

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Sunday, 27 March 2022

Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

Hailing 77th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

To consistently uphold the National Policy: Our Three Main National Causes and foster democracy desired by people not to dissent from its route based on the principles of the Constitution with the entire people ...

(Excerpt from the speech made by SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Maha Thray Sithu Min Aung Hlaing on the occasion of the 76th Anniversary Armed Forces Day).



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

Notification

THE military parade of the 77th Anniversary Armed Forces Day will be held on 27 March 2022. On that day, the Yangon-Mandalay Highway, from the Bawgathiri traffic light of Pysinmana Township to the Thaikchaung junction traffic light of Zeyathiri Township will be temporarily closed from 00:05 am to 10:00 am. The public can use the Yangon-Mandalay highway separate road from the Thaikchaung junction traffic light of Nay Pyi Taw-Zeyathiri Township along the Neikban Road (circular road) to the Khwanyo Roundabout, to the Yazathingaha Road, the Kumudra Lotus Roundabout, the Yazahtani Road via the Pankhin traffic light-Bawgathiri traffic light of Pysinmana Township.

Nay Pyi Taw Traffic Rules Enforcement Supervisory Committee

77th Armed Forces Day Military Parade event to be broadcast live

THE celebration of the 77th Armed Forces Day Military Parade which will be held on 27 March at the Nay Pyi Taw Military Parade Ground will be broadcast live on MRTV HD, MRTV News Channel, MWD Channel, MWD Variety Channel, MITV, MOI Website, MOI Youtube and MRTV Website and aired live on Radio Myanmar, Thazin FM, Mandalay FM, Pyinsawady FM, Shwe FM, Padamyar FM and Cherry FM starting from 5 am on 27 March. —MNA

235 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 26 March, total figure rises to 610,728

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **610,728** after **235** new cases were reported on 26 March 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **567,945** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **19,429** after **1** died.. —MNA

Yangon main pandal under construction to celebrate Maha Thingyan Festival

YANGON City's main pandal is under construction to celebrate Yangon Maha Thingyan Water Festival of Myanmar Era 1383 in front of the Yangon City Hall. This year, Yangon Maha Thingyan Water Festival will be held successfully, it is learnt.

Under the supervision of the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC), Yangon's main pandal is being constructed by outside skilled labourers. The area of the entertainment hall will be 94 x 48 feet while the area of the water park will be 120 x 20 feet. The entertainment pandal and water-playing pandal will be built stronger. Besides, there will be artwork that will depict Myanmar culture, said the officer in charge of the construction of the Yangon City main pandal.

Although the Myanmar Traditional Water Festival has not

been held for two years to control the spreading of COVID-19, the plan is now underway to make Yangonites have fun and recreation following Myanmar tradition and culture in the coming Myanmar New Year.

This year, Yangon Maha Thingyan Water Festival main pandal includes Myanmar traditional dancing competition and ethnic culture dancing competition. Besides, other music performances will also be included, according to the YCDC.

The construction of the Yangon Maha Thingyan Water Festival main pandal will be completed by 10 April, according to the official from YCDC.

Thingyan (water festival) is the biggest and most popular festival in Myanmar and this is very attractive to tourists. It is not only known as the Thingyan



The construction of the Yangon Maha Thingyan Water Festival main pandal is underway. **PHOTO: SOE MYINT AUNG**

festival but also as the Myanmar Traditional New Year Festival which usually occurs in the middle of April and is usually celebrated over a period of four to five days. — Pwint Thitsa

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

The right of citizens can only be claimed if there is no destructive elements

- Individual human rights include respect for each other; Appreciation is the most important thing. Citizens can also claim their rights if they have a country.
- Despite the destruction of the country, there is no example in the world that protects the rights of individual citizens. The right of citizens can only be claimed if there is no destructive elements.

(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)

SAC Chairman Senior General Min Aung Hlaing pays respect to retired military personnel to 77th Anniversary Armed Forces Day Ceremony



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla talk with the retired military personnel and their wives in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

THE retired military personnel and wives arrived at the Bayintnaung Guesthouse in Nay Pyi Taw to attend the military parade of the 77th Anniversary Armed Forces Day.

State Administration

Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla paid respects to the retired military officers and wives yesterday evening.

First, the Senior General and wife cordially met them and assisted their health and social matters.

Then, the Senior General talked about the changes in the political sector, cooperation work

of the government, Tatmadaw and people in strengthening the genuine disciplined multiparty democratic system and in building a Union based on democracy and federalism, good traditions of Tatmadaw and assistance for the

food and accommodation of Tatmadaw members and families.

The retired military personnel expressed their pride in attending the military parade and gave some words of advice.

—MNA

MoH Union Minister meets EEC delegates

UNION Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win received the delegation of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) led by Project Manager Mr Iliia Nesterov of the Russian-Myanmar Friendship Association on 25 March.

First, the Union Minister presented the use of one million Russian made Sputnik Light, treatment activities, public healthcare services, development programmes in health-related human resources and medical sectors and called on further cooperation with Russia.

Then, the delegates exchanged views on Myanmar-Russia health cooperation,

international standard COVID-19 vaccine production sector of Russia, vaccine registration processes in Myanmar, medical research, manufacturing of medicines, hospital materials and diagnosis machines, medicinal technology and training, cooperation in the field of radiation therapy in cancer treatment, proper communication between the universities of medicine and universities of medical technology and the use of the solar system in hospitals and health department in remote areas. The event was attended by the deputy minister of the Health Ministry, the directors-general and representatives of the EEC. —MNA



Union Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win meets the delegation of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) led by Project Manager Mr Iliia Nesterov of the Russian-Myanmar Friendship Association on 25 March.

Union Industry Minister meets EU-Asia Economic Commission delegation

UNION Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than received a delegation led by Vice-Chairman of the Russian Association for Friendship and Cooperation with Myanmar Mr Vitaly Maliev at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Industry on 25 March.

During the meeting, potential investment issues between the Ministry of Industry and the Eurasian Economic Commission were discussed.

They also said that the Ministry of Industry wants to cooperate in the areas of iron and steel production and pharmaceutical industry as Russia provides technical assistance for the speedy resumption of

No 2 Steel Mill (Pinpet).

Sending experts, cooperation with Russian pharmaceutical companies in the production of cancer drugs that Myanmar Pharmaceuticals is trying to produce, infrastructure development and electricity sector development were also focused in the meeting.

They also discussed the successful holding of the Russia-Myanmar Business Forum to enhance cooperation in the industrial sector and bilateral economic sector.

The deputy ministers from the Ministry of Industry, the directors-general, managing directors and officials also attended the meeting.—MNA



The MoI Union Minister holds talks with the Eurasian Economic Commission delegation in Nay Pyi Taw on 25 March.

Union Education Minister meets Head of Asia Bureau



The MoE Union Minister receives the Asia Bureau Head of the Asahi Shimbun Newspaper in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

UNION Minister for Education Dr Nyunt Pe met Head of Asia Bureau of Asahi Shimbun Newspaper, Japan, Mr Onaga Tadao at the lobby of the Ministry of Education Office in Nay Pyi Taw at 10:30 am yesterday.

During the meeting, the post-COVID-19 education conditions were discussed, and the Union minister gave comprehensive answers to the enquires raised.

Next, the Union minister said that education was important for the development of the country with a large number of skilled and knowledgeable people.

At a time when the COV-

ID-19 pandemic is declining, primary schools and universities have been opened, and now the primary school year is coming to an end, the Union minister said.

Arrangements are being made for students to continue their studies as usual and new teachers were also trained and appointed, he added.

He said that he would like to work together for the education of the country in the future as Myanmar and Japan have been friends for many years.

Deputy Minister Dr Zaw Myint and Permanent Secretary Dr Soe Win also attended the meeting.—MNA

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

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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.

MoC facilitates daily imports of essential anti-COVID-19 equipment

THE Ministry of Commerce is overseeing the importation of essential medical supplies plus anti-COVID devices that are critical to the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities, including liquid oxygen and ox-

ygen cylinders, through trading posts, international airports and seaports.

A total of one tonne of masks and 0.4 tonne of gloves were imported via the Kampaiti border trade post yesterday.

From 1 to 26 March, 680 cylinders empty oxygen, one oxygen plant, one oxygen generator, 100 oxygen concentrators, 22 tonnes of gloves and 70 tonnes of masks were imported by 10 vehicles of six companies through interna-

tional seaports and trade posts.

Officials from the relevant departments are cooperating to facilitate and expedite the standard operating procedures for the import process.

It is reported that the Minis-

try of Commerce is coordinating with relevant departments and treatment of COVID-19 as well as contact persons for inquiries can be reached through the Ministry's Website — www.commerce.gov.mm. — MNA

COVID-19 vaccine drive continues in various regions, states



Locals get jabbed against COVID-19 in Mon State.

DOCTORS and nurses from public hospitals, Tatmadaw medical teams, healthcare workers and volunteers are working hard to administer COVID-19 vaccines in different states and regions as the vaccination programme is one of the most important activities in the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19

disease.

The COVID-19 vaccine is inoculated daily to target groups regardless of race or religion, including Buddhist monks and nuns, local people over the age of 40, students, religious leaders, prisoners, people with disabilities, ethnic armed organizations, people with chronic diseases,

people in IDP camps and over 12-year-old students, respectively.

On 26 March, doctors and nurses from public hospitals, medical teams from the Tatmadaw, relevant healthcare workers in collaboration with volunteers injected COVID-19 vaccines to 6,511 people from 14 townships in Mon and Kayin states, 330 people from Tamway Township in Yangon Region, 14,390 people from 26 townships in Ayeyawady Region, 9,074 people from eight townships in Rakhine State, 49,109 people from seven districts in Mandalay Region and 270 people from Htantabin Townships in Bago Region, respectively.

It is reported that officials from the respective Military Commands visited the sites and coordinated where necessary. — MNA

Youth Awareness Lecture conducted at BEHS-1 in Maubin

WITH the cooperation of the Department of Basic Education, Department of Information and Public Relations, and Department of Sports and Physical Education, a youth awareness talk was given to basic education students at Myat Pyinya Hall of Basic Education High School in Maubin Township, Maubin District, Ayeyawady Region at 11 pm yesterday.

To develop students' knowledge, Assistant Director of Maubin District Education Office Daw Maw Maw Khaing, gave a talk on "Good Morals, Good Discipline" at the Youth Awareness Seminar.

Next, District Information and Public Relations Department Assistant Director Daw Tin Thuzar Hlaing spoke on the topic of morality and patriotism.

Then Assistant Director U Kyaw Myint from District Sports



and Physical Education Department talked about "Youth and Sports" and students from No. (1) Basic Education Middle School (Maubin) attended the lecture.

After the talk, Assistant Director of District Sports and

Physical Education Department U Kyaw Myint provided sports equipment for the students from No. (1) Basic Education High School and the headmistress Daw Soe Soe Maw received them. —Maubin IPRD/GNLM

Door-to-door water distribution system launching ceremony held in Maungtau Township

DOOR-TO-DOOR water distribution system launching ceremony with water meters using Ngwe Taung Dam water was organized at Magyigon Village of Maungtau Township in Rakhine State yesterday.

First, the District Head of Rural Development Department U Oo Saw Tun explained the water distribution processes adding that the department utilized the K116.365 million Union Budget to provide water to seven villages and K318.516 million of Rakhine State budget for 22 villages during the six-month mini-budget period of the 2021-2022FY. Currently, the Kissapanadi Nadi Hlaing Com-

pany conducted the door-to-door water distribution system using a K30.840 million budget and it can benefit 730 people of 140 houses. He then instructed the need to sustain the system and one town elder expressed words of thanks on behalf of villagers.

Then, District Administration body Chairman U Nay Oo, District Administration body member Colonel Kyaw Thu Win and District Head U Oo Saw Tun cut the ribbon to launch the ceremony. They inspected the use of water meters in the villages together with the attendees to the ceremony. —Thet Lwin Soe (IPRD)/GNLM



Youth Awareness Talks, Chess Training held at Nyaunglebin Community Centre

WITH the cooperation of the Information and Public Relations Department and Department of Sports and Physical Education of Nyaunglebin Township, Bago District in Bago Region, a youth knowledge lecture was held at 3 pm at the township's Community Centre Hall.

Township Head of the Information and Public Relations Department Daw Ni Ni Win said that the purpose of opening the

chess course and Youth Awareness Talks is to help young people become great people.

She mentioned that it was a celebration and gave a lecture entitled "Try to get an education not only if you can read and write".

After that, the students who attended the ceremony attended the chess course with enthusiasm. —Township IPRD/GNLM

Total border trade value drops by \$2.4 bln this mini-budget year

THE total border trade value at border trade camps exceeded US\$3.18 billion during this mini-budget period, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

During the mini-budget period, the total border trade amounted to \$3.180 billion, down \$2.44 billion compared with the

last year's figure of \$5.623 billion.

From 1 October to 18 March of the 2021-22FY, the country's export via land borders amounted to \$2.33 billion, while its import shared \$827.79 million.

Myawady topped the list of border checkpoints with the most trade value of \$1.19 billion,

followed by Hteekhee with \$916 million.

Myanmar is trading with her main neighbouring countries — China, India, Bangladesh and Thailand. Sino-Myanmar border trade is carried out through Muse, Lwejel, Kampaiti, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung

land borders while Myanmar is carrying out border trade with India via Tamu and Reed.

The country's border trade posts with Bangladesh are Sitway and Maungtaw as well as Thailand via Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Maese.

Myanmar mainly exports agricultural products, animal products, marine products, minerals, forest products, manufacturing goods and others while capital goods, intermediate goods and consumer goods are imported to the country. — ACM

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, foodstuffs, household appliances, unregistered motorcycles, auto spare parts seized

MANAGED by the Anti-illegal Trade Steering Committee, action is being taken against illegal trades under the law.

On 25 March, the port duty inspection team led by the Department of Customs carried out inspections at the Myanmar Industrial Port Container Inspection Station and seized various sizes of electric water motors and PVC pipes (estimated at K133,600,000) imported in violation of import licences, and action is taken under the Customs Law.

Similarly, combined inspection teams conducted inspections at the Mayanchaung Permanent Checkpoint in Mon State.

Illegal apples and pears that could not show any official documents and carried more than what is stated in the import declaration (ID) (estimated

at K1,173,700) were seized on a 12-wheel truck leaving Myawady for Yangon, and action is taken under the Customs Law.

Similarly, an inspection team led by the Customs Department of 16-Mile Rock Inspection Station under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force in Mandalay Region carried out patrol inspections.

At mile post 16/4 of the Mandalay-PyinOoLwin Road, ownerless stacked illegal vehicle spare parts (estimated at K4,995,000) were seized, and action is taken under the Customs Law.

On 26 March, an inspection team led by Police under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force in Homalin Township carried out inspections and seized an unregistered motorcycle (estimated at K180,000) and is prosecuted under the Import and Export Law.



Officials seize illegal timbers.

Similarly, a joint inspection team led by the Forest Department under the management of the Bago Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force carried out

and seized 5.4216 tonnes of illegal teak, wood and timbers (estimated at K1,141,154) and action is taken under the Forest Law.

Thus, a total of five ar-

rests were made on 25 and 26 March (estimated value of K139,948,700), according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee. — MNA

Ecstasy tablets seized in some townships of Dawei, Kunlong and Tachilek



An arrestee is seen together with seized drugs and a motorbike.

A combined inspection team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force conducted an inspection in a house of Ma Naw Sae Muu in Kyaukmaw Ward, Dawei Township at

9:45 am on 25 March and seized 175 ecstasy tablets.

According to the further investigation, inspection in Ma Emy The's house in Htein Thit Ward in Dawei led to the sei-

zure of 2,000 ecstasy tablets together with Ma Win Wah Htwe.

Similarly, a combined inspection team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force conducted an inspection in Kuu Laut Chan's house in Nantchinhaw village of Kunlong township led to the seizure of 1,600 ecstasy tablets at 7 pm.

Afterwards, a combined inspection team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force inspected a motorbike driven by Aye Naut near Yankhaung village, Tachilek Township and seized 3,800 ecstasy tablets at 6:20 pm.

They are prosecuted under the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, according to the Myanmar Police Force. — MNA

Ecstasy tablets worth K1.58 billion seized in Mingaladon

A combined inspection team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force conducted inspections in Mingaladon Township at 3 PM on 25 March.

A search of a Nissan AD Van driven by Ni Lin Aung (b) Mon Lay on Gandama street, Pale (2) Wards, Mingaladon Township, turned up 400,000 ecstasy tablets. According to the further investigation, a search of the seized ecstasy tablets' owner Ah lo (b) Ike Sai led to the seizure of K1.18 million ecstasy tables with Pyae Sone Aung, Zaw Myo Naing (b) Zay Ye (b) Ka Lar and Ma Yu Wadi Aung.

Thus, the total seizure of K1.58 billion worth of drugs and the police are investigating to arrest further suspects. — MNA



Interview on Myancopharm—the first-ever Myanmar product against COVID-19

THE State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing gave instructions to the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Defence to work together to produce COVID-19 vaccines locally and conduct researches by drafting the short and long plans during his visit to the Pharmaceutical Factory Branch (Ywathagyi) on 8 October 2021. According to the directive, officials made efforts and produced the vaccine and conducted the launch ceremony of the Myancopharm vaccine on 23 March 2022. Only four countries could carry out Full-Finish of Sinopharm vaccines in the world and five ASEAN countries, including Myanmar, also produced the vaccine and so the production of the Myancopharm vaccine in collaboration of three ministries made a new chapter in the history and a golden day for the Myanmar medicinal field.

The Myancopharm vaccine production can discover the production processes and reduce the use of foreign currency in buying the vaccines. It can also show the China-Myanmar unique relationship, Pauk-Phaw friendship. The vaccine was produced with 12 detailed procedures at the Pharmaceutical Factory Branch (Ywathagyi) under the Pharmaceutical Factory (Insein).

Here are the some heartfelt words of the Pharmaceutical Factory Branch (Ywathagyi) staff;

Daw Ei Ei Win
(Production Department-In Charge)



The experts of Sinopharm China National Biotech Group came to the Pharmaceutical Factory Branch (Ywathagyi) to examine whether we have proper condition to produce the vaccines. When we were perfect,



An opening speech by SAC Secretary Lt-Gen Aung Lin Dwe.

the Media Fill completed after three March and we conducted the necessary operations and so we could produce the vaccines in March. Our department buys the Ready to Fill Bulk to produce the vaccines.

We continued the Ready to Fill Bulk operations using the mixed vaccines from the Chinese Sinopharm CNBG. First of all, we have to clean the materials with Ultrasonic Machine. Then, we conduct Depyrodensation at 310 degrees centigrade. After we reduce the temperature for vial, we fill the vaccines in it. The Quality Assurance Department inspects the whole in-process. We cover the vials with Rubber Stopper, Aluminium Cap and check them with Inspection Machine. After the check whether the vials contain small particles, we send them to Quality Assurance Department. Only the ones that pass the department, we stick seals and make packaging process.

All the vaccines are kept at 2-8 degree centigrade.

One vial can offer 5 doses. We will manufacture 1 million doses of vaccine per month, targeting 10 million doses for the 2022-2023FY. We will follow the Program of the Ministry of Health as there are still people who have not received vaccines and who have to get Booster Dose. All the staff are glad for the ability to produce the vaccines as the people need them. The Sinopharm experts make successive inspection in the production processes and the production starts only when we pass these inspection levels. In producing the vaccines, we check them sending to FDA under the Ministry of Health and not just only to the Ministry of Industry. We thank the Sinopharm experts and those who involved in processes and the officials of ministry concerned as they provided us the needed assistance.

production department. Then, the QA department submits the vaccine quality documents to FDA. Since we receive the Ready to Fill (RTF) Bulk, we record the Cold Change Temperature and the Temperature of Cold Room daily.

We energize the collective strength of the ministries, staff and the supports of leaders under the instructions of Prime Minister in vaccine production. As the Sinopharm experts also prioritized the purity and safety, we all are satisfied with the vaccine productions for the people.

We measure the temperature of vaccine three times



Myancopharm Covid vaccine—the first-ever product of Myanmar.

Daw Nyein Nyein
(Quality Assurance Department -In Charge)



The Quality Assurance Department and Quality Control Department have to conduct Environmental Monitoring in the whole Process Control. These two departments have to check the cleanliness in the production room. If there are proper results, we continue the filling processes.

The Quality Control Department check the Efficacy, Purity, Safety and Quality on the vaccines produced by the

a week and check them daily. The term of vaccine is one year. I have been working here for nearly 30 years and my participation in vaccine production under the guidance of Prime Minister is such as proudful action. I am happy for achieving Myancopharm vaccines for all people.

The vaccine was launched on 10 March 2022 and the purchased RTF Bulk (1,220 litres) will arrive by the end of April. The term of vaccine is one year and it is estimated to produce 10 million doses of vaccines in the 2022-2023FY. The Myancopharm vaccine will support the education sector of the country as no one knows when the pandemic will end. Such achievement will brighten the country than before and open a new chapter in the history of ministry concerned and Myanmar medicinal field. – NyaungU Phee, Photos: Oaktha/GNLM

Expand areas of forest reserves, protected forests

THE Republic of the Union of Myanmar is blessed with forest coverage in 30 per cent of the country's total area. In addition, 10 per cent of natural environmental protected areas were set as a pledge of Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions according to the 30-year Forest Master Plan and Paris Climate Change Conference held in 2015.

The forest areas are home to flora and fauna including wildlife as natural resources of Myanmar. To be the existence of these forest areas, both the government and the people are responsible for conserving the plants and living beings without fail.

The country set 404,158 acres of forest reserves and 581,804 acres of protected land areas between 1 February 2021 and 1

February 2022. Hence, the government has established 43,111,705 acres of forest reserves, accounting for 25.79 per cent of the country's total area as well as 10,750,625 acres of protected public forests, accounting for 6.43 per cent of the country's total area.

For such doings, forests can reduce climate change, protect the biodiversity and endangered wildlife animals, plants and their habitats, make better ecosystem and enhance environmental services, conserve the waterway outlets and watershed areas, prevent natural disasters, preserve the natural resources and ensure sustainable development of forest resources.

Forests can initiate the ecosystem service for raising the tourism industry dubbed as the smokeless industry. As such, the conservation of forests can directly or indirectly create job opportunities for residents in various regions. Conservation of forests is not only a cost-effective way to lessen climate change but also means that many other benefits including biodiversity, soil and water resources, pollination are provided to local communities and wider society.

Nowadays, forests are increasingly threatened by a wide range of pressures, including deforestation, abuse of land, agricultural expansion, invasive alien species, severe droughts and wildfires. These impacts will affect not only the forest but residents. Hence, to be able to overcome these challenges, residents need to implement forest conservation in their regions as much as possible.

The country is decorated with forests to emerge the green societies. Only when people can expand green societies larger and larger will the weather be favourable for both living and non-living beings. According to the feedback scheme of nature, people will have the chance to enjoy the fruits of forest conservation as they do.

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The non-religious nation enjoys Colourful Confection/Sweet

By Yoshida Suzuka

MANY of the sweets that were distributed in the Olympic Village at the 2021 Tokyo Olympics seem to have gained popularity among athletes and the press from all over the world. A wide variety of sweets, expensive ones, salty sweets, traditional Japanese sweets, and Western sweets, which are not found in other countries, attracted people.

Behind the birth of many types of sweets in Japan, the people value the human relationships within the community to which they belong, such as workplace and school relationships, encourage each other, and when exchanging greetings, they bring sweets. Connecting people is more important than religion, and the people prefer more realistic and visible goods. That is "sweets".

There are three types of cultural events in Japan: those derived from Chinese culture over 1000 years ago, those derived from religions such as Buddhism and Shintoism, and those based on the sweets brought about by the imported concept have enriched the variety of Japanese sweets.

Valentine's Day is a classic example of an imported concept. Valentine's Day is originally an event for men and women to convey their love to each other, but in 1936, it was changed to the mean-

ing of "a day when women can confess to men" by the initiative of Mr Morozoff, who had been in exile from the Russian Revolution. Moreover, the gift was made into a rule with chocolate. Shy young women jumped at the new concept that women may confess their love to men.

In the late 1970s, Valentine's Day was further developed. Office ladies pretend to give a gift of gratitude to a male boss who gives a bar of very cheap chocolate with a little considerable sarcasm. The name is "Giri Choco". It is sadly that men who want to be popular among women welcome Valentine's chocolate, even if it's meaning obligation. Well, it is etiquette in Japan to give back to a gift. The confectionery maker devised a "White Day" to give back from men to women, in a custom gift should be not only chocolate but anything. It is interesting that men who want to get a lot of chocolate from women tend to be reluctant to pay when it comes to rewards. Therefore, the market size of White Day seems to be much smaller than Valentine's Day. The culture that goes from Valentine's Day to White Day no longer has its true religious meaning. It's just a reason for those who want to eat sweets.

Let me say another example of the imported concept. It was Mr Juchheim, who was a German prisoner of the First World



Ohagi (rice cake with sweet beans paste)

War, who made a great success by making his own sweets for celebrations in every country. In 1922, before Mr Morozoff, he settled in Japan after the release of POWs and began making and selling Western confectionery called Baumkuchen. The sweets that prayed for long happiness by comparing life to annual rings sold very well as the best gifts for wedding ceremonies.

March is a busy month with many cultural and school events.

It is also the month for people to enjoy the culture of giving gifts and offering sweets to each other at each event. At the Hinamatsuri on March 3rd, which wishes for the healthy growth of girls, family and friends gather to eat Hina-arare (rice cracker) and Hishi mochi (rice cake). On White Day on March 14th, men should give back some sweets or gifts. Since March 21st is the day of the Buddhist equinoctial week, the whole family enjoys the traditional

Japanese sweets Ohagi (a sort of rice cake with sweet beans), after offering it to the Buddha, whose custom has been carried on for hundreds of years.

Normally traditional Japanese sweets are associated with traditional events, and when you hear the name of a cultural event, the sweets come to your mind. Both Japanese and Western have not declined and are preferred by people.

The development of confec-

tionery that has continued since the 20th century was brought by marketing strategies that stimulate people's desire to consume and the economic power to fully import confectionery ingredients from other countries. Foreigners who have immigrated have made efforts to explain and introduce the new culture so that Japanese people can easily accept it. The Japanese also enjoyed the new culture. It was a fortune in the early 20th century in a way there was no negative pressure from the international community, just as it said, "Take on poor immigrants based on human rights." Incorporating various cultures promoted an active society and fostered an enterprising spirit, so the economy was also able to develop.

The size of the confectionery market is 1,699.3 billion yen (about 15.4 billion US dollars) in Japan as a whole. It is about 0.3% of Japan's GDP. The confectionery field is doing well while the population is declining.

Source:

Valentine Day: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valentine%27s_Day#Japan
Juchheim: <https://www.juchheim.co.jp/history>
Morozoff: <https://www.morozoff.co.jp/en/>



COVID-19 along with flu increases risk of severe illness: Research

ACCORDING to a new research, adults in hospitals who have COVID-19 and the flu at the same time are at much greater risk of severe disease and death compared with patients who have COVID-19 alone or with other viruses.

The findings of the research were published in the journal, 'The Lancet'.

Patients with co-infection of SARS-CoV-2, which causes COVID-19, and influenza viruses were over four times more likely to require ventilation support and 2.4 times more likely to die than if they only had COVID-19,

experts found.

Need for greater flu testing

Researchers said that the findings show the need for greater flu testing of COVID-19 patients in hospital and highlight the importance of full vaccination against both COVID-19 and the flu.

The team from the University of Edinburgh, University of Liverpool, Leiden University and Imperial College London, made the findings in a study of more than 305,000 hospitalized patients with COVID-19.

The research, which was delivered as part of the International

Severe Acute Respiratory and Emerging Infection Consortium's (ISARIC) Coronavirus Clinical Characterisation Consortium was the largest ever study of people with COVID-19 and other endemic respiratory viruses.

ISARIC's study was set up in 2013 in readiness for a pandemic such as this.

Data of adults

The team looked at the data of adults who had been hospitalized with COVID-19 in the UK between 6 February 2020 and 8 December 2021.

Test results for respiratory

viral co-infections were recorded for 6965 patients with COVID-19. Some 227 of these also had the influenza virus, and they experienced significantly more severe outcomes.

Dr Maaik Swets, a PhD student at the University of Edinburgh and Leiden University, said, "In the last two years we have frequently witnessed patients with COVID-19 become severely ill, at times leading to ICU admission and the employment of an artificial ventilator to help with breathing. That an influenza infection could give rise to a similar situation was already



An image of a woman sneezing in a tissue serves as a reminder of preventive measure against COVID-19 at Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar on 21 March 2020. PHOTO: SEYLLLOU / AFP/FILE

known, but less was understood about the outcomes of a double infection of SARS-CoV-2 and other respiratory viruses."—ANI

Myanmar Gazette

Appointment of Permanent Secretary

THE State Administration Council has appointed Director-General U Wunna Zaw of the Union Minister Office of the Ministry of Construction as Permanent Secretary of the same ministry.



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 26 March 2022)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 27 March 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State, scattered in Taninthayi Region and isolated in Lower Sagaing, and Mandalay regions and Northern Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw, Bago, Yangon, and Ayeyawady regions and partly cloudy 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: Increase of day temperatures in Nay Pyi Taw, Bago, Yangon, and Ayeyawady regions and Shan, Kayah and Kayin states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27 March 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27 March 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27 March 2022: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

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EU to suspend green farming rules to enhance global food security

THE European Commission is temporarily allowing European Union (EU) farmers to grow crops on fallow land currently designated as “ecological focus areas” to enhance global food security as food stocks and storages in Ukraine are being destroyed by the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, EU officials said here on Wednesday.

This “exceptional and temporary derogation” aims at increasing the production of crops for food and feed purposes to mitigate the loss of Ukrainian products on the global market, according to Valdis Dombrovskis, executive vice-president of the European Commission in charge of an economy that works for people. Dombrovskis is also European commissioner for trade.

“The EU is an agricultural superpower and we will ensure that our farmers have the Com-



The EU harvested 119.1 million tonnes of common wheat and spelt in 2020, the equivalent of 41.6% of all cereal grains harvested. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

mission’s full support to respond to the global needs for food,” Janusz Wojciechowski, Euro-

pean commissioner for agriculture, said. Farmers will be able to grow food or feed on the four

million hectares of EU fallow land this year. All technicalities should be cleared within the next

seven days to allow EU farmers to use this extra fertile land in time for the spring sowing season, according to Wojciechowski.

To help EU farmers, the derogation is accompanied by a support package worth 500 million euros (549 million US dollars) for European producers most affected by the consequences of the conflict in Ukraine; advances of direct payment in October for next year; market safety net measures for the pig-meat market; and temporary flexibilities to existing import requirements on animal feed. The loss of Ukrainian agricultural products resulting from the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict could disrupt food supply for lower-income countries in regions such as North Africa and the Middle East, which rely heavily on wheat imports, Dombrovskis explained.—Xinhua ■

Biodiversity loss threatens economic stability: central banks report

CENTRAL banks have underestimated the significant threat posed by biodiversity loss, a new report said Thursday, warning that financial institutions and businesses were destroying the natural assets that they depend

on. While climate change is increasingly factored into calculations of systemic economic risks, the report by central bankers, financial supervisors and academics said the comparable threats from the biodiversity

crisis had only recently begun to be appreciated.

“Biodiversity supports all life on our planet,” said Ravi Menon, chairman of the Central Banks and Supervisors’ Network for Greening the Financial System, in his foreword to the report. “But we are eroding this biodiversity at a pace that is severely damaging the natural ecosystems that provide us with food, water and clean air. This in turn could pose significant risks to economic, financial and social stability.” The report, compiled with input from dozens of central banks, comes amid international negotiations in Geneva to thrash out a global deal to protect nature up to mid-century that has been compared to the Paris Agreement for climate change.—AFP ■



Pollinators are crucial for food production, like these bees on almond blossom. But they are also threatened by things like pesticides. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Male contraceptive pill found 99% effective in mice

A team of scientists said Wednesday they had developed a male oral contraceptive that was 99 per cent effective in mice and didn’t cause observable side effects, with the drug expected to enter human trials by the end of this year.

The findings will be presented at the American Chemical Society’s spring meeting, and mark a key step towards expanding birth control options — as well as responsibilities — for men. Ever since the female birth control pill was first approved in the 1960s, researchers have been interested in a male equivalent, Md Abdullah Al Noman, a graduate student at the University of Minnesota who will present the work, told AFP.

“Multiple studies showed that men are interested in sharing the responsibility of birth

control with their partners,” he said — but until now, there have been only two effective options available: condoms or vasectomies. Vasectomy reversal surgery is expensive and not always successful. The female pill uses hormones to disrupt the menstrual cycle, and historic efforts to develop a male equivalent targeted the male sex hormone testosterone. The problem with this approach, however, was that it caused side effects such as weight gain, depression and increased levels of a cholesterol known as low-density lipoprotein, which increases heart disease risks. The female pill also carries side effects, including blood-clotting risks — but since women face becoming pregnant in the absence of contraception, the risk calculation differs.—AFP ■

Double lung transplant saves US man with terminal cancer

US doctors announced Thursday they had successfully performed a double lung transplant on a patient with terminal lung cancer, giving new hope to others who also are in advanced stages of the deadly disease.

Albert Khoury, a 54-year-old non-smoker, underwent a seven-hour surgery to receive

his new lungs at Northwestern Medicine in Chicago on 25 September 2021.

Six months on, the lungs are working well and he has no signs of cancer in his body.

“Lung transplantation for lung cancer is extremely uncommon with few cases reported,” Ankit Bharat, chief of thoracic

surgery at Northwestern Medicine, said in a statement.

“For patients with stage 4 cancer, lung transplantation is considered a complete ‘no-no’, but because Albert’s cancer was confined only to his chest, we were confident we could clear all the cancer during surgery and save his life.”—AFP ■



This picture taken on 1 June 2021 shows a mouse feeding on grains in a wheat hold on Col Tink’s farmland in the New South Wales’ agricultural hub of Dubbo. **PHOTO: TUKO/AFP/FILE**

China's science foundation ups research budget to 33 bln yuan

THE National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) has raised its funding budget to 33 billion yuan (5.2 billion US dollars) in 2022, up 6.8 percent over last year. A major funding source in China for basic research and frontier exploration, the NSFC financed 48,800 programmes in 2021, with a total investment of more than 31.2 billion yuan, the science foundation said Thursday.

Li Jinghai, head of the NSFC, said the science foundation will bolster funding support in the fields of basic science, technical science, life sciences and medicine and interdisciplinary studies, with a particular focus on research involving COVID-19 and carbon emissions.— Xinhua ■



A staff member adjusts equipments at a vaccine production plant of China National Pharmaceutical Group (Sinopharm) in Beijing, capital of China, 10 April 2020. PHOTO: XINHUA/ZHANG YUWEI

India reports 1,685 new COVID-19 infections, active cases dip to 21,530

INDIA'S daily COVID-19 infections witnessed a dip since yesterday with 1,685 new cases being recorded on Friday.

As per the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 1,938 new COVID-19 cases were reported on Thursday.

The daily positivity rate and weekly positivity rate slightly declined to 0.24 per cent and 0.33 per cent on Friday from 0.29 per cent and 0.35 per cent on Thursday respectively.

Notably, the testing was increased to 6,91,425 in the last 24 hours from 6,61,954 tests on Thursday.

India's active caseload currently stands at 21,530. It accounts for 0.05 per cent of the total positive cases. The active cases dipped by 897 since yesterday.



Slum dwellers being checked by medics amid nationwide lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus at Vallabh Nagar locality, in Bhopal, in Madhya Pradesh on 20 April 2020. PHOTO: ANI

With 2,499 recoveries in the last 24 hours, the cumulative recoveries mounted to 4,24,78,087. The recovery rate remained constant at 98.75 per cent.

In the last 24 hours, 83 people succumbed to the virus. The country's death toll is at 5,16,755. The case fatality rate is at 1.20 per cent.—ANI ■

Non-white audiences kept Hollywood afloat during pandemic

AUDIENCES of colour were major drivers of box office revenue in Hollywood last year, a report revealed Thursday, making up the majority of ticket sales for opening weekend for most blockbuster movies.

The findings continue a years-long trend that has seen filmgoer demographics shift over time in the United States, even beyond changes in the wider population.

"Every time there was a big

movie that exceeded expectations or broke a record, we see that between 53 per cent and 60 per cent of opening weekend audiences were people of colour," said Ana-Christina Ramon, co-author of the Hollywood Diversity Report.

"For people of colour and especially for Latino families, theatres provided an excursion when mostly everything was shut down.

"In a sense, people of colour

really kept the studios afloat the past couple of years."

The report, from the University of California, Los Angeles, also found that casts are becoming more diverse — a factor that appears to be playing well with streaming audiences.

Titles with substantial minority casts tended to do especially well among younger viewers — those aged 18-49 — who are more engaged with streaming, the report found.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Australia to give fourth Covid-19 jab to over 65s

AUSTRALIA is offering a fourth dose of Covid-19 vaccines to over 65s from next month, federal health authorities announced Friday, as a new Omicron strain races through the population.

The top advisory group on vaccines approved the fourth shot for vulnerable groups: those aged over 65, indigenous people over 50, people who are immunocompromised and care home residents.

In the past six weeks, other countries, including France, Germany and Sweden as well as health authorities in England, have recommended a fourth Covid-19 vaccine dose for the most vulnerable, including the elderly.

Australia has been reporting daily infection rates of more than 50,000 in the past few days — about double those of just a month earlier — blamed partly on the rise of a more infectious BA.2 Omicron variant. Health Minister Greg Hunt said the extra dose would be available from 4 April — nearly two months before the start of the Australian winter — for people who had a third dose at least four months earlier.— AFP ■

Amid China's COVID surge, shoemaking companies face delay in logistics, new launches

THE shoemaking industry in East China's Fujian Province has been impacted by the latest COVID-19 flare-ups in the country, resulting in delays in logistics and postponements of domestic sports brands' launches of new series.

A domestic sportswear brand on the condition of anonymity said that the local shoemaking enterprises in Quanzhou city have been affected significantly in daily production, as many shoe manufacturers are under closed-loop management, and logistics and delivery services are being restricted, reported Global Times.

The shoemaking industry is a major source for the local economy. Numerous shoemaking companies in the cities of Quanzhou and Putian in the Fujian Province confirmed that the supply chain has been delayed and even suspended due to the rise in the covid cases. Quanzhou is the most affected among them, reported Global Times.

Quanzhou has taken strict epidemic containing measures. For example, express services are suspended for the regions placed under quarantine, according to the Quanzhou Municipal Postal Administration. Delivery services have principally stopped receiving parcels from controlled areas but distribution services have remained normal.

Fujian recorded 69 new confirmed cases on Wednesday, among which, Quanzhou and Putian reported 65 and three cases respectively. The province also reported 162 asymptomatic cases, reported the newspaper.

Earlier, Chinese President Xi Jinping said that Beijing will stick to its "zero Covid-19" policy, days after National Health Commission (NHC) released new guidelines easing its control measures.— ANI ■



People line up at a concession stand at a movie theatre in Las Vegas, Nevada in August 2020. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

NEWS
IN BRIEF

Germany to halve Russian oil imports by mid-2022

GERMANY plans to halve Russian oil imports by the middle of the year and become almost independent by the end of 2022, the Ministry of Economy and Climate Protection (BMWK) said on Friday.

The country's dependence on Russian oil would be reduced in the coming weeks to around 25 per cent through contract conversions, according to the ministry.

"The first important milestones have been reached to free us from the grip of Russian imports," said Robert Habeck, Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Protection, adding that contract conversions were being done at an "insane pace".

With regard to coal, Germany could become independent of Russia by the fall, according to BMWK. From April, the country's dependence on Russian coal could be reduced from 50 per cent to 25 per cent in the short term.

Although diversification of gas imports was progressing, the process was "challenging," said Habeck.—AFP ■

France calls for urgent food security plan over Ukraine war

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron on Thursday called for an urgent international food security plan to avert "famine" in vulnerable countries caused by the Russian war in Ukraine.

Speaking after NATO and G7 summits in Brussels, Macron urged Russia to show responsibility by allowing farm production in Ukraine, which is a major cereal grain exporter.

Without that, "inevitable famine" in some countries would ensue within 12 to 18 months, with Egypt and North Africa facing severe grain shortfalls, he said.

Earlier the UN said the war in Ukraine had sent commodity prices soaring, creating fresh shock waves across poorer countries already hard-hit by the pandemic and warned that "profound social anxiety" was spreading.—AFP ■

Xi talks with British PM over phone

CHINESE President Xi Jinping on Friday afternoon held a phone conversation with British Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

Noting that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level between China and Britain, Xi said that the bilateral relationship in the past half century has witnessed continuous growth on the whole despite some ups and downs.

The trade volume between the two countries has increased from 300 million US dollars to 100 billion dollars, and the two-way investment stock has risen from almost zero to 50 billion dollars, Xi said.



Last year, bilateral trade reached a new high, and China's investment in Britain more than tripled. PHOTO: AFP

Last year, bilateral trade reached a new high, and China's investment in Britain more than tripled, Xi said, adding that British-funded enterprises have actively participated in China's

reform and opening up, and London has become the world's largest offshore RMB trading hub.

The two countries have coordinated and cooperated in such fields as global development and climate change, and have made positive contributions to tackling humanity's common challenges, Xi said.

Noting that China and Britain have different domestic conditions and development paths, Xi said the two sides should take a strategic and long-term perspective, respect each other, keep an open and inclusive mindset, promote dialogue and communication, and expand mutually beneficial cooperation.—Xinhua ■

US, EU strike deal to help wean Europe off Russian gas



The Gascade Gas Receiving station adjoining the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline Inspection Gauge (PIG) receiving station in Lubmin, northeastern Germany. PHOTO: AFP

THE US and EU announced a task force Friday aimed at reducing Europe's reliance on Russian

fossil fuels in the face of Moscow's war on Ukraine.

The initiative being unveiled

by President Joe Biden and EU chief Ursula von der Leyen will see the US work with partners to strive to supply Europe with an extra 15 billion cubic metres of liquefied natural gas this year, a statement said.

The push comes as EU member states wrangle over calls for the bloc to ban Russia's key energy exports to punish President Vladimir Putin for his invasion of Ukraine.

The Baltics and Poland are urging counterparts to pull the trigger but others, including economic powerhouse Germany, remain reluctant to impose a sudden rupture given their reliance on Russian gas imports.

Germany said Friday it was drastically slashing its energy purchases from Russia amid

Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, with oil imports to be halved by June and coal deliveries to end by the autumn.

The EU has already announced ambitious plans to slash its imports of Russian gas by two-thirds this year and eliminate imports entirely before the end of the decade.

As part of the task force the EU's executive said it will work with member states "toward the goal of ensuring, until at least 2030, demand for approximately 50 bcm/year of additional US LNG". "This Task Force for Energy Security will be chaired by a representative from the White House and a representative of the President of the European Commission," the statement said.—AFP ■

Oil prices rise after reports of attack on Saudi oil facilities

OIL prices climbed on Friday as reports of attacks on oil facilities in Saudi Arabia rekindled concerns over supply shortages.

The West Texas Intermediate for May delivery added 1.56 US dollars, or 1.4 per cent, to settle at 113.90 dollars a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude for May delivery increased 1.62 dollars, or 1.4 per cent, to close at 120.65 dollars a barrel on the London ICE Futures Exchange.

Yemen's Houthi militia on Friday claimed responsibility for fresh cross-border drone and missile attacks on oil facil-

ities in Saudi Arabia, the third such attack in less than a week.

"A number of bomb-laden drones targeted the oil refineries in Ras Tanura and Rabigh, as well as the Aramco oil facilities in Jazan and Najran ... A barrage of wing missiles targeted Aramco oil facilities in Jeddah and the Saudi capital Riyadh," Houthi military spokesman Yehya Sarea said in a statement aired by the Houthi-run al-Masirah TV.

The news added fuel to the already volatile oil market shadowed by supply risks related to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.—Xinhua ■



Smoke billows from an oil storage facility in Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coastal city of Jeddah on 25 March 2022. PHOTO: ANDREJ ISAKOVIC / AFP

Japan's top business lobby aims to create boom in "unicorn" firms

JAPAN'S largest business lobby has crafted an ambitious proposal to increase the number of so-called "unicorn companies", or unlisted startups valued at more than \$1 billion, 10-fold over five years as it tries to spur innovation and in turn the country's slow-growing economy.

The Japan Business Federation, also known as Keidanren, aims to increase the number of such firms from about 10 to around 100 while at the same time seeking to expand the number of start-ups by a factor of 10 to about 100,000.

Speaking at a recent press conference, Tomoko Namba, the business lobby's vice-chair and founder of online service provider DeNA Co., underscored the importance of fostering start-ups in stimulating the economy. "The setting of a five-year goal reflects our determination," she said.

The proposal is trying to address the long-time dominance in Japan of large, slow-moving corporations that prospered during a period of high economic growth decades ago. It is hoped the shift will cause companies that promote digital innovation and entrepreneurship to prosper. Japan hopes to foster innovative companies like US tech giants Amazon.com Inc. and Facebook Inc., the latter now called Meta Platforms Inc., which grew from startups to companies that drive the US economy.—Kyodo ■

Major Japan banks to halt dollar transactions with Russia's Sberbank



A visitor uses a currency converter at Haneda airport in Tokyo on 19 January 2021. PHOTO: KYODO/FILE

JAPAN'S three major banks will halt dollar transactions and money transfers with Russia's largest financial institution Sberbank following the United States' sanction against it in response

to the Ukraine invasion, sources close to the matter said Saturday.

MUFG Bank, Mizuho Bank and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp. have been settling dollar transactions with Sberbank via

the United States. Disruption of their dollar dealing with the Russian bank will likely force Japanese companies doing business in Russia to seek alternative ways to settle payments such as using non-US

banks, the sources said.

The United States added Sberbank to its sanctions list in February and the ban on dollar transactions with the bank is to take effect Saturday.

Sberbank is not among the Russian banks excluded earlier this month from a key international payment network, the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication, known as SWIFT. Many Japanese companies operating in Russia use Sberbank for their settlement needs.

The three Japanese banks have already halted transactions with other major Russian banks, including the country's second-largest financial institution VTB Bank which was cut off from SWIFT on 12 March.—Kyodo ■

US dollar edges down amid economic data



Photo taken on 23 March 2020 shows a US dollar banknote in Washington D.C., the United States. PHOTO: XINHUA/LIU JIE

THE US dollar inched lower in late trading on Friday as market participants digested newly-released economic data.

The dollar index, which measures the greenback against six major peers, fell 0.0030 per cent at 98.7860.

In late New York trading, the euro was down to 1.0989 US dollars from 1.1004 dollars in the previous session, and the British pound rose to 1.3187 dollars from 1.3182 US dollars in the previous session. The Australian dollar rose to 0.7522 US dollar from 0.7513 dollar.

The US dollar bought 122.10 Japanese yen, lower than 122.25 Japanese yen of the previous session. The US dollar increased to 0.9308 Swiss franc from 0.9303 Swiss franc, and it was down to 1.2474 Canadian dollars from 1.2548 Canadian dollars. On the economic front, the final reading of US consumer sentiment in March fell to 59.4, down from 62.8 in February, amid high inflation and concerns over geopolitical tensions, showed the report released Friday by the University of Michigan.—Xinhua ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CONTSHIP PEP VOY.NO. (030S/N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CONTSHIP PEP VOY.NO. (030S/N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **27-3-2022** 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 GOLF STAR SHIPPING LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (051N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (051N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **27-3-2022** 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 NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V PROGRESS VOY.NO. (018N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V PROGRESS VOY.NO. (018N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **27-3-2022** 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 INTER ASIA LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V RICH SEAWAY VOY.NO. (013N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V RICH SEAWAY VOY.NO. (013N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **27-3-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq once more into presidential vote unknown

Iraqi lawmakers on Saturday are scheduled once again to elect the country's president and try to overcome months of political paralysis, even as renewed boycott calls risk scuttling a vote.

Parliament has issued a final list of 40 candidates for the post, a largely ceremonial role reserved for the Kurds.

The contest pits Barham Saleh, the incumbent and member of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, against Rebar Ahmed of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), the PUK's rival.

Lack of a quorum -- two-thirds of the house's 329 members -- and legal issues have held up the vote, deepening war-scarred Iraq's political uncertainty.—AFP ■

Ukrainians fighting to retake Kherson, now 'contested' city: Pentagon

UKRAINIAN forces have launched a counter-offensive in Kherson, the country's only major city seized by Russian troops, and it is once again "contested", a senior US defence official said Friday.

"The Ukrainians are trying to take Kherson back, and we would argue that Kherson is actually contested territory again," the Pentagon official told reporters.

"We can't corroborate exactly who is in control of Kherson but the point is, it doesn't appear to be as solidly in Russian control as it was before," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.—AFP ■

China calls for restraint regarding nuclear issue on Korean Peninsula



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (C) walks near what state media said was a new inter-continental ballistic missile. PHOTO: KCNA VIA KNS/AFP

CHINA on Friday called for restraint on the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue after the test launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile was conducted

by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea the previous day.

"Under the current circumstances, we call on the parties concerned to stay calm, exercise

restraint, stay on the right track of dialogue and consultation, and avoid taking any action that may exacerbate the tensions and lead to miscalculations," China's permanent representative to the United Nations Zhang Jun told the Security Council meeting on the situation of the Korean Peninsula.

"As the peninsula's next door neighbour, China has been consistent in advocating and promoting the peninsula's peace and stability, its de-nuclearization, and the approach of seeking a solution through dialogue and consultation," Zhang said, adding that "we hope the United States and the DPRK will actively pursue dialogue and engagement in search of an effective solution to settle their differences."—Xinhua ■

Chinese FM calls for long-term vision, win-win cooperation in ties with India

VISITING Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said here Friday that China and India should stick to their own development paths and join hands to safeguard peace and stability in the region and the world at large. Wang made the remarks at a meeting with Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval.

He proposed a three-point approach to achieving that end.

First, both sides should view the bilateral relations from a long-term vision.

China and India should adhere to their two leaders' strategic judgement that China and India should not be a threat to each other, but an opportunity for each other's development, and put their differences over the border issues at a proper position in the bilateral relations, Wang said.

Second, China and India should view each other's development with a win-win mentality.

China and India should forge a cooperation model with a healthy interaction, so as to achieve mutually beneficial and win-win cooperation at a higher level and in a wider range, he said. Third, both countries should take part in the multilateral process with a cooperative posture.

The two sides should step up communication, coordination and mutual support to send more positive signals for upholding



Two soldiers from a special combat brigade under the Tibet Military Command of the Chinese People's Liberation Army take an oath during a Party admission ceremony on a plateau near the China-India border. PHOTO: WANG SHUDONG/GLOBAL TIMES/XINHUA

multilateralism and inject more positive energy into improving global governance, Wang said.

For his part, Doval said the Indian side appreciates China for its insightful thinking and constructive proposals, and shares the identical view that India and China are partners instead of rivalries, and shouldn't let the border issues affect the overall bilateral relations. The two sides affirmed the outcomes from the corps commander level meetings and the diplomatic consensus between the two countries, and agreed to speed up the resolution of individual issues left over by history, properly manage the situation on the ground and avoid misunderstanding and misjudgement. The two sides also

agreed to abide by the agreement reached in 2005 between the two governments on the political guiding principles for the settlement of the China-India boundary question, resolve the border issue through consultations in a peaceful and friendly manner, and refrain from the threat or use of force against each other.

Wang stressed that the special representatives on the China-India boundary question should maintain communication and exchanges, press for the shift from emergency response to regular management and control on the border issues as soon as possible, and stay committed to properly managing the border issues so as to seek a fair and just solution.—Xinhua ■

Israel to host 'historic summit' of US, Arab diplomats

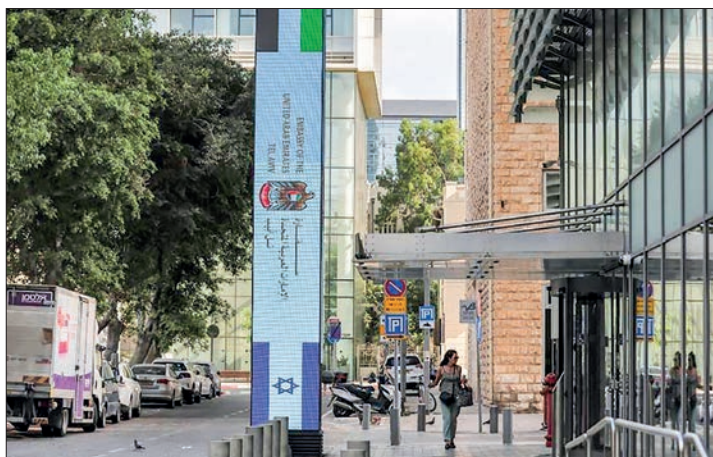
ISRAEL said it will host a "historic summit" from Sunday of top diplomats from the United States and three Arab states with which it has normalized ties. "At the invitation of Foreign Minister Yair Lapid, this upcoming Sunday and Monday... a historic diplomatic summit will be held in Israel," the foreign ministry said on Friday.

A series of diplomatic meetings would be attended by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and his counterparts from the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco, it said, without giving further details.

The United Arab Emirates forged diplomatic ties with Israel in 2020 under a series of US-brokered deals known as the Abraham Accords.

Bahrain and Morocco followed suit, while Sudan also agreed to normalize ties with Israel although it has yet to finalise a deal.

The agreements — reached under former US president Donald Trump — broke with decades of Arab consensus that there would be no relations with Israel while the Palestinian question remains unresolved.—AFP ■



This picture taken on 12 July 2021 shows a view of the sign marking the entrance of the United Arab Emirates' embassy at the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange building, also known as the Bursa, the Israeli Mediterranean coastal city. PHOTO: EMMANUEL DUNAND / AFP

US, EU leaders divided on new sanctions against Russia in hasty meetings

THREE intensive summits in two days — US President Joe Biden squeezed his schedule for Thursday and Friday when he rushed to Brussels to shake hands, pose for pictures and tried to coax a display of unity with European partners, but he nonetheless failed to talk them into more sanctions against Russia. Following the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit and G7 gathering, the summit of the European Council came last on Thursday and continued on Friday, during which the Ukraine crisis was the major focus. Despite a seemingly unanimous tone against Russia across such transatlantic partnerships, geopolitical concerns and different interests are at play, making it difficult to balance the demands of various parties.

NO NEW SANCTIONS COMING

The European Council sum-



Leaders attend the European Council meeting in Brussels, Belgium, 24 March 2022. PHOTO: EUROPEAN UNION / HO / XINHUA

mit on Thursday failed to agree on additional sanctions against Russia, despite Biden's presence — a reflection of different positions among members of the European Union (EU) as they become increasingly wary of consequences of such actions given existing challenges they face due to the

Ukraine crisis.

While Biden was busy "showcasing unity" at Thursday's summit, the White House announced new sanctions against the Russian State Duma and a number of what it called "oligarchs" as well as several financial institutions and their leaders.—Xinhua ■

Interpol provides help to Moldova after refugee surge



A human tide flows out of Ukraine in search of shelter and security. PHOTO: AFP

INTERPOL said Friday it sent a team to Moldova to help the impoverished non-EU country deal with a surge in refugees fleeing war-torn Ukraine. Nearly 380,000

Ukrainians have fled into neighbouring Moldova, which has a population of 2.6 million, since Russia's invasion last month. The Interpol team will be deployed in

the capital Chisinau and different refugee camps, the international body said in a statement. "The mission is providing on-the-ground support to law enforcement and humanitarian agencies managing the large outflow of refugees," it added.

The team will identify what needs must be met and "provide relevant training, analysis and operating support accordingly", Interpol said. The agency had already received reports of human traffickers and smugglers waiting at border checkpoints to prey on "vulnerable" Ukrainians. "Children and unaccompanied minors are especially vulnerable to exploitation by smugglers and traffickers," Interpol warned.—Xinhua ■

Russian President Vladimir Putin signs law on jail terms for 'fake' news on state actions abroad

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin Friday signed into law a bill introducing jail terms of up to 15 years for publishing "fake" information about Russia's actions abroad, as Moscow's troops continue their military operation in Ukraine.

The bill, adopted by Russia's parliament this week, sets out jail terms and fines for people who publish "knowingly false information" about actions abroad by Russian government agencies.

If the false information

"caused serious consequences", it is punishable by up to 15 years in jail. The new bill expands on a law passed earlier in March that allows for up to 15 years in jail for publishing false information about the Russian army.—AFP ■

NEWS DIGEST

Here are the latest developments in the war in Ukraine.

Russia turns attention to Donbas

In a potentially significant shift, the Russian army says the first phase of its military campaign in Ukraine is over and troops will now focus on the complete "liberation" of the eastern Donbas region.

"The combat potential of Ukraine's armed forces has been significantly reduced, which allows (us)... to focus our main efforts on achieving the main goal -- the liberation of Donbas," a senior representative of the General Staff, Sergei Rudskoi, says.

Mariupol operation

French President Emmanuel Macron says that France is working with Turkey and Greece on a "humanitarian operation" to evacuate people from the devastated city of Mariupol.

Earlier Ukrainian officials in the strategic port city said around 300 people could have died in last week's Russian strike on a theatre where hundreds were sheltering.

Biden in Poland

US President Joe Biden meets US soldiers stationed in Poland close to the border and aid workers helping to deal with the massive refugee crisis caused by the conflict in Ukraine.

He compares Russia's invasion of Ukraine to China's crushing of protests in Tiananmen Square in 1989, and says he thinks President Vladimir Putin is a "war criminal".

Fighting in Kherson

Ukrainian forces have launched a counter-offensive in Kherson, the country's only major city seized by Russian troops, and it is once again "contested", a senior US defence official says.

Ukrainian command centre hit

Russian missiles hit a military command centre in the city of Vinnytsia in central Ukraine, Kyiv officials say, adding it is unknown if there were any casualties.

It posts an image on Telegram of the alleged centre in rubble and says missiles hit "several buildings, causing significant damage to infrastructure".

Talks 'very difficult'

Ukraine says that talks with Moscow are "very difficult" and vows not to back down on its demands.

"We insist, first of all, on a ceasefire, security guarantees, and territorial integrity of Ukraine," Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba says.

Kremlin aide Vladimir Medinsky says there was little progress at the talks saying "on major political issues we are actually marking time".

No US chemical strike

The US has "no intention" of using chemical weapons under any circumstance even if Russia uses such weapons in Ukraine, White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan says.

Russia puts losses at 1,351

Russia's army has put its official losses in Ukraine to date at 1,351 soldiers, adding it has evacuated more than 400,000 civilians.

Ukraine and Western intelligence say it is many thousands more.

Russia says hits key fuel storage site

Russia says it has destroyed Ukraine's largest remaining military fuel storage site in a Kalibr cruise missile strike.

Further east, Russian strikes targeting a medical facility in Ukraine's second city Kharkiv kill four civilians and wound several others, police say.

SOURCE: AFP

Six Myanmar billiards players to compete in 31st SEA Games

THE Myanmar billiards team will compete with six players in the 31st SEA Games to be held in May.

The Myanmar Billiards and Snooker Federation will compete in the SEA Games Billiards event except for Carom.

The team will compete in the snooker and pool competitions.

A total of six players including two for the Billiard event, another two for the Pool event and two for the Snooker event will participate in the team Myanmar.

In billiards, three players have previously been selected, but one player will not be able to compete due to his health condition and will only be competing with two.

The Myanmar Billiards Team will compete in the Billiards Doubles Tournament, Snooker Individual Tournament, Snooker 6 Red Individual, Pool 9 Ball and Pool 10 Ball events.



Myanmar Snooker Player Aung Phyo. PHOTO: ACBS

Pauk Sa and Min Si Thu Tun will be in the Myanmar Billiards Team, while Win Ko Ko and Aung Phyo are participating in the snooker team.

Meanwhile, Pool players are Phone Myint Kyaw and Thaw Zin Htet. Myanmar billiards and snooker players competed in eight World Snooker Champi-

onships and Asian Billiards and Snooker Championships in Qatar this month in preparation for the SEA Games.

Aung Phyo won third place in the Asian Billiard Championship while Pauk Sa also won another third prize in the Asian Snooker Championship. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM ■

Returning Messi scores as Argentina take unbeaten run to 30



Lionel Messi scored on his return to the national team as Argentina stretched their world-leading unbeaten run to 30 matches with a routine 3-0 World Cup qualifying win over Venezuela on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP

LIONEL Messi scored on his return to the national team as Argentina stretched their world-leading unbeaten run to 30 matches with a routine 3-0

World Cup qualifying win over Venezuela on Friday.

Goals from Nicolas Gonzalez and Angel Di Maria, both created by Rodrigo De Paul, also

kept a packed Bombonera stadium enthralled in Buenos Aires for a match that had nothing riding on it.

Argentina have long qualified for the World Cup in Qatar later this year, while Venezuela were the first team in South America's single 10-nation qualification group to be eliminated.

The victory kept Argentina just four points behind group leaders Brazil with two matches to go. Venezuela are now guaranteed to finish bottom after a 13th defeat in 17 qualifiers so far.

All four automatic qualification spots have been decided ahead of next week's qualification finale, with Uruguay and Ecuador booking their tickets to Qatar on Thursday night.—AFP ■

Iga Swiatek becomes new WTA World No.1 with Miami win

POLAND'S Iga Swiatek clinched becoming the new world number one in women's tennis on Friday by defeating Swiss player Viktorija Golubic 6-2, 6-0 at the WTA Miami Open.

Swiatek will move into the top spot vacated by Australian Ashleigh Barty after the three-time Grand Slam champion announced her retirement earlier this week.

"Pretty surreal," Swiatek said. "On one hand,

these are the most special moments that you're going to remember for the rest of your life, but on the other hand, that match was just another match."

The 20-year-old Warsaw-born star had to win her second-round match at the South Florida hardcourt tournament to ensure she would replace Barty in the next rankings next month.—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.

Salah sets up win for Egypt over Senegal

PROLIFIC Liverpool scorer Mohamed Salah was the architect of the only goal as Egypt edged Senegal 1-0 in Cairo on Friday in a high-profile World Cup play-off first leg.

Salah turned inside the box and slammed the ball against the crossbar with the rebound hitting Senegal defender Saliou Ciss and rolling into the net for an own-goal.

The eagerly awaited clash was a repeat of the Africa Cup of Nations final last month, which Senegal won 4-2 on penalties in Cameroon after 120 goalless

minutes.

Sadio Mane, a Liverpool teammate of Salah and scorer of the winning penalty in the African title decider, was closely guarded by Egypt.

He did have a chance soon after half-time off a Bouna Sarr cross, but a close-range header flew just wide of the post.

The Cairo clash was one of three first legs decided by a solitary goal with Algeria winning 1-0 against Cameroon in Douala and Tunisia achieving a similar result against Mali in Bamako.—AFP ■



Egypt's forward Mohamed Salah (R) and Egypt's midfielder Mahmoud 'Trezeguet' Hassan (L) celebrate after a goal. PHOTO: AFP