achieve. They need to analyze their bitter experiences and seek what are the advantages of the bitters and choose them at first. And then, keeping these advantages in hand, they have to properly re-improve these bitters but they should reform their mindsets not to fall under the bitter events with wavering. The results of building a strong and dynamic mindset will save them from the bitter experience and black days.

In the vicious circle, everybody creates fortune for themselves. They all adopt their future. Glittering and brighter days and experiences depend on their mindsets. Strong and white mindsets will take them to the deserved positions free from bitter experiences and black days. But they should not misuse the chance of creating their fortunes.



COVID-19: Germany first to contribute 'fair share' for vaccine equity push

GERMANY has become the first country to answer a call for wealthy nations to contribute their "fair share" towards ending the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported on Tuesday.

The country has committed to provide \$1.22 billion to support the ACT-Accelerator, the global partnership for equitable access to tests, treatments, vaccines, and personal protective equipment (PPE).

The mechanism requires \$16.8 billion to meet urgent needs.

'Fair share' calculation

Last month, the co-chairs of the ACT-Accelerator Facilitation

Council - President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa and Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre of Norway - appealed to 55 countries to contribute their "fair share" towards bridging the gap.

This would be calculated based on the size of their national economy and what they would gain from a faster recovery of the global economy and trade. German Finance Minister Christian Lindner, announced the pledge at the G7 Finance Ministers' Meeting, which was held virtually.

An additional \$253 million will also be allocated for in-country COVID-19 response.

Follow the leader

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the WHO Director General,



A health worker prepares to administer COVID-19 vaccines at a village in Kasungu, Malawi. PHOTO: UNICEF/THOKO CHIKONDI

thanked Germany for its leadership. "We call on other countries to follow Germany's lead in contributing their fair share, as we seek to end the acute phase of the

pandemic this year. Only through acting together can we achieve this goal," he said.

WHO's Special Envoys for the ACT-Accelerator, Dr Ayoade Alakija and Carl Bildt, have also welcomed the early support from Germany. The ACT-Accelerator was established just weeks after the pandemic was declared in March 2020. The global vaccine solidarity initiative COVAX is one of its four pillars.

WHO said the German pledge reinforces the strong support the country has provided to the ACT-Accelerator effort, since its inception.

SOURCE: UN



Study analyzes if medicines affect body's response to infections like COVID-19

A NEW clinical review of immune responses to paracetamol, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and opioid analgesics, with a focus on infectious diseases, has provided insights into the unintended impacts of these commonly used medicines.

The findings highlight the potential for some of these medicines to join the fight against old and new infectious diseases.

The study was published in the journal, 'British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology'.

Impact on the treatment

Although research into these drugs has focused on their effects on pain and fever management, until now, their impact on the treatment of infectious diseases specifically was unclear. The findings highlight the need for more studies in this under-recognized

area of research, with wide-reaching implications.

Key findings of the clinical review:

1. For pain: Morphine suppresses key cells of the immune system and increases the risk of infection, particularly after cancer surgery.
2. For fever: Antipyretics - e.g. Paracetamol, Ibuprofen, Aspirin - can reduce the desirable immune

response when taken for vaccination.

3. Aspirin could be an affordable and accessible therapeutic option for tuberculosis - which mainly afflicts poor countries, with beneficial results shown in animals and humans.

4. Anti-inflammatory medicine indomethacin may reduce viral replication in Covid-19 but large-scale human trials are needed.

Available evidence

Researchers led by the University of Sydney's Faculty of Medicine and Health opted for a 'clinical' review in order to have a broader scope to synthesize the available evidence, noting the importance of further research and trials regarding infectious disease responses.

The research was unplanned and the findings unexpected, with lead author Christina Abdel-Shaheed. She said that they initially were interested in studying possible impacts of paracetamol (acetaminophen) during the pandemic, when people hoarded the drug in the first months of COVID-19.

"We decided to study painkillers and fever medications generally and were amazed by what we found," she said.

"In 14 years of studying pain, this is the most important research I have been involved in," she added.

Need for rigorous clinical trials

Pain researcher Dr Christina Abdel-Shaheed, from Sydney Musculoskeletal Health, said the relationships uncovered with infectious diseases highlighted the need for rigorous clinical trials.

"Our review shows some of the common pain and fever medications may work with the immune system to fight infection, whereas others work against it and increase the risk of contracting or responding badly to infectious diseases," Dr Abdel-Shaheed said.

"Taking paracetamol or ibuprofen before or immediately after vaccination - for example for COVID-19 - to try to prevent mild fever or headache is not recommended, because this could reduce the body's desirable immune response to the vaccine," she continued.

"For chickenpox, use of ibuprofen is not recommended as it might increase the risk of secondary bacterial skin infections," she added.

An important finding

Dr Justin Beardsley, infectious disease specialist at Westmead Hospital and researcher with Sydney Institute for Infectious Diseases, said an important finding of this review during the pandemic was that: "morphine - one of the most commonly used opioid analgesics in post-surgical and critical care - suppresses key innate immunity cells, thereby increasing the risk of infection".

He highlighted: "This is particularly the case with cancer patients, who are already vulnerable to COVID-19." "Efforts are needed to achieve adequate analgesia whilst avoiding immune-suppression in the immediate postoperative period caused by opioids such as morphine - both for people undergoing cancer surgery as well as for the immunocompromised generally," said Dr Beardsley, who also works with the Westmead Institute for Medical Research.

New insights for further research Professor Andrew McLachlan said on the positive side, the findings provide new insights for further research to evaluate these commonly used medicines, which could be repurposed to improve outcomes for people undergoing treatment for infectious diseases.—ANI



REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE. Although research into these drugs has focused on their effects on pain and fever management, until now, their impact on the treatment of infectious diseases specifically was unclear. PHOTO: AFP



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Wednesday 2 March 2022)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (17:30 hrs M.S.T) today, the low pressure area over south Bay of Bengal and adjoining Equatorial Indian Ocean still persists. It may further intensify into a Depression during next 24 hours and continue to move west-northwestwards. Weather is cloudy over the South Andaman Sea and south Bay of Bengal and a few cloud over the north Andaman Sea and Central Bay of Bengal and generally fair elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 3 March 2022: Rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Taninthayi region and Mon state. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in upper Sagaing, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady regions and Kachin, (south and east) Shan, Kayah, Kayin states and generally fair in the remaining regions and states.

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

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of day temperatures in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady regions and (south and east) Shan, Kayah, Kayin, Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 March 2022: Generally fair weather.

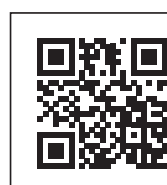
FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 March 2022: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 3 March 2022: Generally fair weather.

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Russian-European Mars rover ‘very unlikely’ to launch this year



The launch of the Rosalind Franklin rover, whose mission is to drill into Martian soil to seek out signs of life, has been again delayed. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

A Russian-European mission to land a rover on Mars is “very unlikely” to launch this year due to sanctions over Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine, the European Space Agency said.

The launch of the Rosalind Franklin rover, whose mission is to drill into Martian soil to seek out signs of life, was originally planned for 2020 but postponed due to Covid-19 and technical delays.

In January the ESA declared the ExoMars mission was ready to launch this September, with Russia providing the launcher, descent module

and landing platform.

However after Russia shocked the world by invading Ukraine last week and the European Union responded by targeting Moscow with a massive package of economic punishments, the ESA said “the sanctions and the wider context make a launch in 2022 very unlikely”.

“We are fully implementing sanctions imposed on Russia by our member states,” the ESA said in a statement on Monday.

“We deplore the human casualties and tragic consequences of the war in Ukraine. We are giving absolute priority

to taking proper decisions, not only for the sake of our workforce involved in the programmes, but in full respect of our European values.” The ESA also said it took note of the Russian space agency Roscosmos’ decision over the weekend to suspend launches and withdraw its workers from Europe’s spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana, over the EU sanctions.

It will “consequently assess” future planned operations using Russian launchers, including the deployment of two satellites for Europe’s Galileo GPS system planned for this year.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

UN roots for innovations to restore oceans’ health amid rising pollution

THE United Nations has called for the use of science-based innovative solutions in order to halt the decline in the health of oceans globally.

Peter Thomson, the special envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for the Ocean, said Monday that science has the solution that is crucial toward restoring the health of marine and coastal ecosystems.

“The international community needs to produce solutions that could lead to starting a new chapter in the global ocean action,” Thomson said at a forum on oceans held on the sidelines of the fifth resumed session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-5) underway in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya.—Xinhua ■

N. Korea says it conducted test for reconnaissance satellite on Sunday

NORTH KOREA carried out a test for developing a reconnaissance satellite system on Sunday, state-run media reported Monday following what its neighboring countries described as a ballistic missile launch toward the Sea of Japan. The latest test of what appears to be military equipment suggests that North Korea plans to take advantage of the United States’ focus on Russia’s invasion of Ukraine to develop its weapons capability, some foreign affairs experts said. Tokyo said North Korea’s missile on Sunday fell outside Japan’s exclusive economic zone after flying about 300 kilometers and reaching an altitude of roughly 600 km.—Kyodo ■

Australia tells tens of thousands to flee floods

DEADLY floods swept Australia’s east coast Tuesday, stranding residents on bridges and rooftops and forcing tens of thousands to flee their homes.

Flood warnings were in effect for dozens of areas across the states of Queensland and New South Wales, where a week-long “rain bomb” has dumped a metre (3.2 feet) of water on some areas in a week.

Several waterways have already burst their banks or broken through levees, inundating towns and forcing residents to flee or seek safety on higher ground.

Nine people have died and more than a thousand people have been rescued. Authorities have warned that more fatalities are likely.

The latest victim was a woman in her 80s, whose body was found by police inside a home in the country town of Lismore.



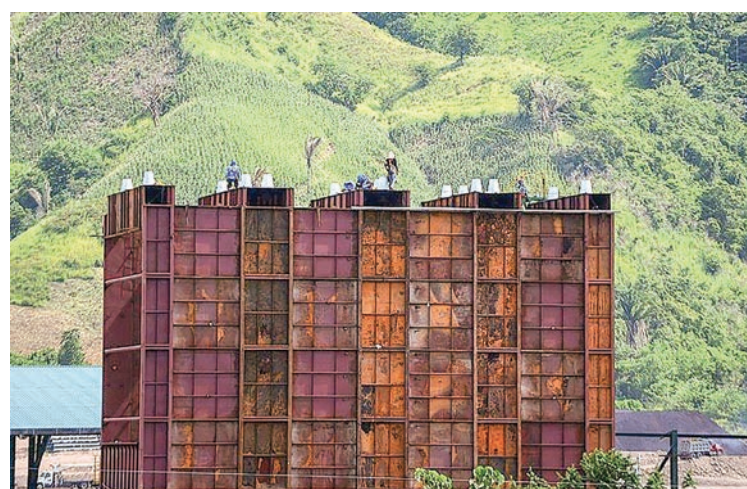
Flood warnings were in effect for dozens of areas across the states of Queensland and New South Wales, where a week-long “rain bomb” has dumped a metre of water. **PHOTO: QUEENSLAND FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES/AFP**

“She is yet to be formally identified,” said New South Wales Police.

In the usually laid back surf town of Byron Bay, Hannah Lesser spent the weekend celebrating her wedding with 150 guests.

But the new bride and

groom are now spending their honeymoon rescuing friends stranded in the nearby towns of Ballina and Mullumbimby in a borrowed four-wheel-drive. Some 30 people are camped at the house where they were to spend their honeymoon.—AFP ■



Men work at Los Pinares iron oxide mine, on the outskirts of Tocoa, Honduras in September 2021. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Honduras bans open-pit mining

THE government of newly elected Honduran President Xiomara Castro has banned open-pit mining, declaring it harmful to the environment and to people, and said it would scrap permits for such operations.

The move, announced Monday by the leftist leader, was met with joy by rights defenders and environmentalists but brought uncertainty to the industry.

“All Honduran territory is

declared free of open-pit mining,” a statement from the Ministry for Mining and the Environment said.

“The approval of extractive exploitation permits is cancelled because they... threaten natural resources and public health and limit access to water as a human right,” it added.

The statement did not specify whether this applied to new as well as existing permits for

open-pit, or surface mining.

Taking office on 27 January, Castro announced that banning open-pit mining was one of her priorities, along with fighting crime, poverty and corruption that she said was rife under her predecessor Juan Orlando Hernandez. The ministry also vowed to intervene “immediately” to conserve areas of “high ecological value” and secure their benefit to the population.—AFP ■

Philippines celebrates Ash Wednesday as Covid rules lift



Thousands of Filipinos flocked to churches to observe Ash Wednesday, with Catholic priests and nuns daubing their foreheads with a cross for the first time since the start of the pandemic. PHOTO: AFP

THOUSANDS of Filipinos flocked to churches to observe Ash Wednesday, with Catholic priests and nuns daubing their foreheads with a cross for the first time since the start of the coronavirus pandemic. Most Covid-19 restrictions were scrapped this week after a sharp drop in infections and increased vaccinations, allowing churches to pack their pews and physical contact to resume. Devotees wearing masks began lining up outside Baclaran Church in Manila before dawn to receive the ash cross on their foreheads – a ritual that signals

the beginning of Lent.

Churches have in the past two years sprinkled it in people's hair due to anti-Covid measures.

"I feel like I am in heaven," Lydia Smith, 76, told AFP outside the church where several thousand of the faithful stood in long queues waiting their turn. "I am really happy even if it's very crowded. It's like the joy of the church has returned."

The Philippines is overwhelmingly Catholic, with some 80 per cent of its people said to be believers. Since early 2020 most devotees have been forced

to follow church services online and major religious festivals have been curtailed or cancelled due to strict social-distancing rules. But Tuesday marked the beginning of the "new normal" in the national capital region and 38 other areas.

Most restrictions have been removed, allowing places of worship, restaurants and public transport to operate at full capacity. Local church officials gave the green light for the "imposition of ashes on the forehead" to resume on Wednesday, but sprinkling the powdery residue in hair was still allowed.—AFP ■

Chinese scientists design cocktail antibody to treat, prevent COVID-19



The double-kill antibody or bsAb15 has shown greater neutralizing efficiency than its parental ones, and more potent neutralizing activity against the Delta variant, according to the study published on Nature Immunology this week. PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE

CHINESE scientists designed a cocktail antibody that can deliver a one-two punch to the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

The researchers from Capital

Medical University and Chinese Academy of Sciences developed the bispecific human monoclonal antibody against SARS-CoV-2, combining a noncompeting pair

of human neutralizing antibodies, namely B38 and H4, to target two antigens, thus blocking the virus from binding to its receptor. The double-kill antibody or bsAb15 has shown greater neutralizing efficiency than its parental ones, and more potent neutralizing activity against the Delta variant, according to the study published on Nature Immunology this week. They selected escape mutants of the two parental antibodies and demonstrated that bsAb15 can efficiently neutralize all escape mutants of single antibodies.

Also, the new antibody was shown to reduce the viral titer in infected nonhuman primates and human ACE2 transgenic mice, making it a feasible and effective potential strategy to treat and prevent severe COVID-19, according to the study.—Xinhua ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Australian PM tests positive for Covid, isolates

PRIME MINISTER Scott Morrison has tested positive for Covid-19 but says he will carry on working from isolation at home as Australia's east coast battles huge floods.

The prime minister said he was suffering from "flu-like" symptoms after a PCR test came back positive on Tuesday.

"While in isolation I will continue to discharge all my responsibilities as prime minister," he said in a statement late Tuesday.

Morrison said he would be working on the response to deadly floods in Queensland and New South Wales, "ensuring we stand with each and every one of the affected communities".

"I will also be focused on our urgent response to the tragedy unfolding in Ukraine and Russia's senseless aggression, staying in regular contact with our security and intelligence officials and our international partners."—AFP ■

New Zealand reports 22,152 new community cases of COVID-19

NEW ZEALAND recorded 22,152 new community cases of COVID-19 on Wednesday, the Ministry of Health said in a statement.

A total of 13,231 cases was reported in the largest city Auckland. In addition, eight new cases were detected at the New Zealand border.

Currently, 405 COVID-19 patients are being treated in New Zealand hospitals, with 10 of them in the intensive care unit.

New Zealand has reported 142,321 confirmed cases of COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic, including 123,836 active community cases which have been identified in the past 21 days and not yet classified as recovered, the ministry said.—Xinhua ■

Valneva wins first Covid-19 vaccine approval

FRENCH-AUSTRIAN biotech firm Valneva on Tuesday said its Covid-19 vaccine received emergency authorization for use in Bahrain, the first approval for its jab.

Valneva committed to supplying the Gulf kingdom with one million doses in an advance purchase agreement last year and plans to deliver the first batches at the end of March.

The jab, which uses the traditional technology of inactivated virus, "will offer an alternative vaccine to the

Bahraini population and medical community", said Valneva president Thomas Lingelbach.

Bahrain has reported more than 1,400 Covid-related deaths and cases exceed 500,000. More than 70 per cent of the population has received at least one vaccine dose.

Valneva says it remains "determined" to gain further authorization for the VLA2001 jab. It hopes to receive conditional approval for use in the European Union by the end of March.—AFP ■



Valneva committed to supplying the Gulf kingdom with one million doses in an advance purchase agreement last year and plans to deliver the first batches at the end of March. PHOTO: EUROPEAN PHARMACEUTICAL REVIEW/AFP

NEWS
IN BRIEF

Japan PM says sanctions to be imposed on Belarus possibly this week

JAPAN will impose sanctions against Belarus as early as this week, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said in parliament Wednesday.

Belarus, known for its close ties with Russia, has served as an entry point for Moscow's forces invading Ukraine. The sanctions are expected to target Belarusian entities and individuals, including President Alexander Lukashenko.—Kyodo ■

France, Russia clash after Paris evokes 'economic war'

FRANCE'S finance minister said on Tuesday that Europe was waging "economic war" against Russia, prompting a senior Kremlin figure to warn about the dangers of a "real" conflict between the countries.

"We will bring about the collapse of the Russian economy," Bruno Le Maire told the Franceinfo broadcaster on Tuesday morning after France, the EU and others said they would impose a new round of sanctions on Moscow.—AFP ■

Visa, Mastercard, Amex block Russian banks after sanctions

US credit card giants Visa, Mastercard and American Express said they were blocking Russian banks from their payment networks following international sanctions in response to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. "As a result of sanction orders, we have blocked multiple financial institutions from the Mastercard payment network," Mastercard Chief Executive Michael Miebach said in a statement released Monday night. "We will continue to work with regulators in the days ahead to abide fully by our compliance obligations as they evolve." Visa said on its website that it is "taking prompt action to ensure compliance with applicable sanctions, and is prepared to comply with additional sanctions that may be implemented."—AFP ■

Putin signs decree on measures to ensure financial stability



People pass by an electronic board showing the exchange rates in Moscow, Russia, on 24 February 2022. The Russia's rouble exchange rate plunged after Russia launched military operations in Donbass. PHOTO: BAI XUEQI/ XINHUA

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin signed a decree introducing temporary economic measures to ensure the country's financial stability, the Kremlin announced Tuesday.

These measures will be taken in response to anti-Russian sanctions by the United States, other countries and international organizations, according to the decree.

Among the measures, Russia will ban the outflow of foreign currencies in an amount exceeding the equivalent of

10,000 US dollars starting Wednesday.

Effective since Wednesday, restrictions regarding transactions of securities, real estate and loans will be imposed on foreigners associated with countries that have taken anti-Russian actions.

On Monday, Putin also inked a decree introducing "special economic measures" to cushion the impact of a new wave of Western sanctions amid Russia's special military operation in Ukraine.—Xinhua ■

Egypt's Suez Canal increases transit tolls by up to 10 pct



Tourists take pictures on the bank of the Suez Canal as a giant container ship passes by in Ismailia Province, Egypt, on 5 October 2021. PHOTO: XINHUA/AHMED GOMAA

EGYPT'S Suez Canal Authority (SCA) announced on Tuesday an increase in the transit tolls by up to 10 per cent for laden and bal-

last vessels. The decision, which was made in line with significant growth in global trade, waterway development, and transit service enhancement, takes effect on 1 March the SCA said in a statement. This is the second toll increase in two months.

On 1 February the SCA raised its transit tolls by six per cent for vessels travelling through the waterway, except for the tourist ships and the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) carriers.

"The new increase is subject to continuous evaluation based on the changes of the marine transit market," the statement added.

Linking the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea, the Suez Canal was officially opened for international navigation in 1869, serving as a lifeline for global seaborne trade. Around 12 per cent of the world's trade passes through the canal.—Xinhua ■

Nord Stream 2 firm files for bankruptcy after Russian invasion

THE Swiss-based Nord Stream 2 company has gone belly-up after Germany halted the gas pipeline following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Berlin halted the project, built to bring Russian gas to Europe, as Moscow faced a barrage of sanctions from the West.

"Nord Stream became insolvent because of last week's US sanctions," Silvia Thalmann-Gut, economics director in the Swiss canton of Zug where the company is based, told public broadcaster SRF.

She said the regional authorities had been informed

Tuesday that the company had filed for bankruptcy and its entire workforce of 106 people had been laid off.

The United States and Germany announced last week that they were imposing sanctions on the Russian Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipeline project in retaliation for Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

The targeting of Nord Stream 2 — one of energy-rich Russia's highest-profile geostrategic initiatives — did not however prevent Moscow from launching a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February.—AFP ■



A worker at the construction site of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline in Lubmin, northeastern Germany. PHOTO: AFP / TOBIAS SCHWARZ

World's biggest shipping groups suspend Russian deliveries

THE three biggest container shipping groups in the world announced Tuesday that they were suspending non-essential deliveries to Russia, adding to the country's economic isolation following a raft of sanctions by the West.

Danish shipping giant Maersk, Switzerland-based MSC and France's CMA CGM all announced that they would no longer take bookings for goods from Russia and were suspending most deliveries in the wake of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. Citing the impact of sanctions, "bookings to and from Russia will be temporarily suspended, with exception of foodstuffs, medical and humanitarian supplies", Maersk said in a statement.

MSC announced similar measures, saying it would "continue to accept and screen bookings for delivery of essential goods".

CMA CGM said its "utmost priorities remain to protect our employees and ensure as much as possible the continuity of your supply chain". "In the interest of safety, the group has decided to suspend all bookings to and from Russia as of today and until further notice," it said in a statement posted on its website. MSC recently became the biggest shipper in the world by capacity, followed closely by Maersk, according to data from intelligence provider Alphaliner, with both companies accounting for around 17 per cent each of global container shipping.

MSC is the third biggest, with a share of 12.6 per cent, according to Alphaliner. Smaller competitors such as Singapore-headquartered Ocean Network Express and Germany's Hapag Lloyd have also announced an end to non-essential deliveries.—AFP ■



Two of the world's biggest container shipping companies are halting cargo bookings to and from Russia. PHOTO: OLGA MAL'TSEVA/AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

World's first LNG dual-fuel oil tanker commissioned in COSCO's fleet

THE world's first LNG dual-fuel crude oil tanker has been delivered to China's shipping giant COSCO Shipping.

According to COSCO Shipping, the ship will be assigned to Yangpu Port in south China's island province of Hainan, adding the number of the port's registered ships for international voyages to 32.

The ship, 333 metres long and 60 metres wide, uses LNG as the main fuel. It is equipped with LNG dual-fuel main engine, generator and boiler.

The use of clean energy in shipping can help reduce sulfur oxide emission by 99 per cent and particulate matter by 98 per cent, compared with current oil tankers.—Xinhua ■

Boeing announces suspension of support for Russian airlines

AMERICAN aviation giant Boeing on Tuesday announced it was suspending its support for Russian airlines and its operations in Moscow amid a growing backlash to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"We have suspended major operations in Moscow and temporarily closed our office in Kyiv," the Ukrainian capital, a Boeing spokesperson said.—AFP ■

Indian auto companies report mixed trend in February domestic sales

INDIAN auto companies reported a mixed trend in February monthly domestic sales, with Tata Motors and Mahindra reporting growth while the country's largest passenger car maker Maruti Suzuki showing a marginal decline, as per the filing with the bourses on Tuesday.

The February sales figures for Tata Motors grew by 47 per cent to 39,981 while Mahindra reported an 80 per cent rise to 27,663 units over the corresponding month last year.

However, Maruti Suzuki reported a 6.7 per cent drop in February domestic sales to 137,607 units over the same month last year. "The shortage of electronic components had a minor impact on the production of vehicles which are primarily sold in domestic market. The Com-

pany took all possible measures to minimize the impact." Maruti Suzuki said in its statement. Commenting on the monthly performance, Veejay Nakra, chief executive officer of the automotive division of Mahindra & Mahin-

dra, said, "We expect demand to continue to remain strong as the COVID-19 situation eases further. We continue to closely monitor the semiconductor related parts supply and take corrective action as appropriate."—Xinhua ■



Tata Motors has announced that the Altroz hatchback will be soon offered with a new DCT gearbox. PHOTO: TATA/XINHUA



The transport shutdown came as seven-and-a-half hour electricity blackouts also went into effect, the longest scheduled power rationing in over a quarter of a century. PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka runs out of fuel as dollar crisis worsens

SRI Lanka's public transport was crippled Wednesday as buses ran out of diesel, officials said as the country's foreign exchange crisis worsened with no dollars to import fuel.

The Private Bus Owners' Association said they were able to operate only about a quarter of their fleet of 20,000 vehicles,

while drivers reported queuing for seven hours to top up fuel.

"I could not run the bus for two days because there was no diesel," said 51-year-old bus driver Sarath.

"I have been in the diesel queue for seven-and-a-half hours." Many commuters were seen using their own motorcycles

and small cars Wednesday after bus operators warned of drastically scaled back schedules. One of Sri Lanka's biggest fuel suppliers, Lanka IOC, put up prices by as much as 12 per cent on Saturday while the state-owned Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC) said it too asked the government to allow it to raise prices.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF**US troops in Europe not to fight in Ukraine, but to defend allies: Biden**

WHILE extending support to Kyiv in the ongoing Ukraine-Russia conflict, US President Joe Biden has reiterated that his country will not deploy troops in Ukraine against the Russian forces.

Biden's remarks came during the first State of Union address delivered by him to a joint session of Congress at the Capitol.

Condemning Russia's "premeditated attack" in Ukraine, Biden said that Russian President Vladimir Putin sought to shake the very foundation of the free world.

He further said that the NATO alliance was created to secure peace and stability in Europe after World War II and the US stands with Ukraine in the ongoing conflict.

However, Biden added that the US will not have boots on the ground in the ongoing war.—ANI ■

Slovakia allows in Russian plane with nuclear fuel

A Russian cargo plane carrying nuclear fuel landed in Slovakia on Tuesday, the EU member said, marking an exception to the ban on Russian aircraft in EU airspace.

Poland's civil aviation authority said it had also given its green light to the flight, which had to fly over Belarus and Poland to reach Slovakia. "Today... the Il-76 aircraft of Volga Dnepr Airlines landed at Bratislava Airport, transporting nuclear fuel from the Russian Federation," the economy ministry said in a statement. Slovakia, which had been one of the last EU countries to close its airspace to Russian aircraft, said the flight Tuesday benefited from an exemption made in the case of humanitarian aid and nuclear fuel.—AFP ■

Lebanese Hezbollah chief blames US for Russia-Ukraine conflict

LEBANON'S Hezbollah Chief Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah on Tuesday blamed the United States for the events taking place in Ukraine, urging those trusting the United States to draw a lesson from the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Nasrallah made the remarks in a televised speech during a conference held on the 30th anniversary of the martyrdom of Hezbollah leader Sayyed Abbas al-Moussawi, the Lebanese National News Agency reported.

"What's happening between Ukraine and Russia is very dangerous," Nasrallah warned, adding that "Washington has done everything to push for the current scenario."

"The United States is responsible for what is happening in Ukraine," he said, accusing Washington of refraining from helping reach a diplomatic solution and complicating or even to certain degree inciting the Russia-Ukraine confrontation.—Xinhua ■

Belarus President orders more troops to Ukraine border

BELARUSIAN President Alexander Lukashenko said Tuesday he had ordered more troops to the south of the country, by the border with Ukraine, the Belta news agency reported.

But forces of Belarus, a close ally of Russia, would not be taking part in the attack on Ukraine, he added. On the sixth day of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Lukashenko told a meeting of his security council that he would be sending five tactical battle groups to protect the south.

These battle groups will comprise hundreds of soldiers equipped with armoured vehicles and artillery. Helicopters and warplanes were already protecting the southern border, he told the meeting.

Explaining his decision not to send troops into Ukraine itself, he said: "That's not our



This handout image grab taken and released by the Russian Defence Ministry on 8 January 2021 shows Belarus' paratroopers unboarding a military cargo plane after landing in Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan's president has rejected calls for talks with protesters after days of unprecedented unrest. **PHOTO: HANDOUT / RUSSIAN DEFENCE MINISTRY / AFP / FILE**

job." Lukashenko also said he was sending troops west to the country's border with Poland.

"We must under no circumstances allow an invasion of NATO forces on Belarusian

territory, nor the least operation on our territory," he said. Last week Lukashenko allowed Russian troops to use Belarusian territory to invade Ukraine from the north.—AFP ■

Ukraine Crisis: Venezuela assures "strong support" to Russia

Ukrainian servicemen prepare to repel an attack in Ukraine's Lugansk region on 24 February 2022 **PHOTO: ANATOLII STEPANOV/AFP**

IN rare backing for Russia following its invasion of Ukraine, Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro on Tuesday assured

Vladimir Putin of his "strong support" in a telephone call, according to a Kremlin statement. In the call initiated by Ca-

racas, the Venezuelan leader also condemned "destabilizing actions of the United States and NATO" and spoke out against a Western campaign of "lies and disinformation", it said.

Dozens of people have been killed and nearly 680,000 have fled Ukraine since Putin ordered his troops into the country last week after failing to get guarantees that NATO will not expand its military alliance eastward.

In the call with Maduro, Putin insisted the objectives of the military assault were to "protect the civilian population" of the Donbass separatist region and to get Kiev to recognize Russian sovereignty over Crimea, which it annexed in 2014.—AFP ■

Kremlin says 'too soon to assess' Ukraine talks

THE Kremlin on Tuesday said it was too early to draw conclusions from a first round of talks held with Ukraine on ending the war following Moscow's invasion last week.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said President Vladimir Putin had been informed about the talks and that "it is too soon to assess" their outcome.

Russian and Ukrainian officials met on Monday on the border between Belarus and

Ukraine for the first talks since the outbreak of war.

Peskov said Moscow will "analyze" the outcome of the talks.

He spoke several hours after Ukrainian officials said the Russian army shelled the central square of Ukraine's second city, Kharkiv. Russian troops also reached the southern city of Kherson on Tuesday, advancing from Moscow-annexed Crimea.

Peskov said Russian forces

"do not carry out strikes against civilian infrastructure or residential complexes", despite widespread evidence otherwise.

Ukraine says more than 350 civilians have been killed since Moscow launched its attack last Thursday. Russia has admitted losses but has not disclosed how many of its troops have died so far. Some Russian regional leaders started naming soldiers killed in Ukraine on Tuesday.—AFP ■



A military cargo truck is pictured in central Kyiv in the morning on 24 February 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

Fighting continues as Russia, Ukraine expected to resume talks

FIGHTING continues as Russia's "special military operation" in Ukraine has entered the seventh day, while a new round of peace talks is reportedly to take place. A massive Russian airstrike hit the centre of Ukraine's second-largest city of Kharkiv on Tuesday, as rockets struck residential areas and buildings of the regional state administration, according to Ukraine's State Service for Emergencies. The agency on Tuesday reported Russia's attack on the Kyiv TV tower which had killed five people and injured five others. Russia would strike the information warfare and psychological operation center of the Ukrainian Armed Forces as well as tech-



Photo taken on 1 March 2022 shows armed personnel in Donetsk. PHOTO: VICTOR/XINHUA

nological facilities of the Ukrainian Security Service in Kyiv with high-precision weapons, Russian Defence Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov told a regular briefing on Tuesday. Russian Defence Min-

ister Sergei Shoigu vowed to continue the military operation in Ukraine until achieving the main goal of defending Russia from Western threats. "The main thing for us is to protect Russia from the

military threat posed by Western countries that are trying to use the Ukrainian people in the fight against our country," Shoigu said during a video conference with senior defence officials.—Xinhua ■

Five killed in Russian strike on Kyiv TV tower



A Ukrainian interior ministry hand out photo shows the moment an apparent Russian strike knocked out television broadcasts in Kyiv. PHOTO: UKRAINIAN INTERIOR MINISTRY PRESS SERVICES/AFP

AN apparent Russian airstrike aimed at Kyiv's main television tower killed five people on Tuesday, officials said, knock-

ing out some broadcasts but leaving the structure intact. After a blast sounded around the city and

smoke was seen rising in the Babi Yar district, the emergencies service said five people were also injured in the attack.

Ukrainian officials released footage of charred bodies and cars damaged by the strike, which came during a surge of Russian attacks on Ukraine's second city of Kharkiv.

"To the world: what is the point of saying 'never again' for 80 years, if the world stays silent when a bomb drops on the same site of Babi Yar," Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelensky asked in a tweet. "Once again, these barbarians are murdering the victims of Holocaust!" The tower is based near the Babi Yar ravine where more than 30,000 were slaughtered by the Nazis during World War II.—AFP ■

Russian troops land in Ukraine's second city Kharkiv

RUSSIAN forces landed in Ukraine's second biggest city on Wednesday and triggered immediate clashes in the streets of Kharkiv, the military said, following Moscow's relentless air assault across the ex-Soviet state.

The airborne operation came as US President Joe Biden branded Vladimir Putin a "dictator", warning the sanction campaign to cripple Russia's economy would escalate and its oligarchs were being targeted. In Biden's

first State of the Union address, he hailed the resolve of the Western alliance and voiced solidarity with Ukraine as lawmakers in the US Congress gave a standing ovation to the Ukrainian people. "A Russian dictator,

invading a foreign country, has costs around the world," Biden told lawmakers in his annual State of the Union address, promising "robust action to make sure the pain of our sanctions is targeted at Russia's economy".—AFP ■

OBITUARY

Asleep in Jesus U Saw Tun Zan (92) years

Residing at No.95 Cherry Road, PyinOoLwin; beloved husband of (Daw Naw Ivy Tun Zan); beloved father of U Than Myint Tun + Daw Naw Edna Jean Kyaw Zan; beloved grandpa of Naw May Thandar Tun, Naw Khin Kyi Thar Tun, Naw Yin Thu Zar Tun, Mee Gyi, San San Aye was asleep in Jesus peacefully on 2-3-2022 at 12:50 pm.

Bereaved family

NEWS IN BRIEF

Chinese, Ukrainian FMs hold phone talks over Ukrainian situation

CHINESE State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi held a phone conversation at request with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba on Tuesday.

Kuleba briefed Wang about the first round of Ukraine-Russia talks, saying that the end of the fighting is the top priority for Ukraine. Ukraine stays open to a negotiated settlement to the current issue and treats the talks with Russia with positive sincerity, said Kuleba, adding that despite current difficulties, the Ukrainian side remains calm and willing to push forward the talks. China has played a constructive role in the Ukrainian issue, said Kuleba, mentioning that Ukraine stands ready to strengthen communication with the Chinese side and looks forward to China's mediation in achieving a ceasefire.—Xinhua ■

NATO chief stresses diplomatic efforts to solve Ukraine crisis

VISITING Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Jens Stoltenberg on Tuesday stressed diplomatic efforts to solve the ongoing Ukraine crisis.

Stoltenberg made the remarks at a joint press conference with Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas and visiting British Prime Minister Boris Johnson at the Tapa Army Base in northern Estonia.

He called for an immediate stop of the war in Ukraine, pullout of Russian forces and the engaging of diplomatic efforts.—Xinhua ■

Ukraine war brings Sweden, Finland even closer to NATO

THE Russian invasion of Ukraine has upended the status quo in traditionally non-aligned Finland and Sweden, ushering in an "historic" surge in support for NATO, "exceptional" arms exports and defiance to Moscow's demands. Stockholm and Helsinki have ruled out applying to join the NATO military alliance for the time being but the two countries have never been so close to taking the plunge, analysts say.

"Anything is possible at the moment and the signal from NATO countries is that a membership application can be processed in a very short time-span," said Zebulun Carlander, defence analyst with the Society and Defence organization in Sweden.—AFP ■

Myanmar to play opener against Tajikistan in third-round Asian Cup Qualifiers

THE Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has announced the qualifiers for the 2023 AFC Asian Cup, with Myanmar set to take on Tajikistan in their first group match.

The Football Confederation held the drawing-lot ceremony for the third round of the Asian Cup on 24 February in four groups of six.

Myanmar is placed in Group F with Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Singapore.

According to the group division, Jordan, Kuwait, Indonesia and Nepal are placed in Group A.

Group B consists of Palestine, the Philippines, Yemen, and Mongolia.

Next, ASEAN powerhouse Thailand is falling in Group C with Uzbekistan, Maldives and Sri Lanka.

Meanwhile, Group D is made of India, Hong Kong, Afghanistan and Cambodia and Group E will see Bahrain, Turkmenistan, Malaysia and Bangladesh.

The Myanmar team is in the tough group and likely to struggle to qualify for the tournament.

According to the match

schedule, the Myanmar team will play against Tajikistan on 8 June, Kyrgyzstan on 11 June and Singapore on 14 June, respectively.

The third round will be a one-round event, with a total of 11 teams including the top six teams from each of the six groups and the top five runners-up will qualify to the next stage.

Myanmar lost to ASEAN regional rival Singapore in the same group at the ASEAN Suzuki Cup in 2021. —Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Ukraine's Yarmolenko will 'not be rushed back', say West Ham



West Ham manager David Moyes said Tuesday he would not rush Andriy Yarmolenko back into action after the club gave the Ukraine international time off following the invasion of his country by Russia. **PHOTO: AFP**

WEST Ham manager David Moyes said Tuesday he would not rush Andriy Yarmolenko back into action after the club gave the Ukraine international time off following the invasion of his country by Russia.

The 32-year-old winger was not part of the Hammers' squad for Sunday's 1-0 Premier League win over Wolves.

Moyes, whose side return to action on Wednesday with an FA Cup fifth-round tie at Southampton, said Yarmolenko had done some light training on Monday.

"We won't rush him," said the Hammers boss. "I've asked him to come in today and see how he feels. If he feels fine and up to it then he'll travel with the team. If he doesn't, then we'll give him

some more days off.

"Things can change very quickly but we'll give him the chance to go with his own feelings. "He's really upset — he's got lots of family members in Ukraine and friends and he's worried for everybody and realises the difficulty that's going on, and he's a long way away and can't do an awful lot about it." There was a strong show of support for Yarmolenko and Ukraine before West Ham's match on Sunday — the players warmed up in T-shirts displaying his name and Declan Rice led the side out carrying Yarmolenko's number seven shirt.

"We speak to him (Yarmolenko) most days," said Moyes. "I have to say the players at the club were great with him (on Monday), they tried to get him back in, integrate him and make sure he felt really welcome and that we were thinking about him and his family.

"But there's very little we can do — we just have to try to support him as best we can." —AFP ■

Klopp plays down 'crazy' Liverpool quadruple talk

LIVERPOOL manager Jurgen Klopp says it is "crazy" to even think about an unprecedented quadruple of trophies as he prepares his League Cup winners for Wednesday's FA Cup tie against Norwich.

The Reds beat Chelsea 11-10 in a dramatic penalty shootout at Wembley on Sunday to win the

first piece of domestic silverware on offer in the English season and are still chasing glory on three other fronts.

Victory against Premier League strugglers Norwich would take Liverpool through to the FA Cup quarter-finals, while they are 2-0 up after the first leg of their elite European Champi-

ons League last-16 game against Inter Milan. Klopp's men are six points behind Premier League leaders Manchester City, with a match in hand, after a run of six consecutive league wins.

But the German is not entertaining the thought of winning all four trophies, with months of the season still to come. —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.

Djokovic announces split from long-time coach Vajda

NOVAK Djokovic's turbulent start to 2022 took another twist Wednesday as the 20-time Grand Slam champion revealed he had split from his long-time coach Marian Vajda after last year's ATP Finals.

Djokovic was deported on the eve of the Australian Open in January and on Monday lost his number one ranking to Russian Daniil Medvedev.

"Marian has been by my side during the most important and memorable moments in

my career," said the 34-year-old Djokovic on his official website.

Djokovic began working with the Slovakian coach since he was a teenager in 2006, though they split for a year in 2017. "Together we have achieved some incredible things and I am very grateful for his friendship and dedication over the last 15 years." Vajda stopped working with Djokovic following the tour finals in Turin in November.—AFP ■



Novak Djokovic has split with Marian Vajda (left). **PHOTO: AFP**