

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Sunday, 17 April 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.

SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla visit PyinOoLwin Station family water-throwing pandals

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla on the Atet Day of the 1383 ME Maha Thingyan Festival yesterday viewed the participation of officers, other ranks and families in the water-splashing festivities at the pandals of training depots, regiments and units in PyinOoLwin Station.

The Senior General, his wife, and party were welcomed by officers, other ranks, their family members, and the Defence Services Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Training School cadets. They



Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla view the choral dance performance at the Defence Services Academy Maha Thingyan Water Festival Pandal in PyinOoLwin yesterday.



watched the performances of the family choral dance troupes and the singing of cadets and vocalists.

Then, the Senior General, his wife and the party went to the Defence Services Academy

and watched the performances of the family choral dance troupes and the singings of the cadets and vocalists.

Afterwards, the Senior General, his wife and the party enjoyed throwing water at

cadets and senior officers from the Defence Services Academy. They awarded cash prizes to choral dance troupes, performers, officers, other ranks, and family members.

—MNA

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Closing Ceremony of Yangon Maha Thingyan Pandal held



Dignitaries and foreign missions in Yangon take part in the Walking Thingyan.



The closing ceremony in progress.

THE closing ceremony of the Yangon Maha Thingyan Pandal was held yesterday at 5 pm.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, Yangon Region Command Commander Maj-Gen Nyunt Win Swe, Minister for Security and Border Affairs Colonel Win Tint, Yangon Mayor U Bo Htay, Yangon Region cabinet ministers, the deputy mayor of the Yangon City Development Committee, the committee secretary and members, diplomats, military attaches, and officials from foreign embassies in Myanmar, heads of Yangon City Development

Committee departments, officials, staff and family members from the Myanmar Motion Picture Organization, Myanmar Music Association, Myanmar Theatrical Association and invitees attended the ceremony.

First, departmental and district dance troupes performed the Kyaukse Elephant Dance.

Artistes from the Myanmar Music Association, Myanmar Motion Picture Organization and Myanmar Theatrical Association performed dances and songs. At the same time, the Yangon Region Women's Sports and Physical

Education Sub-Committee also entertained modern dances.

In the evening, the closing ceremony of the 1383 ME Myanmar Traditional Thingyan Festival was held.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein said that it is a transition of a new year from 1383 to 1384, which is also the last day of the year. On an auspicious day, he wished all the city people possess peace of mind and happiness.

Next, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein announced the 1383 ME Yangon Maha Thingyan

Water Festival's winding up.

Afterwards, he presented the prizes to 12 winners of the dance troupes. Next, Yangon Region Command Commander Maj-Gen Nyunt Win Swe presented awards to the winning teams from the 16-woman choral dance competition. Yangon Region High Court Chief Justice Daw Sandar Thwe presented awards to 20 winning dancers, and Yangon Region Minister for Security and Border Affairs presented consolation prizes to 12 dancers.

Next, Yangon Mayor U Bo Htay presented another consolation

award to 16 dancers, and Yangon Region Advocate General U Htay Aung presented consolation prizes to the remaining 20 dancers.

After that, the award-winning dance troupes and artistes entertained with dances and the Yangon Maha Thingyan Water Festival concluded successfully.

Along with the Yangon Region chief minister and officials, diplomats and military attaches also attended the Walking Thingyan near the Maha Bandoola Park starting from the pre-Thingyan day. — MNA

Thingyan Water Festival celebrated in Nay Pyi Taw

YESTERDAY was the last day of the traditional Myanmar Thingyan Festival.

In Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, water-splashing cars were patrolling around the Thingyan pandals, and traditional Myanmar food and snacks were served at the donation pandals.

Visitors were seen yesterday at Nay Pyi Taw Uppatasanti Pagoda, Dhardu Zaya Dat-

paungsu Pagoda, Laekwintaung Pagoda, Phayakoesu Pagoda, Lawka Maresein Pagoda, Lawka Yannaing Pagoda, Yanaungmyin Shwelathla Pagoda, Thata Thadaha Thanwezaniya Pagoda, Paungtaw Chatma Pagoda and other famous pagodas.

Musicians played music, and dance troupes performed traditional dances at the Nay Pyi Taw Mayor Maha Thingyan Pan-

dal and Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) Maha Thingyan Water-throwing Pandal on the last day of the Thingyan.

Similarly, in the townships within the Nay Pyi Taw Council area, Thingyan lovers played water and food donations are also seen in the area.

The Hlaekhwintaung Resort at Kyitaung village, Kyitaung village-tract, Zeyathiri

Township in Nay Pyi Taw, and the Aweya Beach Resort in Pyinmana Township are also bustling with Thingyan lovers and visitors.

The Thingyan festivities were also held at the Walking Thingyan Festival in Nay Pyi Taw Water Fountain Park.

During the Maha Thingyan Festival, relevant authorities have formed joint teams at the

water fountain parks and resorts to provide peace and relaxation to the people. Warnings are issued to ensure safety during recreation.

Water is poured into one another to remove the dirt from the old year and prevent it from entering the new year during the Thingyan Festival, in line with Myanmar's traditional culture. — Myo Set Thit/GNLM



Maha Thingyan merrymakers are seen at one of the Nay Pyi Taw roads.



At the Nay Pyi Taw water fountain park. PHOTOS: KO GYI HTEIN (MNA)

Our Tatmadaw is the only institution hailed from the ethnic people

AS our Tatmadaw is the only institution hailed from the ethnic people, it has to safeguard the lives and poverty of the people and to assist in the daily social life security of the people in all directions.

(Excerpt from Speech Delivered by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Maha Thray Sithu Min Aung Hlaing at the Parade of the 77th Anniversary Armed Forces Day on 27th March 2022.)

SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla visit PyinOoLwin Station family water-throwing pandals

NEWS ON PAGE-1



18 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 16 April, total figure rises to 612,545

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **612,545** after **18** new cases were reported on 16 April 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **591,304** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll stands at **19,434** without casualties. —MNA

Closing ceremony of Commander-in-Chief (Army, Navy and Air) Office Pandal held

THE closing ceremony of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army, Navy and Air) Pandal was organized yesterday afternoon.

The ceremony was attended by State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, SAC members, Union Ministers, Deputy Ministers, senior military officers of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Office, their wives and family members. They enjoyed performances by artistes, sing-



The Vice-Senior General, his wife and party praise the performance of the Thingyan choral dance troupe.

water on them and peacefully concluded the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army, Navy and Air) Pandal.

Similarly, the Vice-Senior General and party visited the Nay Pyi Taw Command family water-throwing pandal and viewed the participation and entertainment of artistes, singers and family choral dance troupes in the water festival.

On Thingyan Atet Day, all the pandals in the Commander-in-Chief (Army) compound were alive with the performances of artistes, singers and dancers and also crowded with Thingyan lovers, officers, other



The Commander-in-Chief (Army, Navy and Air) Office Maha Thingyan Water Festival Pandal in progress.

ers and choral dance troupes. They then awarded the artistes

and dancers. During the closing cere-

mony, the artistes, singers and dancers sang a Mann Taung

Yeik Kho song. The Vice-Senior General and party sprinkled

ranks and family members. — MNA

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

MoEE holds ceremony of Thingyan Festival

THE Ministry of Electricity and Energy's 1383 ME Maha Thingyan Festival was held yesterday at Office No 27 of the Ministry of Electricity and Energy in Ot-tarathiri Township, Nay Pyi Taw.

State Administration Council Member Saw Daniel and his wife, Union Ministers and their wives, the MoEE deputy minister, heads of departments, officials and invitees were present at the event. Thingyan choral dance troupes from departments performed dances at the pandal.

Then, SAC member Saw



The SAC member and officials attend the MoEE Maha Thingyan Water Festival.



Daniel and his wife gave a bouquet to choral dance troupes. Union Ministers splashed Thingyan water on officials and invitees and presented cash award to Thingyan choral dance troupes from departments.—MNA

SAC member Daw Aye Nu Sein attends closing ceremony of Sittway Maha Thingyan Central Pandal



STATE Administration Council member Daw Aye Nu Sein visited the pandals of departments and Sittway Station in Rakhine State, accompanied by Rakhine State Chief Minister Dr Aung Kyaw Min and relevant officials. They attended the closing ceremony of Central Pandal yesterday.

The SAC member and party visited the pandals and enjoyed performances of Thingyan cho-

ral dance troupes in the morning, and attended the closing ceremony of the Sittway Maha Thingyan Central Pandal in the evening.

On the last day of the Thingyan festival, pandals in Sittway Township were crowded with merrymakers and the Rakhine ethnic artistes and Thingyan choral dance troupes performed at the pandals. — Tin Tun (IPRD)/ GNLM

The SAC member presents the award to the Thingyan choral dance troupe. PHOTO: TIN TUN (IPRD)

Closing ceremony of Nay Pyi Taw Maha Thingyan Pandal held

THE closing ceremony of the Maha Thingyan Festival 1383 ME was held at the Nay Pyi Taw Maha Thingyan Festival Pandal yesterday evening.

Present at the ceremony were State Administration Council Member Saw Daniel and his wife, Constitutional Tribunal Chairman U Thar Htay, Union Ministers, the Nay Pyi Taw Council chairman, deputy ministers, and members of the Nay Pyi Taw Council, heads of departments, artistes and invitees.

Nay Pyi Taw Maha Thingyan Pandal was closed after delivering of the new year



greeting speech of Chairman of the Nay Pyi Taw Council Mayor Dr Maung Maung Naing at the ceremony.

Then the ceremony was concluded by singing



Mann Taung Yeik Kho song performed by choral dance troupes of the Ministry of Re-

ligious Affairs and Culture.—MNA

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

MoTC holds closing ceremony of Thingyan Festival



UNION Minister for Transport and Communications Admiral Tin Aung San attended a closing ceremony of the Myanmar Traditional Water Festival at the Maha Thingyan Water Festival Pandal near the Railway Station in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

During the ceremony, choral dance troupes from the Ministry's subordinate organizations performed Thingyan dances, and the Union minister and his wife presented awards to the dancers.

Then, at the closing ceremo-

ny of the Myanmar Traditional Maha Thingyan conducted by the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Union minister delivered a New Year speech and announced the successful winding up of the Myanmar Traditional Maha Thingyan Pandal of the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

After that, the participants sang a Thingyan song named "Mann Taung Yeik Kho", greeted each other and played with water happily, and the ceremony was successfully concluded. —MNA

The winding up ceremony of the Ministry of Transport and Communications is held in Nay Pyi Taw.

MoI Family Thingyan Festival held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE Ministry of Information staff's family Thingyan festival was held at the Office of the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning,

Deputy Minister U Ye Tint and his wife attended the Thingyan festival on behalf of the Union Minister for Information.

Permanent Secretary Myo Myint Maung and his wife, the department heads, officers, staff and family members happily participated in the festival.

First, the deputy minister,

his wife and the party watched the reception of the respective departments during the Thingyan festival and enjoyed the water festival with the staff.

Afterwards, entertainment groups from the Myanma Radio and Television performed in collaboration with the MRTV band.

Musicians performed Thingyan songs, and the deputy minister presented cash prizes and enjoyed water-splashing festivities. —

MNA



The MoI deputy minister gives the cash award to performers.

Visitors flock to islands of Myeik Archipelago during Thingyan period

TRAVELLERS across the nation pay a visit to Myeik Archipelago, including Smart Island, during the Thingyan period by taking speed boats from Myeik jetty.

The people mainly visit Smart Island, Marcus Island, Thamee Hla, Mintha, Done Waterfall, Done Nyaungmine (Salon village), Beli Island and Kyal Leik Island. According to

the travel agencies, some make a day trip while some spend the whole day there.

"There are very few visitors during the Thingyan period than the numbers of visitors before the outbreak of COVID-19. Only 30 per cent of the visitors of previous years come here, and about ten speedboats run per day during Thingyan days.

Some travellers take an overnight trip," said a travel agency.

The island's day-trip tours can cost between K120,000 and 200,000 depending on the island while the overnight trip to Marcus Island K180,000 and K300,000 to Smart Island, Beli Island and Kyal Leik Island, according to the agencies. — Khine Htoo (Myeik/IPRD)/GNLM



Travellers are seen going on island trips. PHOTO : KHINE HTOO (MYEIK)

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

Actress Khine Thin Kyi's Excellent Performance in Social Field Title revoked

THE Excellent Performance in Social Field Title (Second Class) awarded to actress Khine Thin Kyi by the State Administration Council with Order No 54/2022 was revoked under Paragraph 67 of the 2009 Honorary Title and Medal Provision and Section 419 of the Constitution.

Chin State Chief Minister attends Thingyan Festival closing ceremony



Maha Thingyan Water Festival closes in Chin State.

THE 1383 ME Myanmar Traditional Thingyan Festival Atet Day event was held at 9:30 am yesterday at the Maha Thingyan Festival Central Pandal at the Chin State Government Office in Haka Township.

Chin State Chief Minister U Ngun San Aung, State Chief Justice U Nay Soe, cabinet ministers, State Advocate General U Sun Dot Kyin, Secretary of State Government U Maung Maung San, Commandant for Military

Strategy Colonel Saw Tun, and departmental officials watched and encouraged performances of choral dance troupes.

Afterwards, an award-giving ceremony for Miss Thingyan and choral dance troupes was held. Officials presented the best prizes, the first, second and third, and consolation prizes to the awardees, respectively.

The Chin state chief minister, the state chief justice, state cabinet ministers, the state advo-

cate, and the state government secretary proceeded to Haka Station Water-splashing Pandal and watched performances of choral dance troupes. They awarded cash prizes to the winning choral dance troupes.

The Myanmar Traditional Maha Thingyan Festival closing ceremony was held at 3 pm, and the state chief minister made a concluding remark. —District IPRD/GNLM

Kachin State winds up Maha Thingyan festival, holding award-giving ceremony

THE closing ceremony of the Kachin State Maha Thingyan festival and award-giving ceremony to Thingyan choral dance troupes were organized at Myitkyina Maha Thingyan Central Pandal yesterday.

Kachin State Chief Minister U Khat Htein Nan and wife Daw Nann Saing, Northern Command Commander Maj-Gen Myat Thet Oo and state ministers gave

awards, certificates of honour and cash prizes to the winners of the first, second, third including special and fourth award winners out of seven Thingyan choral troupes who competed with CDs songs, own tunes and Myanma Saing Waing (Orchestra).

Then, one of the state ministers gave cash rewards to the judges and the award-winners performed Thingyan dances.

Finally, the Kachin State chief minister announced that the 1383 ME Myanmar traditional Thingyan festival was concluded and welcomed the New Year, 1384 ME.

Afterwards, the choral dance troupes entertained with Mann Taung Yeik Kho song and officials concluded the event. —MNA



Maha Thingyan Water Festival winds up in Kachin State.



Maha Thingyan in Katha.



Maha Thingyan in Buthidaung.



Maha Thingyan in Monywa.



Maha Thingyan in Eainme.



Maha Thingyan on Ohnma Dandy Beach.



Maha Thingyan in Loikaw.

OPINION

Look at the future with optimism from New Year onwards

TODAY is New Year's Day in the Myanmar calendar. As it is a New Year's Day, we all need to refresh our minds to look at the world with a new optimistic sense of all things. We all should have to expect all new things today. We should leave the old and worn-out things in the past, at least yesterday. We should widen our scope to see all better things at present and in the future. You all should take care not to compare things with the past and the present. If you leave useless one of the pasts, your

You must join societies to build a peaceful, prosperous, pleasant and pleasurable world. These societies are formed with happy souls. From now onward, your souls should understand the nature of the New Year, which leaves the past things, brings the present things and expects the future things to the new world.

can tolerate everything and will have the chance to march onwards to the goal with pleasure and pleasantness.

You must join societies to build a peaceful, prosperous, pleasant and pleasurable world. These societies are formed with happy souls. From now onwards, your souls should understand the nature of the New Year, which leaves the past things, brings the present things and expects the future things to the new world.

Don't hesitate! Rush into the new scenes of the future, but your souls must have been washed. You should bring the best gift to the world where everybody is waiting for you to give the best things. You cannot see the best things with ordinary eyes, but you can find these things with knowledgeable eyes.

minds will be brighter. Its result will bring you to a new abode of society.

You should leave all grudges in the past and march into the present time when you should enjoy the fruits of optimism. Consequently, much debris in the ways of your minds will automatically disappear, taking frets from you. If so, your faces will be brighter.

Don't be eager to fight against the world but prioritize cleansing your minds first. You will enjoy the fruits of the trees you planted. Every echo will reflect your soul. Your whitish hearts will be victims of your endless tests on how to conquer the world. Now is the best time to overhaul your mindsets. Hence, refreshed mindsets will have the chance to decorate the world with honesty.

It is important to see the world with optimistic eyes. If you see inappropriate things, you must have the morale to forgive them. It would be best if you had to explore the insight of others on how to feel all events of the world. Your daily lifestyle will be the best if you can forge sympathy for all. Consequently, you

Scientists outline need for new approach to COVID-19 vaccine testing

Rutgers University's top health researchers are calling for a change in approach to developing COVID-19 vaccines, and vaccines to fight future pandemics to incorporate both conventional and challenging trials.

THE commentary by bioethicist Nir Eyal and epidemiologists Tobias Gerhard and Brian Strom (the latter is chancellor of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences) -- published in *Pharmacoepidemiology and Drug Safety* -- examines how this parallel approach to vaccine trials can lead to faster and more accurate vaccine assessment and more effective pandemic response. Conventional randomized controlled trials are where participants receive a vaccine or placebo and then may or may not be exposed as they continue with their lives over the course of the months that follow.

Human challenge vaccine trials
Human challenge vaccine tri-

als are where participants receive a vaccine or placebo and are then artificially exposed to the virus.

The researchers say that further vaccine testing could help settle remaining questions about how effective the shots are at blocking infection against old and new virus strains.

It could also reveal the most effective dosing and timing between shots, the level of protection compared to natural immunity and how well vaccines work in groups that were underrepresented in initial trials.

While some researchers proposed at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic that challenge trials take place, others argued that too little was known about the virus and that conducting the trials would be too dangerous.



They were not used for the studies that led to the approval of the major COVID-19 vaccines but are now being used in testing. "The vigorous discussions about vaccine trial designs in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic, unfortunately, played out as a mostly adversarial debate between pro-challenge trial and pro-conventional trial supporters. We felt that there was an overlooked third approach that involved combining strengths from

People wait to be tested for COVID-19 in Miami Beach, Florida, as the pandemic surges in the US on 3 December 2020. PHOTO: CHANDAN KHANNA/AFP

both designs and could facilitate better outcomes throughout the remainder of the COVID-19 pandemic and in future pandemics," says Gerhard, Director, Centre for Pharmacoepidemiology and Treatment Science at Rutgers Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research (IFH) and Professor, Rutgers Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy.

Rutgers researchers' parallel approach

The Rutgers researchers' parallel approach, called "Combining Conventional and Challenge trials (CCC)," would involve trials of both types, conducted either simultaneously or at different times.

"In a pandemic, the value of obtaining information as early as possible is so vast that 'CCC' is

ethically preferable to any single trial, and preparations for a future pandemic should include laying the groundwork for a CCC," said Eyal, Henry Rutgers Professor of Bioethics and Director, Centre for Population-Level Bioethics at Rutgers IFH.

Eyal and his colleagues say that researchers will be able to collect more information and increase confidence in the efficacy of vaccines. "When either human challenge- or conventional trials are permitted, it may be even more advisable to combine conventional and challenge testing for surer, faster, and more comprehensive vaccine assessments and a fuller understanding of the infection and the disease," said Gerhard.

SOURCE: ANI

Did Covid lockdown trigger obesity in children? Indian Medical bodies to study

WITH obesity turning into an emerging health crisis across the nation, the ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) will be conducting another study on such an issue in all the age groups to collect data from several parts of the country and monitor the rise in the number of obese people before and after COVID-19 pandemic.



The scientist further explained the role of junk food in increasing childhood obesity in India. PHOTO: PICTURE FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE/ANI

"The idea of the study is under the process of approval from ICMR. Once it approves, the study will be taken up. It is a collaborative study and we are also partnering with other leading institutes to complete it," Dr Avula Laxmaiah, Scientist G, ICMR- NIN told ANI.

Studies on dietary consumption

He said that scientists have

already done some studies on dietary consumption.

"We will compare the previous years' data also. We have already done some studies on dietary consumption and will see what is the difference in the number of obese people before COVID and after COVID," Dr Laxmaiah stated.

The scientist further explained the role of junk food in increasing childhood obesity in India. "It is a series of studies on childhood obesity and its determinants. One of the determined is the consumption of processed junk food and processed foods. In that process, we will put our ultra-processed samplings and everything will come," he described.

Dr Laxmaiah said, "We have also published one paper on obesity research. In that paper, we analyzed the contribution of junk food which is causing the overweight. We have also done a principal component analysis which revealed that almost 53 per cent

of overweight obesity is caused by unhealthy food consumption."

Research on the subject

The ICMR-NIN scientist informed that the scientists have done research on the subject in 2004, 2008, 2012 and 2018.

"All studies show obesity is caused by the obesogenic environment due to sedentary activities and junk food consumption. High intake of junk food can also affect mental health and other organs of the body. Junk food majorly gives only energy, but not minerals and vitamins which required for brain development and growth," he added.

He affirmed that the study will focus on the social dynamics of childhood obesity.

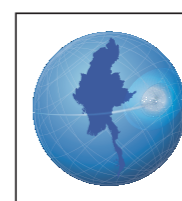
"For now, we are planning to conduct dietary consumption data in all 36 states and union territories shortly. The study will be conducted from 5 to 65-year age group," the scientist said.

SOURCE: ANI

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Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 16 April 2022)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 17 April 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin and Southern Shan states, scattered in (Northern and Eastern)Shan and Chin states and isolated in Nay Pyi Taw, Lower Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, and Taninthayi regions and Mon State. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be 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: Likelihood of scattered to fairly widespread rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing, and Taninthayi regions and Kachin and Shan states and isolated in Kayah, Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17 April 2022: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17 April 2022: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR NAYPYITAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17 April 2022: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

NATIONAL CRIME NEWS



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

THE Ministry of Commerce oversees the importation of essential medical supplies and anti-COVID devices critical to COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities, including liquid oxygen and oxygen cylinders, through trading posts, international airports

and seaports.

Twenty-six tonnes of masks have been imported via trading posts from 1 to 16 April.

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

It is reported that the Ministry of Commerce is coordinating with relevant departments and the treatment of COVID-19. Contact persons for enquiries can be reached through the Ministry's Website — www.commerce.gov.mm. — MNA

Illegal timbers, timber-loaded trucks seized

BY the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee, efforts are being made to take effective action against illegal trades across the country.

On 14 April, combined teams led by the Region Forest Department under the management of the Regional Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections in Hlegu and Hmawby townships. They seized 8.6942 tonnes of illegal Pyin Ka Toe (hardwood) and teak (estimated value of K2,572,780) and two trucks that carried this illegal wood (estimated value of

K60,000,000) and took action under the Forest Law.

On 15 April, the combined team seized 6.4256 tonnes of illegal Kanyin (estimated value of K449,792) in Hlegu Township and a truck (estimated value of K32,000,000) that carried this illegal wood and 3.324 tonnes of illicit timbers (estimated value of K159,850) in Taikgyi Township, totally calculated at K95,182,422 and took action under the Forest Law.

Similarly, on 16 April, combined teams led by the Region Forest Department under the management of the Bago Re-



Seized timbers and lorry in Yangon.



Confiscated teak logs.

gional Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections in Bago, Toungoo, Pyay and Thayawady districts and seized 13.2554 tonnes of teak, timbers and other wood (estimated value of K2,026,974) and took action under the Forest Law.

Therefore, according to the committee, 13 arrests (estimated value of K97,209,396) were made on 14, 15 and 16 April. — MNA

Drugs seized in Bhamo, Monghsat townships

ILLEGAL drugs were seized in Bhamo township in Kachin State and Monghsat Township in Shan State on 15 April, Myanmar Police Force stated.

At 4:30 pm, a combined team of the Anti-Illegal Drug Police Force seized 4.4 kilogrammes of heroin and K210,000 during a search of two vehicles that are a Vigo vehicle driven by Zaw San Aung and a Landcruiser car driven by Jonjeinwong on the Bhamo- Mansi Road, in Bhamo

Township.

At 5:45 pm on the same day, the police also seized 2,800 stimulant tablets while searching for a motorbike driven by Ahbaela in the rubber field near Maehsat village in Monghsat township. It is also reported that action is taken against the arrested suspects, according to the MPF. — MNA

Four arrestees are pictured along with seized drugs and vehicles.



LOCAL BUSINESS

Corn growers push for cultivation acreage increase on price rise

PRICE rise prompted the corn growers in Minbu (Sagu) Township, Magway Region, to continue the corn season this year, the growers said.

The corn can be harvested after three months of cultivation. The retail price of corn is K200, and the corn is offered at K180 in the wholesale market. Systematic cultivation can result in a high yield. There are sweet corn, glutinous corn and pod corn. The pod is only for animal feed.

The corn needs moisture content. Irrigation is utilized for adequate soil moisture in the summer and winter growing seasons. The growers have to take special care in corn pollination and fertilization. Corn can be grown by broadcasting or planting the seeds in rows. Drip agriculture, spraying fertilizer and clearing weeds and grass are required to grow them successfully. Approximately 10,000 plants can be produced per acre. The high



Myanmar exported 2.3 million tonnes of corns to foreign trade partners in the 2020-2021 financial year. The majority of them were sent to Thailand, and the rest went to China, India and Viet Nam.

price encouraged the growers to extend the corn season, said U San Tun, a grower from Kyauktan village in Minbu Township.

The corn FOB price stood at US\$345 per tonne during the pre-Thingyan period, according to the Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Bay-

intnaung).

The recent policy changes will not adversely influence the exports. An export licence is required for the exports of those items, including maize, starch, popcorn, seed, maize corn flour, cereal grains, millets, cereal groats, meal and pellets, buck-

wheat and canary seeds starting from 1 April 2022, according to a notification released by the Ministry of Commerce on 9 March 2022.

Nevertheless, the Foreign exchange earned by locals in Myanmar must be deposited in accounts at the authorized banks and exchanged for the lo-

cal currency at the Central Bank of Myanmar's reference rate of K1,850. The CBM's move makes the traders face export hurdles, a trader from Mandalay said.

According to Myanmar Corn Industrial Association, as the corn traders are filling the inventory, trade is likely to go strong up to September. Presently, corn is highly demanded by foreign trade partners and domestic feed processing factories.

Myanmar exported 2.3 million tonnes of corns to foreign trade partners in the 2020-2021 financial year. The majority of them were sent to Thailand, and the rest went to China, India and Viet Nam. Currently, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions.

Myanmar has three corn seasons- winter, summer and monsoon. The country yearly produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corns. — Zeya, KK/GNLM

Exports of aquaculture products top \$481 mln in past mini-budget period

THE export value of Myanmar's fish and fishery products in the past mini-budget period (Oct 2021-March 2022) amounted to over US\$481.58 million, which indicated an increase from \$39.4 million in the corresponding period of the last financial year 2020-2021, the Ministry of Commerce's data showed.

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation focuses on boosting production, exploring new markets, increasing export items, enhancing the livelihood of local people, providing financial assistance to the breeders, promoting the fish consumption of the people and tackling the challenges together with all the stakeholders.

Moreover, Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF) is striving for pedigree and genetic improvement for sustainable utilization. The fish and shrimp research centre disseminates the information to the breeders to develop the fishery sector.

The marketable fish products, especially fish, shrimp, eel and crab from Taninthayi and Ayeyawady regions and Rakhine State, are primarily exported to foreign markets.

Myanmar typically exports fisheries products, such as fish, prawns, and crabs, to markets of 40 countries, including China, Saudi Arabia, the US, Japan, Singapore, Thailand, and countries in the European Union. Chinese market constitutes about 65 per cent of Myanmar's fishery exports, accounting for US\$254 million out of the overall fishery export value of over \$850 million in the FY 2019-2020. Currently, China shut down the border areas in the wake of the COVID surge in Myanmar. The federation is turning to the Bangladesh market with export potential at present.

There are 480,000 acres of fish and prawn breeding farms across the country and more than 120 cold-storage facilities in Myanmar. During the last financial year 2020-2021 (October-September), Myanmar shipped approximately \$785 million worth of seafood, the Ministry of Commerce's data showed. The country is striving for livestock sector development, a key economic sector, by shifting from traditional farms to advanced aquaculture systems. The effort is to keep abreast of the developments in the regional countries. — KK/GNLM

57th Myanma Gems Emporium to start in Nay Pyi Taw on 22 April

ACCORDING to the Central Committee on Organizing Myanma Gems Emporium, a seven-day 57th Myanma Gems Emporium will take place in Nay Pyi Taw from 22 to 28 April 2022.

Under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation's guidance, the central committee will sell Myanmar's mineral products such as jade, premium precious stone, and pearl lots at the emporium.

All Myanmar citizens engaged in extractive industry and holding a mining permit in line with Myanmar Gemstone Law, and those involved in production, selling, and buying of the finished gems products are entitled to attend the emporium in line with the set rules and regulations.

Those enthusiastic can inquire about the details of the individuals who are allowed to attend the emporium through the central committee, the Myanma Gems Enterprise (Nay Pyi Taw) and the Myanma Pearl Enterprise (Nay Pyi Taw), the central committee notified.

The 56th Myanma Gems Emporium was held on 11-20

March 2019 at Mani Yadanar Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw. The raw jade stones, finished premium jade products, natural gems stones, finished jewellery products, jake-like stones, statues and curving, loose stones, gemstones arts and pearl lots were sold.

Tax levied on the sales at the emporium as a special goods tax is 15 per cent for raw jade stones, 10 per cent for raw gemstones and three per cent for the finished jewellery prod-

ucts and one per cent for some finished products.

Under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, the Myanma Gem Enterprise notified the miners on 1 April 2022 of the suspension of jade mining permit extension in Lonkhin, Phakant, Mawlu and Mawhan sites. It aims to have the sustainable utilization for future generations, ensure no environmental impacts and the safety measures. — NN/GNLM



Gems merchants were pictured evaluating gem stones in the previous emporium.

ECONOMY WORLD

Chinese economy may grow 5.9 pct this year: Credit Suisse economist

AN economist of Credit Suisse Group AG expects China's gross domestic product to grow 5.9 per cent, higher than the 5.5 per cent target set by the world's second-largest economy, Bloomberg reported Thursday.

Yi David Wang, chief China economist at Credit Suisse Group AG, said he could revise his projection closer to 5.6 per cent once the impact of coronavirus lockdowns becomes clearer.

According to the report, Wang's prediction is based on three reasons. "First, coronavirus lockdowns will hurt production less than consumption. Second, government and corporate investment will grow strongly. Finally, investment in housing can still grow despite a slump in sales as existing projects still need to be finished," said the report.

Wang argued that the recent export data suggests that global demand for Chinese production will remain elevated this year, as



A staff member works at the construction site of a ferris wheel at Baoan coastal cultural park in Shenzhen, south China's Guangdong Province, on 6 Oct 2020. **PHOTO: XINHUA/LIU DAWEI**

the rate of export growth remains above pre-pandemic levels.

China's total imports and exports expanded 10.7 per cent year on year to 9.42 trillion yuan (1.48 trillion US dollars) in the first quarter of 2022, official data showed Wednesday.

In the period, exports surged 13.4 per cent year on year to 5.23 trillion yuan (821.7 billion dollars), while imports rose 7.5 per cent to 4.19 trillion yuan (658.3 billion dollars), according to the General Administration of Customs.—Xinhua

WORLD ECONOMY **Brief**

China cuts bank reserve requirements amid COVID-19 resurgence

CHINA'S central bank said Friday it will cut the amount of cash that banks must hold as reserves, in an attempt to ease credit and shore up the economy hit by another wave of novel coronavirus infections.

The reduction of the reserve requirement ratio by the People's Bank of China is aimed at bolstering consumption and domestic investment by prompting financial institutions to lend more money to companies and other entities. The reserve requirement ratio for all lenders will be lowered by 0.25 percentage point to 8.1 per cent -- the first cut since December.—Kyodo

New PM Sharif orders 'Pakistan speed' to fix stagnant economy

PAKISTAN'S new Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said Thursday the country's economy had stagnated under his predecessor Imran Khan, setting the tone for possibly months of bitterness before an election that must be held by October next year.

Sharif, sworn in Monday after Khan was ousted by a no-confidence vote in parliament, is still finalising his cabinet but has called for "Pakistan speed" to hurry along development projects and fix the economy. On Thursday the 70-year-old notorious workaholic visited a metro bus project in Rawalpindi and complained about the pace of infrastructure development.—AFP

Iraqis queue for fuel as stations protest government

MOTORISTS in Iraq formed long queues for fuel Thursday after some owners of filling stations shut off their pumps to protest government policies on fuel distribution and pricing.

Some government-run fuel stations have been ordered to operate around the clock to meet demand, the official news agency INA reported. Dozens of vehicles were lined up at stations that remained open. Some

owners of petrol stations have denounced the method of fuel distribution imposed by the authorities, complaining they end up paying more for the quantity of fuel they receive from the government than what they say it is worth. Iraq is the second largest producer in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and oil provides more than 90 per cent of its income.—AFP



Iraqis crowd a Baghdad petrol station to fill up after some filling stations shut off their pumps to protest government policies on fuel. **PHOTO: AFP**

EU embargo on Russian oil, gas will take 'months'



Russian oil and gas sales to the EU account for a far higher amount of revenue: between a quarter of a billion to a billion euros per day, per different estimates. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

THE EU is working on broadening sanctions on Russia to include oil and gas embargoes but such measures would take "several months", European officials told AFP on Friday.

The bloc last week announced a ban on Russian coal in a first step against Russian energy exports -- together, Moscow's main hard currency earner.

But the coal sanction only kicks in from mid-August, and would hit around eight billion euros (\$8.7 billion) in Russia's sales abroad, annually.

Russian oil and gas sales to the EU account for a far higher amount of revenue: between a quarter of a billion to a billion euros per day, per different estimates.

Public and political opinion in the EU is swinging towards a total energy ban as Moscow's war in Ukraine grinds on and yields discoveries of atrocities.

An EU official involved in discussions on cutting Russian energy imports said the European Commission is "thinking about options". Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen has already come out publicly in favour of targeting Russian oil.

But, the official said, "adopting measures on oil means undoing existing contracts, finding alternatives and preventing circumvention".

"That can't be done overnight. It requires at least several months."

Outrage over war

Building EU outrage over the war is sweeping aside hesitation by the member states reliant on Russian oil and gas, such as the bloc's biggest economy Germany, and Italy, Greece and Austria.—AFP

New container liner route links east China, Vietnam

A new container liner route linking Taicang Port in east China's Jiangsu Province and Vietnam was launched on Friday, according to the port's administrative committee.

Two ships, with respective capacities of 1,100 TEUs and 1,400 TEUs, will be put into use on the new route, which operates on a

weekly basis and runs to the port city of Hai Phong and Ho Chi Minh City.

The new route will help boost the development of China's "dual circulation", the Belt and Road Initiative and the high-quality integrated development of the Yangtze River Delta region, according to the administrative

committee.

Taicang Port currently operates four container liner routes to Southeast Asia, providing convenient logistics services for trade enterprises in Suzhou, a national high- and new-tech industrial base in the province and other cities along the Yangtze River.—Xinhua



A bird's eye view of the busy Taicang Port in Suzhou, East China's Jiangsu province. PHOTO: XINHUA

Bankrupt Sri Lanka looks to expand airline fleet

CASH-STRAPPED Sri Lanka's loss-making national carrier revealed plans Thursday to lease up to 21 aircraft, just two days after the government announced a default on its \$51 billion foreign debt.

The island nation is in the grip of its most painful economic downturn since independence in 1948, with severe shortages of essential goods and regular blackouts causing widespread misery.

Huge protests have called for the resignation of the government, which has begged Sri Lankans abroad to send cash home to help pay for essential imports.

Despite the crisis, state-owned Sri Lankan



Sri Lankan Airlines will lease up to 21 extra aircraft. PHOTO: AFP

Airlines has unveiled plans to expand its fleet from 24 to 35 planes in the next three years and replace some of its ageing jets.

"Sri Lankan Airlines has issued four requests for proposal to lease up to 21 aircraft to support its long-term business strat-

egy," it said in a brief statement.

The announcement came after the government suspended repayment of all its foreign borrowings, ahead of negotiations for a debt restructure with the International Monetary Fund next week.

The national carrier did not say how it planned to finance the leases, with its balance sheet showing a \$1.7 billion debt and a carried forward loss of \$1.56 billion in March 2020.

It also came the same day international ratings agency Fitch downgraded \$175 million in bonds issued by the airline from C to CC, suggesting the carrier was "near default".

Fitch said the airline's new rating, on debt due in June 2024, was in line with Sri Lanka's default announcement.

The IMF has repeatedly urged Sri Lanka to privatize the airline, saying it was a white elephant the country cannot afford.—AFP

BUSINESS NEWS TODAY

Zambia starts mass export of avocados to Europe

ZAMBIA has started the mass export of avocados to Europe with the first consignment of over 37 tonnes, a senior government official said Friday.

The commencement of export came after the southern African country met the phytosanitary requirements to export the fruit into Europe, said Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture Green Mbozi.

The move marks the start of huge market opportunities for Zambia's avocado growers, Mbozi was quoted as saying by state broadcaster Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation.—Xinhua

Former UK Coca-Cola boss caught taking £1.5m in bribes

A former Coca-Cola boss in the UK on Thursday avoided jail despite taking more than £1.5 million (\$1.95 million, 1.8 million euros) in bribes in return for channelling lucrative contracts to favoured companies.

Noel Corry, 56, provided companies with confidential information to give them an advantage over rivals when bidding for electrical services contracts for bottling plants in the UK.—AFP

Elon Musk's move to buy Twitter faces roadblocks



Elon Musk's fortune does not mean it will be easy for him to buy Twitter. PHOTO: AFP

EVEN for the richest person on the planet, buying Twitter was always going to be a challenge—a highly

complex financial transaction now made even trickier by a defensive "poison pill" move from the platform's

board. Musk's \$43 billion offer lays out the myriad potential pitfalls: possible government approvals, legal as well as regulatory due diligence, negotiations of a final agreement and, of course, how to pay for it all. Then Twitter's board on Friday showed it won't go quietly, saying any acquisition of over 15 per cent of the firm's stock without its OK would trigger a plan to flood the market with shares and thus make a buyout much harder.

"Your move @elon-musk," tweeted Silicon Valley journalist Kara Swisher. The offer itself, which Musk said was final, values Twitter at \$54.20 per share—above the closing price ahead of his bid, but below a high of \$77.06 hit in February of last year. Even with a moderate and inflexible proposal, which could help the board argue for rejection, it's a fraught moment that could end in lawsuits from just about everyone involved.—AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

MV. BBC LOUISE

Consignees of cargo carried on MV. BBC LOUISE VOY NO. (1211-026) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 18-4-2022 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT 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: 2301928

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/SBEN LINE AGENCIES (S' PORE) PTE LTD

North Korea celebrates founding leader's birthday



People bow before the statues of late North Korean leaders Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il at the Mansudae Art Studio, as part of celebrations marking the 110th anniversary of the birth of Kim Il Sung, known as the "Day of the Sun", in Pyongyang on Friday. **PHOTO: AFP**

NORTH Korea marked the birthday of its founding leader on Friday, with a rare "live" broadcast of celebrations in Pyongyang, but no sign of the military parade or weapons tests that many analysts had predicted.

Known as the Day of the Sun in the nuclear-armed North, the 15 April birthday of the late Kim Il Sung -- grandfather of current leader Kim Jong Un -- is one

of the most important dates in Pyongyang's political calendar.

There has been a steady drumbeat of celebratory coverage in state media leading up to the day, including commemorative stamps, light festivals, dance parties and floral tributes.

"I came to see the lighting festival with my daughter. Looking at it today, it's really cool. The most impressive thing in

particular is this one that says 'self-reliance'," Ri Bom Chol, a 40-year-old doctor, told an AFP reporter in Pyongyang.

The anniversary celebrations come three weeks after North Korea staged its largest intercontinental ballistic missile test ever -- the first time Kim's most powerful weapons had been fired at full range since 2017.—AFP

THE WORLD in brief

Catch up quickly on the global stories that matter.

HKSAR chief executive stresses ensuring national security

Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Carrie Lam said on Friday that she will continue to promote national security education for the rest of her term, and hope that the next-term government will continue the work to ensure comprehensive protection of national security.

April 15 marks the seventh National Security Education Day of the country, as well as the second National Security Education Day after the implementation of the national security law in Hong Kong.

Lam noted that the current-term government of the HKSAR has done a lot of work on national security, including the implementation of the national security law in Hong Kong, which is the first law since Hong Kong's return to the motherland that can be applied to ensuring national security, and the improvement of the electoral system that ensures the principle of "patriots administering Hong Kong". — Xinhua

Belgium trial for alleged accomplices of 2015 Paris attacks

FOURTEEN people charged as accomplices to jihadists who carried out deadly bomb and gun attacks in Paris in 2015 will go on trial in Belgium from Tuesday.

Proceedings will take place under high security in NATO's former headquarters and are expected to last until 20 May, with a verdict likely to take several more weeks.

They are happening in parallel with a trial in Paris of 20 suspects charged in France, which opened in September and is expected to run until the end of June.

The November 2015 Paris attacks saw 130 people killed, with the Islamic State group claiming responsibility.—AFP

WHO warns of steep rise in hepatitis cases among UK children

BRITAIN has reported an "unexpected significant increase" in cases of severe acute hepatitis in young children with an occasional link to COVID-19, according to a risk assessment sheet released by the World Health Organization (WHO) European Region on Friday.

WHO was notified of 10 cases of severe acute hepatitis of unknown etiology in children under the age of 10 years across central Scotland on 5 April. "By 8 April, 74 cases had been identified in the United Kingdom," the press release said.

Laboratory testing conducted in the aftermath of the outbreak ruled out hepatitis A, B, C and E viruses

(as well as D in some cases), but "severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus type 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and/or adenovirus have been detected in several cases," according to the WHO.

"While some cases tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 and/or adenovirus," the United Nations (UN) health body stated that genetic analyses of viruses should be performed to determine any possible associations between cases.

"Some cases have required transfer to specialist children's liver units and six children have undergone liver transplantation. As of 11 April, no death has been reported among these cases."—Xinhua

Singapore PM Lee says finance minister Wong will be his successor

SINGAPOREAN Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said Thursday that ministers of his cabinet have chosen Finance Minister Lawrence Wong as his future successor.

The 49-year-old Wong, once Lee's principal private secretary, is seen assuming the post after Singapore's next general election, expected in 2025.

Lee said in a Facebook post that Wong has been chosen as the "new leader of the 4G team," referring to the fourth generation of the ruling People's Action Party.

The PAP has ruled Singapore since the island city-state became an independent nation in 1965.

Wong was among three younger cabinet ministers



Singapore's Finance Minister Lawrence Wong has emerged as the likely successor to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. **PHOTO: NIKKEI MONTAGE/JIJI/AKIRA KODAKA/AFP**

viewed as potential candidates to be the next prime minister. The two others were Education Minister Chan Chun Sing and Health Minister Ong Ye Kung.

Lee, who turned 70 in February, had said a few years ago that he has no plan to continue being

prime minister after he turns 70.

The announcement on the succession had been delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic and Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat, then 4G leader, stepping out of the race in April last year.—Kyodo

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

QUICK SUMMARY

Here are the latest developments in the war in Ukraine:

Russia threatens Kyiv

A Ukrainian military factory outside Kyiv is partially destroyed by overnight Russian strikes, AFP reports, as Moscow warns it will intensify attacks on the capital in response to Ukrainian strikes on Russian soil.

Russian officials accuse Ukraine of sending two helicopters across the border to bomb a town in Russia's southern Bryansk region, wounding eight people. Ukraine has denied the accusations.

The military factory outside Kyiv produced missiles allegedly used to hit Russia's Moskva warship.

"The number and scale of missile strikes against targets in Kyiv will increase in response to any terrorist attacks or sabotage committed by the Kyiv nationalist regime on Russian territory," the defence ministry in Moscow says.

Five million flee Ukraine

More than five million people have now fled Ukraine since the Russian invasion on 24 February, the United Nations says.

The UN's refugee agency lists 4,796,245 million Ukrainians who have crossed the borders, while its International Organization for Migration says nearly 215,000 third-country nationals have also left.

'Polish mercenaries' killed

Russia's defence ministry says it has killed up to 30 Polish mercenaries fighting for Ukraine in the northeastern region of Kharkiv.

It says strategic rocket forces "eliminated up to 30 Polish mercenaries" in a strike on the village of Izyumskoe, near the city of Kharkiv.

Kharkiv offensive

Russian strikes on the eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv killed seven people and left another 34 injured, the region's governor says, as Moscow's forces stepped up attacks.

"The occupiers fired on a residential area in Kharkiv. Unfortunately, 34 people were injured, including three children. Seven people died; one among the dead was a child," Oleg Synegubov says on social media.

EU gas, oil embargo will take 'months'

The EU is working on broadening sanctions on Russia to include oil and gas embargoes but such measures will take "several months", European officials tell AFP.

Russian energy exports are Moscow's main hard currency earner, and its oil and gas sales to the EU account for between a quarter of a billion to a billion euros per day, per different estimates.

Russia kicks out EU diplomats

Moscow says 18 members of the EU mission in Russia have been declared "persona non grata" and must leave the country.

French radio RFI site blocked

Russia's media watchdog Roskomnadzor blocks access to the website of French radio station RFI for violating a law banning the dissemination of false or extremist information.

It does not specify how the radio station has fallen foul of the law.

Japan, 5 Central Asia nations vow to closely communicate over Ukraine

Japan and five Central Asian nations pledged Friday to closely communicate over responses to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said. During online talks with ministers and officials of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi condemned Moscow's aggression on Ukraine that began in late February as a serious breach of international law, according to the ministry.

SOURCE: AFP

Russia warns US of 'consequences' of Ukraine military aid: reports



Ukraine and Russia are both unlikely to advance ceasefire negotiations until the ongoing Russian campaign in eastern Ukraine develops further.

PHOTO: FACEBOOK/AFP

RUSSIA has formally complained to the United States over its military aid to Ukraine, warning of "unpredictable consequences" if shipments of advanced weaponry go forward, US media reported.

In a diplomatic note this week, Moscow warned the United States and NATO against sending the "most sensitive" weapons for Kyiv to use in the conflict with Russia, saying such shipments were "adding fuel" to the situation and could

come with "unpredictable consequences," the Washington Post reported.

The warning came the same week that US President Joe Biden pledged a new \$800 million military aid package for Ukraine, including helicopters, howitzers and armoured personnel carriers.

"What the Russians are telling us privately is precisely what we've been telling the world publicly -- that the massive amount of assistance

that we've been providing our Ukrainian partners is proving extraordinarily effective," the Post quoted a senior administration official -- who spoke on condition of anonymity about the note -- as saying.

The State Department declined to comment on reports of the formal note.

"We won't confirm any private diplomatic correspondence," a State Department spokesperson said.

"What we can confirm is that, along with allies and partners, we are providing Ukraine with billions of dollars' worth of security assistance, which our Ukrainian partners are using to extraordinary effect to defend their country against Russia's unprovoked aggression and horrific acts of violence."

According to the New York Times citing US officials, the note was sent through normal channels, and was not signed by any senior Russian officials.

The formal correspondence indicates Russia is concerned about the United States' ongoing material support for Ukraine, an anonymous US official told CNN.— AFP

Ukraine says fighting for Mariupol continues

UKRAINIAN Defence Ministry's spokesman Olexandr Motuzyanyk said Friday that Ukrainian forces continued fighting with the Russian military for the Azov Sea key port city of Mariupol, the Ukrinform news agency reported.

"The Russian army is constantly recruiting additional units to storm the city, and as of now there are active battles near the Ilyich plant and in the port zone of Mariupol," Motuzyanyk said.

He emphasized that the Russian forces have not gained full control of the city after almost seven weeks since the siege began.

The Ukrainian military recently carried out a tactical operation on joining the forces of two military units in Mariupol



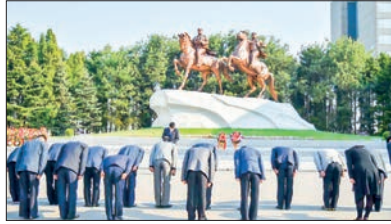
Residents cook outdoors in Mariupol, 12 April 2022. PHOTO: XINHUA

and now they are trying to unblock the city, Motuzyanyk said.

On Wednesday, Ukrainian presidential advisor Oleksiy Arestovych said that the 36th Marine Brigade had broken fighting lines and joined the

Azov Battalion in Mariupol, strengthening the defence of the city.

Mariupol in eastern Ukraine saw one of the worst violence in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.— Xinhua



Myanmar U-22 team to play friendly matches before SEA Games

ACCORDING to the Myanmar Football Federation, the Myanmar U-22 Men's Football Team will play international matches before the 31st Viet Nam SEA Games.

Since early January, team Myanmar has been training for this year's international competitions and competed in the ASEAN U-23 Championship in Cambodia in February, but withdrew from the competition after

arriving in Cambodia after being infected with the COVID-19 virus.

The youth team took a rest for a few days after the tourney and started training in March.

The team will train in the UAE in preparation for the SEA Games and play friendly matches, football officials said.

The squad will leave for the UAE on 17 April and will travel directly to Viet Nam from the

UAE for the SEA Games.

The SEA Games national football tournament is open to under-22 players, but three senior players are allowed to play, and Bulgarian head coach Popov has selected around 30 players, including senior players.

Some of the senior players are playing for foreign clubs and will only be able to join just before the SEA Games, officials added. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Ronaldo hat-trick saves Man Utd as Spurs, Arsenal slump to defeat



Manchester United's Portuguese striker Cristiano Ronaldo (C) celebrates with teammates after scoring his third goal during the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Norwich City at Old Trafford in Manchester, north west England, on 16 April 2022.

— PHOTO: PAUL ELLIS / AFP

CRISTIANO Ronaldo scored a hat-trick as Manchester United claimed a 3-2 win over Norwich

on Saturday to take advantage of defeats for Arsenal and Tottenham in the race for a place in next

season's Champions League.

Spurs' winning run was brought to an abrupt halt by a 1-0 home defeat by Brighton, while the Gunners were beaten 1-0 at Southampton to slump to a third consecutive loss.

Ronaldo's 50th club hat-trick tempered a revolt among the fanbase at Old Trafford as United move above Arsenal into fifth on goal difference, three points behind Tottenham. There was unrest among the United fans before the game even began as many did not come into the stadium until the 17th minute to protest against the 17 years of the Glazer family's ownership of the club. Those late to take their seats missed Ronaldo's first goal of the afternoon as he swept home Anthony Elanga's cross.—AFP

Klopp salutes Liverpool as 'best ever' display seals FA Cup final place

JURGEN Klopp hailed one of Liverpool's "best ever" performances as the quadruple chasers reached the FA Cup final with a "special" 3-2 win against Manchester City on Saturday.

Klopp's side kept alive their bid to win all four major trophies in a single seasons thanks to Ibrahima Konate's opener and Sadio Mane's double at Wembley.

Liverpool were three goals up by half-time as they tore City apart with a scintillating display that Klopp rated among the very finest of his reign.

City hit back with second half goals from Jack Grealish



Liverpool's Egyptian midfielder Mohamed Salah shoots the ball but misses to score during the English FA Cup semi-final football match between Liverpool and Manchester City at Wembley Stadium in north west London on 16 April 2022.— PHOTO: ADRIAN DENNIS / AFP

and Bernardo Silva, but it wasn't enough to stop the Reds reach-

ing their first FA Cup final since 2012.—AFP

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

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

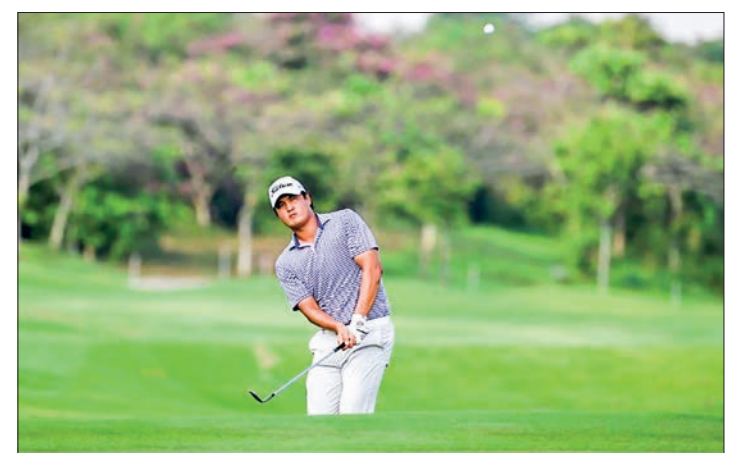
2. Economic affairs

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

3. Social affairs

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

Sensational Sihwan Kim bags second Asian Tour win



American golfer Sihwan Kim swept his second tournament in two months, taking out the Asian Mixed Stableford Challenge in Thailand. PHOTO: ASIAN TOUR/AFP

AMERICAN golfer Sihwan Kim swept his second tournament in two months on Saturday, winning the Asian Mixed Stableford Challenge in Thailand as local teen sensation Ratchanon Chantanawat suffered disappointment after his record-breaking victory last week.

Sixty players from the men's Asian Tour and Ladies European Tour teed off in the \$750,000-prize tournament

which wrapped up Saturday at Siam Country Club's Waterside Course near Pattaya.

Kim scored seven points in the final round for a 49 point total, under the modified stableford scoring system. He had a rollercoaster Saturday with six birdies, two bogeys and a double. After sealing the win, he was splashed with water bottles to mark the Thai New Year Songkran festival.—AFP