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Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

Moeyungyi Wildlife Sanctuary rich in biodiversity



Migratory birds, a flock of black winged stilt, are flying over Moeyungyi Wildlife Sanctuary in illustrating image of sanctuary nature in Bago Region. **PHOTO: KAUNG HTET**

By Kaung Htet

THE foliage is dying back and turning brown at Moeyungyi Wildlife Sanctuary due to the scorching heat in May. It is not time for the migratory birds to fly to Ramsar site so only a small number of visitors

are witnessed at that time. However, relaxing nature's sound and native birds singing are soothing the surroundings. The visitors can practise forest bathing and explore scenic views.

"It is a natural healing spot. Those bird watchers can visit the site when the migratory

birds flock to the Moeyungyi Sanctuary. We stay at Bago and visit here. It is good to visit during the off-season. Feeling the breeze of nature relaxes our mind and body," a visitor U Aung Kyaw Soe from Yangon city said.

Moeyungyi Sanctuary has a habitat education centre,

birdwatching towers, accommodations, restaurants and boat tours for ecotourists. It is an appealing site for birdwatching tourism.

Myanmar's Moeyungyi Sanctuary is 40 square mile (22,600 acres) wide and it is located between Waw Township

and Bago Township, Bago Region. Moeyungyi Wetland Wildlife Sanctuary is habitat of the wildlife animals, migratory birds and rare bird species. It is the protected area for the endangered bird species by the Forest Department.

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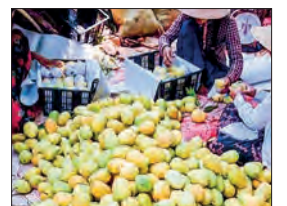
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Moeyungyi Wildlife Sanctuary rich in biodiversity

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Moeyungyi Sanctuary was recognized as Ramsar Site in Myanmar in 2004.

“As Moeyungyi Sanctuary is home to rare bird species and migratory birds, it was designated as Important Bird Area- IBA in 2011. East Asia- Australasian Flyway Partnership recognized it as Flyway Network Site in 2014,” said a warden of Moeyungyi Sanctuary in the Forest Department.

The department is implementing a five-year-wildlife sanctuary management plan (from 2019-2020 to 2023-2024) and ten-year-wildlife habitat restoration project (from 2019-2020 to 2028-2029) to preserve the wetland ecosystem.

“Our department is endeavouring to effectuate the development in ecotourism and create job opportunities for the local community while preserving the ecosystem. We ensure the balance between the tourism development and nature con-

servation,” a warden elaborated.

The staff of the Forest Department is patrolling the protected areas to combat bird hunting and illegal activities that affect the biodiversity. Also, they are raising awareness of the wetland ecosystem, encouraging the participation of the local residents in environmental conservation, protecting the migratory birds from illegal hunting and supporting the eco-tourism sectors. The department is conducting a bird survey to observe the population of native bird species and migratory birds. Similarly, collecting surveys on aquatic plants and fish species and water quality assessment for habitat restoration projects are being implemented as well.

There are 27 water bird species, 55 migratory bird species, 106 forest bird species at the Moeyungyi Sanctuary, totalling 185 species.

Migratory Birds enter Myanmar through two flyways: Central Asian Flyway and East



A scenic view of Moeyungyi Lake.

Asia- Australasian Flyway every year.

Migratory bird species such as Glossy Ibis, Asian Openbill, whistling duck, purple heron, stork, spot-billed duck, pelican, Sarus Cane, northern pintill, Podiceps cristatus, Garganey, river tern, gull and Eur-

asian wigeon enter Moeyungyi through Central Asian Flyway, while Spoon-Billed Sandpiper, black-winged stilt, American Golden-Plover, small pratincole, common crane, Ferruginous Duck and pied avocet fly via East Asia Australasian Flyway, according to the Forest

Department.

“The population of birds is estimated at over 30,000. Most importantly, the critically endangered bird species (Sarus Crane-VU, Spot billed Pelican- NT, Black headed Ibis- NT, Painted Stork-NT, Oriental Darter - NT, Greater spotted Eagle - NT, River Tern - NT, Black-tailed God-NT, Asian Golden Weaver-EN) and newly recorded species White -headed Stilt, Pied Avocet, Pallas’s Gull, Heuglin’s Gull, Caspian Tern, Red-Breasted Merganser, Northern Shoveler, Short-tailed Shearwater, Common Crane are listed.

As a result of this, conservation and research activities and awareness campaigns for the local community to realize the importance of the ecosystem are also carried out, a warden said.

The Forest Department is striving for participation of the CSOs and those engaged in fishing business. The eco-tourism and community-based tourism plans are underway and research activities are also being undertaken for sustainable tourism efforts.

Moeyungyi Wildlife Sanctuary is the first ever Ramsar site recognized in Myanmar. Being an IBA and Flyway Network Site, the ecosystem sustainability is prioritized as well.

Wetland ecosystem helps the local residents earn for living. The department is making effort to keep balance and synergy between the tourism sustainable development and preserving landscape.



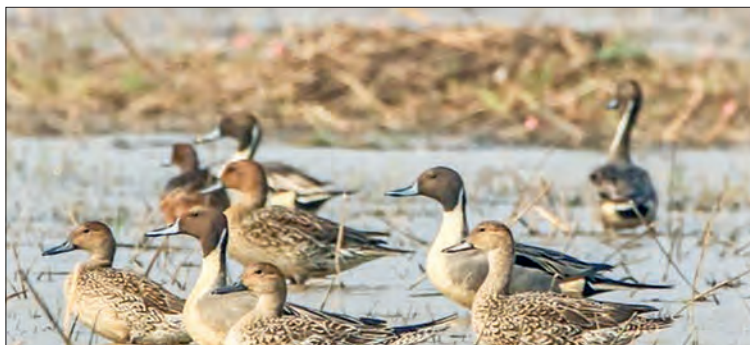
A flock of painted storks are seen in wetland.



Asian openbills.



A tower for bird watchers.



Northren Pintails.



A flock of Purple Swamphens are seen in Moeyungyi Lake.

Translated.

I will strive to do my best through the power of the people

I'VE two national visions—

1. to ensure peace and prosperity of the State
2. to guarantee food sufficiency of the State.

The whole Union must be peaceful and prosperous. Everybody must have proper livelihoods with the capacity to keep abreast of other countries.

We need to manage the food sufficiency in the entire nation by utilizing underground and above ground natural resources.

The strength of the nation lies within. I will strive to do my best through the power of the people. I absolutely believe that it would be successful.

(Excerpt from New Year Message of greetings delivered by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on the New Year occasion in 1384 Myanmar Era Myanmar New Year Day on 17-4-2022)

MoI Union Minister meets with publishers in Yangon

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn met with printers and publishers at the Department of Printing and Publishing in Botahtaung Township in Yangon yesterday afternoon.

During the meeting, the Union Minister said it is necessary to take care of the writings seriously since the publications will remain as records in the future. He called on the attendees to act in accordance with the respective rules, regulations and code of conduct.

The publishers of the recently published pornographic book were unavoidably prosecuted in accordance with the law, he continued.

Such a lawsuit is not a restriction on the right to freedom of expression, but due to the violation of the provisions



Union Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn is speaking at the meeting with publishers and printers in Yangon on 8 May 2022.

of the Printing and Publishing Law, which must be strictly enforced in accordance with

the relevant law, he said.

The Union Minister said, "In other words, I want to say

that we are systematically monitoring writings that are unacceptable in the Myanmar

society." He also spoke about the unscrupulous people who are obstructing the media in various ways, which aim to spread true information and to fight false news in the country.

He said efforts will be made in various ways to ensure the flow of true information to the people and fight against false information no matter how much the Ministry's of Information's media activities are obstructed, urging to work together to do the right thing for the future of the country.

Afterwards, the Director-General of the Information and Public Relations Department explained the supervision situation in accordance with the Printing and Publishing Law 2014, and Publishers and printers participated in the discussions.—MNA

2022 World Red Cross Day Commemoration Ceremony held

THE 2022 World Red Cross Day Commemoration Ceremony took place at Sule Shangri-La Hotel in Yangon yesterday morning.

At the ceremony, Dr Maung Maung Myint, President of the Myanmar Red Cross Society, said that the theme of this year's World Red Cross Day was 'Be Human Kind-Red Cross Helping Everyone'.

He said at a time of COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, humanitarian emergencies, and heightened conflict, which are currently facing the world today, it is time for the Red Cross to spread the message of humanitarianism to all communities, which is one of seven principles of Red Cross.

The theme is to pay a tribute to the people of all ages, young and old, who continue to help those in needs with kind-

ness that can make a big difference in their lives, he said.

Mr Stephan Pierre Sakalian, Resident Representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Myanmar and Ms. Nadia Khoury, Resident Representative of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Myanmar addressed the ceremony. Then, a video of the Red Cross activities was presented to commemorate the World Red Cross Day 2022.

Afterwards, a video recording of the Myanmar Red Cross volunteers was shown in honour of the Red Cross members who served in the Myanmar Red Cross Brigade until the age of 65.

Afterwards, the President of Myanmar Red Cross Society presented certificates to Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma Manijotadhara U Hla Tun and U Tun

Tun Oo family of TTO Pharm Co., Ltd who have always provided necessary support to the township Red Cross branches.

The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies across

the world are marking World Red Cross Day on 8 May, the birthday of its founder, Henry Dunant.

The Myanmar Red Cross Society is celebrating this year's World Red Cross Day

in recognition of the courage and achievements of Red Cross volunteers and staff who have pledged to provide humanitarian services to save lives and change lives for the better.—MNA



MRCS President Dr Maung Maung Myint and attendees to World Red Cross Day ceremony pose for documentary photo on 8 May in Yangon.

SWRR Union Minister inspects activities of social works in Dawei district

UNION Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Thet Thet Khine inspected social work activities in Dawei District in Taninthayi Region on 7 May.

During her inspection tour, the Union Minister and party attended the ceremony of providing social pension to the elderly aged 85 and above, cash assistance to civil society organizations, and honorary certificates to volunteers involved in the COVID-19 control activities in Taninthayi Region in the 2022-2023 financial year.

At the ceremony, the Union Minister briefed them on the implementation of Quick Win Projects on social protection, and disaster management and rehabilitation. Taninthayi



SWRR Union Minister Dr Thet Thet Khine presents cash assistance to Taninthayi Region Chief Minister U Myat Ko on 7 May.

Region Chief Minister U Myat Ko spoke about coordination on social protection, development in the region and disaster management activities.

Minister and officials provided K206.61 million for social pensions to 6,887 elderly people aged 85 and above in Taninthayi Region and K22.908 million for the housing establishment permits through officials.

The Chief Minister handed over the certificates to the representatives of the CSOs which participated in the COVID-19 disease control activities. During the visit, the Union Minister inspected the storage of the relief items, materials for development tasks and donated items at the warehouse of Social Welfare Department and Disaster Management Department, and the Domestic Science Vocational School in Sanchi ward of Dawei and attended to needs.—MNA

Deputy Minister for NREC makes a tour of inspection to Yenwe nursery, furniture factories in Yangon

DEPUTY Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Tun Ohn inspected Yenwe (Myochaung) Permanent Nursery at milestone No 87/6 of the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway on 7 May.

The Deputy Minister, afterwards, arrived at the head office of Myanmar Timber Enterprise in Gyogon forest

complex in Insein Township, and instructed officials to raise the revenue for the State by increasing the production of value-added products, to meet the budget target of each financial year in line with financial regulations, to use reduced impact logging (RIL) system to generate revenue, to expand elephant protection-based tourism, and to pay attention

to the promulgated law, rules and regulations.

The Deputy Minister also visited the No 10 Furniture Factory of the Wood-Based Industry Branch of MTE in Dagon Myothit (South) Township and No 4 Furniture Factory in Thingangyun Township, inspecting the production processes of the factories and coordinating the necessary measures.—MNA



Deputy Minister U Tun Ohn views furniture products at the No 10 Furniture Factory under Myanmar Timber Enterprise in Yangon on 7 May.

Border area development work completed in Ye Township



Completion of 30-foot concrete bridge is seen on Phalan Chaungwa-Nyisar road in Ye Township.

THE Ministry of Border Affairs has been working to improve road communication and socio-economic development of fur-flung villages in Ye Township, Mon State.

During the six-month period from October 2021 to March 2022, Ye Township finished paving of three miles long section of the 14 miles and 4 furlongs long Phalan Chaungwa-Nyisar road.

Maintenance of a two-

mile road section, construction of two 60-foot concrete bridges and a 30-foot concrete bridge was carried out with a grant of K786.825 million from the Department of Progress of Border Areas and National Races.

The work is completed cent per cent meeting the set standards, and the local people can travel comfortably in any season, officials said.—

Zeya Zaw/GNLM

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Yangon mayor inspects preventive measures of flooding in Shwepyitha Township

YANGON Region Development Minister and Yangon Mayor U Bo Htay inspected the construction of the staff housing of the Election Sub-Commission Office at the corner of Thiri Mingala circular road and Ngwe street in Ward 5 of Shwepyitha Township yesterday morning.

Next, the Mayor viewed the dredging of the water collection tank with the use of excavator in the housing compound and the clearing of Tamway Creek for prevention of flooding.

Afterwards, he inspected paving of concrete for expansion

of Pale Road in Insein Township and instructed officials to ensure safety at work and meet the set standards. The Mayor observed dredging in Aungtheikdi Creek, which flows through the Signals Unit in Sawbwayyigon Ward, Insein Township and clearing of rubbish and silt in the same creek along Mindhamma Road in Ward 4.—MNA

Yangon Mayor U Bo Htay views dredging of waste from Tamway Creek in Yangon on 8 May.



Functions of toll gates along Yangon-Pathein road inspected



DEPUTY Minister for Construction U Win Pe inspected the road upgrade work on the Yangon-Pathein road, which is being carried out by Oriental Highway Company under the BOT system. During the inspection, he inspected upgrade of road section to a 12 miles long concrete road between mileposts 5/4 and 17/4

Upgrade works are seen on Yangon-Pathein Road on 7 May.

and the situation of toll collection, instructing officials to systematically monitor the traffic and collection of toll gates, and to collect a fine at the fixed rate for vehicles carrying more than the specified loads.

Afterwards, the Deputy Minister and party made a field inspection to Bo Myat Tun Tollgate on the Yangon-Pathein Road and gave necessary orders.

At the meeting with Director U Yan Naing Zaw, who explained

the situation of paving and levelling of 22 miles long section between mileposts 74/5 and 96/5 with Premix in the next fiscal year, the Deputy Minister said it is necessary to distinguish between the work to be done before the raining season and during the raining season, and he stressed three road task forces, Maubin and Pathein districts must be carried out under the planned projects in a balanced and systematic manner.—MNA

Warning of possible cyclonic storm Asani

THE Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH) has issued a warning that cyclonic storm Asani caused strong winds with heavy rain plus thunderstorms along the Myanmar coast.

Fishing trawlers have also been asked not to do fishery because of the storm.

Due to the cyclonic storm "Asani", rain or thundershowers will be fairly widespread to widespread in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady region and Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states and scattered in the remaining regions and states with likelihood of regionally and isolated heavyfalls in some regions and states from yesterday morning to 12 May.

Occasional strong winds and rough seas are expected off the coast. Surface winds of up to 40 mph are expected during the strong and tidal waves will be 8 to 12 feet along the Myanmar coast and offshore. At 17:30 hrs

MST yesterday, "Asani" in the southeastern Bay of Bengal moved to the northwest. It is centered about 270 nautical miles west of Port Blair, about 450 nautical miles southeast of Vishakhapatnam, 485 nautical miles south-southeast of Puri, 330 nautical miles west-southwest of Coco Island and about 430 nautical miles southwest of Hainggyikyun, Myanmar.

The cyclone "Asani" is likely to turn into a "severe cyclonic Storm" in the southeastern Bay of Bengal in the next six hours. It is forecast continuous to move north-westwards and reach to West Central Bay and adjoining Northwest Bay of Bengal (off north Andhra Pradesh-Odisha coasts, India) around 10 May and re-curve to North-North-eastwards and reach to North-west Bay of Bengal (off Odisha coast, India).

The current situation of the cyclonic storm is classified as yellow stage as it is not likely to move towards Myanmar.—Htun Htun/GNLM

Myanmar, Thai authorities discuss to reopen Myawady-Mae Sot Friendship Bridge (1)

REPRESENTATIVES from Myanmar and Thailand held a discussion to reopen the border checkpoints between the two countries this month to be able to resume border trade, including the Myawady-Mae Sot Friendship Bridge No (1), which has been closed for two years.

Amid the reports on the reopening of the bridge, the authorities from both sides discussed the reopening of the Myawady-Mae Sot Friendship Bridge No 1 on 5 May, following by cleaning done at the bridge in the Myanmar side on 7 May. Due to COVID-19, trade between the two countries has been suspended for over two years. Thailand has agreed to re-



Sanitation tasks are being carried out on Myawady-Mae Sot Friendship Bridge No 1 on 7 May. PHOTO: HTEIN LINN AUNG(MYAWADY)

open the Thailand-Laos Friendship Bridge No 4 on 9 May, and border checkpoints between

Thailand and Cambodia and Thailand and Malaysia were reopened on 6 May.—TWA/GNLM

4 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 8 May, total figure rises to 613,053

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 613,053 after 4 new cases were reported on 8 May 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 591,964 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll stands at 19,434 without more casualties.

COVID-19 vaccine is being injected to those of priority groups in regions and states for prevention and control of the disease. Up to 7-5-2022, a total of 30,931,226 people have been vaccinated. Of them, 24,084,296 people have been fully vaccinated and 6,846,930 people have yet to get the second shots and 1,594,761 people have received booster doses.—MNA

More than 50,000 acres of summer sesame planted in Pwinbyu Township this year to ensure food security



Summer sesame plants are thriving in the farm in Pwinbyu Township of Magway Region.

MORE than 50,000 acres of summer sesame have been planted this summer to ensure local edible oil security, according to the Pwinbyu Township Department of Agriculture in Magway Region.

In order to ensure local edible oil security and develop the oilseeds sector, local farmers particularly cultivate peanuts, sesame and sunflower in

each season by efficiently using the government irrigation, river water pumping system and underground water. It is learned that the field staff of the Township Department of Agriculture are closely monitoring and providing necessary assistance to ensure the proper choice of good varieties and use of inputs.

During this year's sum-

mer cropping season, local farmers have planted 44,131 acres of summer sesame with irrigation facilities, 808 acres with river water pumping system and 6,556 acres with water pumping system and 2,502 acres with underground water, totalling 53,997 acres of summer sesame have been cultivated.—Hlaing Win Lay (Pwinbyu Myay)/GNLM

People receives COVID-19 booster doses in Maungtaw Township

PEOPLE who have received two doses of COVID-19 vaccine were given a booster dose vaccine at the designated places in Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State on 7 May.

Vaccination activities were documented by health officials. Vaccines were given systematically to local people, and only those with normal conditions are vaccinated.

After resting for about 30 minutes, people were given healthcare education and then allowed to leave.

The booster dose vaccine was given to 76 people including two civil servants yesterday.

As of 7 May, 6,394 people had been vaccinated in accordance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Health.—Thet Lwin Soe (IPRD)/GNLM



A local is receiving anti-COVID-19 vaccine as booster dose in Maungtaw Township on 7 May.

COVID-19 vaccine drive continues in various states, regions



DOCTORS and nurses from public hospitals, Tatmadaw medical teams, healthcare workers and volunteers are working hard to give 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.

COVID-19 vaccine is administered 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 groups, people with chronic

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

Doctors and nurses from public hospitals, medical teams from the Tatmadaw, and relevant healthcare workers in collaboration with volunteers gave COVID-19 vaccines to 16,874 people from twenty-six townships in Ayeyawady Region, 7,211 people from twelve townships from Rakhine and Chin states and 35,226 people from seven districts in Mandalay Region on 8 May, respectively. It is reported that officials from the respective military commands visited the site and coordinated the necessary work. — MNA

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, cosmetics seized

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

The Customs and Excise Team inspected the container terminal of Myanmar Industrial Port under the management

of the Customs Department on 7 May. Cosmetics estimated at K35,558,400 not listed in the import declaration (ID) were seized and action was taken according to the Customs procedures.

On 8 May, a combined inspection team led by Myanmar Police force conducted an inspection un-

der the management of Sagaing Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force. A Toyota Townace vehicle estimated at K1.5 million without vehicle registration certificate was seized in Sagaing Township. Police opened a file on this case according to the export/import law.

Similarly, a combined inspection team led by the Region Forest Department conducted an inspection under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force of Bago Region.

During their inspection in Padaung Township, 1.3324 tonnes of doors and door frames made of illegal teak and ironwood at an estimated value of K355,480 were seized near milepost 18/1-2 of the Pyay-Taungup road and action was taken under the Forest Law.

Therefore, four arrests approximately valued at K37,413,880 were carried out on 7 and 8 May, according to the Steering Committee for Combating Illegal Trade. — MNA



Photo shows packages of seized cosmetics on 7 May.

LOCAL BUSINESS

Agricultural export value sees slight decline in April

THE value of agricultural exports shrank to US\$325.6 million in April in the current financial year 2022-2023, indicating a small decrease of \$11.9 million as against the year ago period.

The figures topped \$337.58 million in the corresponding period last year.

Cross-border restrictions between Myanmar and major top customer country China resulted in a sharp drop of agricultural export group in the mini-budget period (Oct 2021-Mar 2022), according to the statistics released by the Customs Department.

Following the closure of Sino-Myanmar border posts triggered by COVID-19 impacts and changes in China's Customs regulations, the export saw a drastic drop in agriculture.



Farming workers are working in the crops farm.

China shut down all the checkpoints linking to Muse border amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the checkpoints,

Kyinsankyawt has resumed trading activity from 26 November on a trial run.

Myanmar agricultural

products are primarily exported to China, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Sri

Lanka.

The country requires specific export plans for each agricultural product, as they are currently exported to external markets based upon supply and demand. The G to G pact also ensures the strong market for the farmers. Contract farming systems, involvement of regional and state agriculture departments, exporters, traders, and some grower groups, are required in order to meet production targets, the Agriculture Department stated.

The Commerce Ministry is endeavouring to help farmers deal with challenges such as high input costs, procurement of pedigree seeds, high cultivation costs, and erratic weather conditions. The agricultural exports were valued at \$2.4 billion in the past mini-budget period.—KK/GNLM

Saltwater shrimp farming business booming in Myeik Archipelago, with production of 35 tonnes per farm within four months

SALTWATER shrimp farming businesses in Myeik Archipelago, Taninthayi Region are booming, with a production capacity of approximately 35 tonnes per farm within four months, a saltwater fish breeder said.

Saltwater shrimp farming business has been accelerating its operations for five years.

"About 1.2 million shrimp larvae are added into the farming lakes in summer and 1 million are poured into the lakes in the rainy season. About 25-30 tonnes are produced in the rainy season and 30-35 tonnes can be harvested in summer. The farming period is about 100-110 days," said U San Maung, managing director of Khaing Zin Yaw Company.

There are abundant land resources for saltwater shrimp farming in Myeik Archipelago. More investors

will eye such business if the departments concerned will support the farming sector.

"The fish resource is gradually depleting in the sea at present. The volume of fish caught is declining. Additionally, hike in fuel oil prices add cost in operating the trawlers at the sea. There are many vacant plots of land to execute fish and shrimp farming in our area. If the authorities concerned support this, it will help tackle with the scarcity of fish species. It will also generate more revenues for the State," U San Maung continued.

The saltwater shrimp farming businesses are found in Katan Island, Masanpar Island and Kyagy-iaw Island in Myeik Archipelago and Thahtay Island in Kawthoung Township. Those shrimps are primarily shipped to Thailand.—Myint Oo (Myeik)/GNLM

Approximately three to four truckloads of Seintalone mango daily shipped to China

ABOUT 3-4 truckloads of Seintalone mango are daily conveyed to China, said U Kyaw Soe Naing, general secretary of Myanmar Mango Market and Technology Development Association (Mandalay).

The mango yield decreases in the regions and states at the moment. Yet, they will be abundant in the market in the coming weeks.

"The number of trucks is low at present. Moreover, yield rate is not that high. The mangoes will abundantly flow into market in the mid-May," U Kyaw Soe said.

The prices of mango touched a high of 120-160 Yuan per 16 kilo.

As mango is perishable goods and delay can harm fruit quality, the authorities concerned are making efforts to transport the mango as soon as possible. It takes only three days for shipment, U Kyaw Soe Naing continued.

Myanmar's mango exporters are facing challenges such as delay triggered by the virus policy, customs policy impeding the exports and high transportation cost to enter China. Therefore, some growers are enthusiastic to distribute them only in the domestic market, said Sai Khin

Maung from Khwarnyo fruit depot.

The Good Agricultural Practices are required for mango exports to China. Moreover, the growers and workers have to strictly adhere to COVID-19 preventive measures such as washing hands, wearing masks and gloves, and sanitation in the packaging process, according to Khwarnyo fruit depot.

"The mangoes delivered in the first batch fetched only 50-70 Yuan per basket as the disinfecting the fruit caused the quality degradation. The actual market price is 100-140 Yuan for Seintalone and Shwehintha mango varieties. If virus is found on one basket, goods loaded onto the

truck will be discarded. There will be no compensation for that," Sai Khin Maung said.

Of about 200 mango varieties originated in Myanmar, Seintalone, Shwehintha, Padamyar Ngamauk, Yinkwe, Machitsu varieties are primarily grown. Foreign market prefers Seintalone varieties. Ayeyawady Region possesses the largest mango plantation acres, having about 46,000 acres. Bago Region is the second largest producer with 43,000 acres and Mandalay Region has 29,000 acres of mango. There are over 24,000 acres in Kayin State, over 20,400 acres in Shan State and over 20,000 acres in Sagaing Region, according to the association.—NN/GNLM



Workers are sorting quality mangoes to be packaged into the market.

OPINION

Bring honour to the State by winning sports events in SEA Games

At a time when the State flag is flapping in the wind, all citizens can heartily take pride in their triumphant events or measures in the sports competitions of the South-East Asian Games. So, every citizen of Myanmar can have goosebumps as a heartfelt feeling for winning the sports events.

All people wish to watch the efforts of athletes to win the sports events so as to fulfil the expectation of the entire Myanmar people. They all wish to see the flapping Union flag and listen to the singing of the national anthem of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

On the other hand, winning in sports uplifts the prestige of the State. Hence, the government is enhancing the skills of sports athletes in all genres to be able to sweep the medals in the SEA Games, the Asian Games and other international sports competitions. As such, the government has been providing monthly cash assistance to victorious athletes after they have turned 60 as part of honouring their endeavours in the sports arena.

Every country is standing tall among other global countries and Myanmar is also taking a position in the world with prestige and integrity in all arenas. To be able to polish the image of the State, all selected Myanmar athletes are responsible for securing the medals in the sports competitions, especially in the SEA Games and the Asian Games.

other athletes in the team-wise events, coaches and management teams.

At the ceremony of handing over the State flag to ensure success, the Head of State urged the athletes of Myanmar Sports Contingent to make utmost efforts in all sports events in order to flap the State flag and air the Myanmar national anthem as winning the victory over opponents in the coming SEA Games.

Every country is standing tall among other global countries and Myanmar is also taking a position in the world with prestige and integrity in all arenas. To be able to polish the image of the State, all selected Myanmar athletes are responsible for securing the medals in the sports competitions, especially in the SEA Games and the Asian Games.

The country also wants to host football's World Cup.

But with the exception of this year's Winter Olympics — held in a virus-secure, closed-loop Beijing bubble in February — the world's most populous nation has cancelled or postponed almost all events since Covid emerged in Wuhan in late 2019.

The Olympic-sized Asian Games became the latest and biggest casualty on Friday as organisers decided to delay the multisports extravaganza "after

On the occasion of the 77th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day in 2022, the government released the list of title recipients including 12 gold medalists in the Asian Games and 24 victorious athletes who bagged more than five gold medals to be conferred the Excellent Performance Award in Social Field (First Class). It is an encouragement to new generation athletes to bring honour to the State by bagging medals in the games.

The government has guaranteed to award K30 million to gold medalists, K20 million to silver medalists and K10 million to bronze medalists for athletes. Likewise, deserved cash rewards will be given to

Covid curbs push China off global sporting map

China's ambitions to be a global sporting hub took a heavy blow as the postponement of this year's Asian Games further isolated a country already cut off by its headline zero-Covid strategy.

The ruling Communist Party burnished its global image with an array of dazzling spectacles such as Beijing's 2008 Summer and 2022 Winter Olympics, tennis and golf tournaments featuring all the world's leading stars, and a showpiece annual Formula One grand prix.

The country also wants to host football's World Cup.

But with the exception of this year's Winter Olympics — held in a virus-secure, closed-loop Beijing bubble in February — the world's most populous nation has cancelled or postponed almost all events since Covid emerged in Wuhan in late 2019.

The Olympic-sized Asian Games became the latest and biggest casualty on Friday as organisers decided to delay the multisports extravaganza "after

carefully considering the pandemic situation and the size of the Games".

No new dates have yet been given for the continental showpiece, originally scheduled for September 10 to 25 in the eastern city of Hangzhou with around 10,000 athletes due to compete across 40 sports.

The World University Games due to begin next month in Chengdu were also postponed for a second time citing "continued uncertainty over conditions".

They were part of a blitz of announcements on Friday as the Asian Youth Games were also cancelled, having been delayed once already, and two prestigious Diamond League athletics meetings later this year in Shanghai and Shenzhen were shelved.

China's costly and labour-intensive Winter Olympics bubble — when participants took daily Covid tests and were not allowed to mix with the public — now appears to have been



A view of Chun'an Jieshou Sports Centre Velodrome, a venue of the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, eastern China's Zhejiang Province. PHOTO: ZHOU HENGZHONG/XINHUA

the exception rather than the rule, experts said.

Sport in limbo

The Winter Olympic Games "were a huge political priority and nothing was going to stop them", said Mark Dreyer, au-

thor of "Sporting Superpower: An Insider's View on China's Quest to Be the Best".

"The Asian Games are big, but not big enough," he told AFP.

Beijing maintained strict

Covid measures including snap lockdowns, mass testing and lengthy quarantines to extinguish outbreaks even as other countries learn to live with the virus.

Event calendars will re-

main in limbo as long as China sticks with zero-Covid, Dreyer said. A revamped FIFA Club World Cup has already been suspended indefinitely, while big-ticket events such as Formula One's Chinese Grand Prix and ATP Tour's Shanghai Masters tennis have fallen by the wayside since the coronavirus pandemic was declared in early 2020.

The World Golf Championships HSBC-Champions tournament has not been held since 2019, when won by former world number one Rory McIlroy.

Stringent conditions leave any visiting athletes facing multiple Covid tests, difficult entry rules, reduced flights and potentially long isolation periods if they test positive.

Beijing has maintained that its Covid policy has saved lives, and one Chinese expert told AFP he saw "no problem" with the country continuing to bid for major tournaments.

SOURCE: AFP

Laos to drop Covid entry curbs for vaccinated tourists



This photo taken on 13 April 2018 shows elephant parading in Luang Prabang, Laos. PHOTO: LIU AILUN / XINHUA

Laos will drop Covid-19 entry restrictions for fully vaccinated tourists from Monday after the country reported falling coronavirus cases and deaths, senior officials said.

The small Southeast Asian nation saw an 80 percent downturn in international traveller numbers in 2020 — 4.7 million foreign tourists visited the previous year.

From January travellers had been required to complete seven days of quarantine, present a negative Covid-19 test, and were limited to travelling within certain areas with officially sanctioned tour groups.

Deputy Minister and Deputy Head of the Prime Minister's Office Thipphakone Chanthavongsa said on Saturday that a task force's recommendations that "measures for entering Laos PDR and relaxation for locals" had been approved.

"The Government sees it is time to develop the economy," she said.

The relaxed measures will see international checkpoints re-opened for Laotian citizens and foreigners, provided they are fully vaccinated.

Unvaccinated visitors must produce a Rapid Antigen Test

Unvaccinated visitors must produce a Rapid Antigen Test issued within 48 hours of leaving their origin country.

Tourists will also have to pay for their own medical treatment should they become Covid-19 positive.

Laos officials added that pubs and karaoke bars could reopen.

The country has reported 663,533 coronavirus cases and 16,509 deaths.

Meanwhile, Thai authorities are preparing for border reopening with Laos after the neighbouring country lifts entry restrictions from Monday, the Bangkok Post reported.

Nong Khai governor Mon-

sit Paisalphanawat on Sunday signed an order to allow all vehicles to enter from Laos at the Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge and Tha Sadej pier by the Mekong River in Muang district, starting on Sunday.

The order took effect one day before Laos reopens the country to foreign visitors.

Nong Khai sealed the frontier with the neighbouring country in March 2020 at the height of the first wave of the Covid-19 outbreak in Thailand. The province has allowed people and only lorries loaded with goods to cross the border since May 1, when the Thai government eased most entry restrictions on visitors.

The first friendship bridge in Nong Khai is the main gateway linking the two countries. Boats at Tha Sadej pier shuttle only Thais and Lao nationals.

SOURCE: AFP

ARTICLE

Weather Report

To
Editor
Global New Light of Myanmar
Yangon
Sir,

Knowing not where to write and suggest, I take this opportunity to write down on your esteemed newspaper. As known to all it is the advent of the rainy season and we are expecting heavy rain soon in the near day. It is especially in Kandawgalay, (West) Mingala Taung Nyunt Township. Where drainage and water channel along the roads and buildings are clogged by thick layers of floating plastic and trash. Every year volunteers of municipal workers retrieved the trash, but due to Covid restrictions, it was stopped and not cleaned out. Thanks to the municipal department for the garbage collection system on a daily basis. It is going well, too.

To say the truth, we are weak in the discipline in terms of discarding plastic trash. Which blocks the drainage and water channel. I am sure heavy rainfall and downpour would disrupt and trigger flashflood and overflow.

Hope and request this authority would take the necessary measure to clean up the drainage before the heavy monsoon.

Respectfully,

Maung Ni
Kandawgalay (West)
Yangon



BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (17:30 hrs MST today, a Cyclonic Storm "Asani" over Southeast Bay of Bengal has moved Northwestwards. It is centred at about (270) Nautical miles West of Port Blair, (450) Nautical miles Southeast of Vishakhapatnam, (485) Nautical miles South-Southeast of Puri (India), (330) Nautical miles West-Southwest of Coco-Island and (430) Nautical miles Southwest of Hainggyikyun (Myanmar). Weather is cloudy over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 9 May 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State, fairly widespread in Lower Sagaing Region and Northern Shan State and widespread in the remaining regions and states with isolated heavyfalls in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, and Ayeyawady regions and Rakhine State. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Occasionally squalls with rough seas will be experienced off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (40) mph. Wave height will be about (8-12) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of rain in Nay Pyi Taw, Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, and Taninthayi regions and Kachin, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 9 May 2022: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 9 May 2022: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 9 May 2022: Isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (100%).

ENVIRON WORLD

No time for climate change complacency, Singapore's minister warns



Singapore rolled out last year the Singapore Green Plan 2030 which aims to advance the national agenda on sustainable development. People visit the Supertree grove OCBC Skywalk on the first day of reopening at Singapore's Gardens by the Bay on 7 September 2020. **PHOTO: THEN CHIH WEY/XINHUA**

A senior Singaporean official has warned that an attitude of complacency and lack of responsibility

are blowing a hole in the global fight against climate change and urged more individual ac-

tion.

"Very often people say that yes, we need to do the right

thing for the climate, but why should I pay more? We need to change the narrative and cause a behavioral change," Grace Fu, minister for sustainability and the environment, told Xinhua.

"Each of us should adopt the philosophy that we are individually responsible for consumption, for the electricity we consume, for the air conditioning in our buildings," she said on the sidelines of the St. Gallen Symposium.

The Switzerland-based conference, serving as a platform for cross-generational dialogue and collaboration, brought together 700 participants, 120 speakers, and 250 young talents from around the world for this year's annual meeting.

"Then only can we start

having that change, as an individual, as business leaders, as community leaders, and as the government as well," she said.

Singapore rolled out last year the Singapore Green Plan 2030 which aims to advance the national agenda on sustainable development.

The plan charts targets over the next 10 years to strengthen the country's commitments under the United Nation's 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and Paris Agreement and help it to achieve its long-term net-zero emissions aspiration as soon as viable.

"We believe that in the next phase of Singapore's development we really need to look at sustainability as a sort of overlay across all sectors," said the minister. — Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rare May fires break out in Siberia, kill at least 10

FIRES that have broken out across southwestern Siberia have killed at least 10 people and damaged hundreds of buildings, local authorities said on Saturday.

Hundreds of firefighters are trying to contain the blazes, which are a rare occurrence in the region during May and have been fuelled by lack of rain and fierce winds, they said.

In the Krasnoyarsk region, at least five people lost their lives in the fires, which damaged around 450 homes, the local authorities said, declaring a state of emergency.

In the Kemerovo region, three people were found dead in a burnt home. In the Omsk region, two people died.

"Extinguishing (the fires) is being complicated by meteorological conditions – violent winds are fanning the flames and preventing them from being put out," the regional ministry for emergencies in Krasnoyarsk said on Telegram. — AFP

Giant New Mexico fire rages as drought-hit US West braces for summer

Firefighters struggled Friday to contain a giant blaze that has been burning for more than a month in New Mexico, raising fears for the summer ahead in the drought-hit western United States.

The so-called "Hermit's Peak Fire" has torn through 168,000 acres at the southern end of the Rocky Mountains, destroying around 170 properties and forcing the evacuation of nearly 16,000 homes.

But the blaze remains just 20 per cent contained.

"This is a historic fire weather event... this is a critical stage of the fire," New Mexico governor Michelle Lujan Grisham said in a briefing Friday. — AFP

Pandemic, Ukraine war hurts Thai orchid industry



Thailand is the world's biggest producer and exporter of cut orchids. **PHOTO: AFP**

THAILAND'S orchid growers, already weary after two years of being battered by the pandemic, are bracing for fresh blows to their livelihood as the war in Ukraine and changing weather patterns further cloud their futures.

Once considered a popular pastime among the elite in Thailand, orchid growing has

developed into a multi-million dollar industry, and the kingdom is the world's biggest producer and exporter of cut orchids.

But the pandemic has seen one in five farms shut recently, according to the Thai Orchid Exporter Association.

"No one has the heart to buy flowers, and transportation is very complicated," said Somchai

Lerdrungwitayachai as he stares in despair at the sea of purple at his orchid farm west of Bangkok.

He grows Dendrobium Sonia orchids — a hybrid variety with delicate white and purple petals. Popular in Japan, China and the United States, they are used for anything from religious ceremonies to college graduations.

At his 20-hectare property, workers treat the cut flowers with a special solution before trimming the stems and fitting them with a small vial, containing vitamins and nutrients, to preserve their fresh appearance for up to two weeks.

But times are tough: Somchai has been dipping into his savings for two years to keep paying his 50-odd employees.

Covid-19 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine have sent the price of fertilisers and pesticides up by 30 per cent, he said. —AFP

China's Shandong taps into offshore wind power

EAST China's coastal province of Shandong is aiming high in developing its offshore wind power industry.

The construction of an

offshore wind farm invested by Shandong Energy Group Co., Ltd. has kicked off recently. Located in the Bohai Sea area, the 500,000-kW project

will include 60 wind turbines, a 220-kV offshore voltage step-up station and an on-shore controlling center. — Xinhua

Aussie state begins “low dose” COVID-19 booster trial



A person walks past posters encouraging people to get vaccinated in Melbourne on 31 August 2021. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

A new global trial of COVID-19 vaccines is set to begin in the Australian state of Victoria, which will administer lower dose booster vaccines in an effort to top up immunity, lessen side ef-

fects, and stretch the supplies. The large-scale trial, announced to the public by the Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) on Friday, would see 800 participants in

Victoria receive a low dose of a COVID-19 booster vaccine.

A representative from the MCRI told Xinhua on Friday that the program would use half doses of the Pfizer vaccine, 15

micrograms as opposed to 30 micrograms, and the Moderna vaccine would be administered at 20 micrograms, rather than 50.

Following receiving the shot, participants would be required to take four separate blood tests to monitor antibody levels, fill out an online diary card for seven days, and receive follow-up calls to assess the side effects they experienced.

The study seeks to assess the impacts and use the results to guide future global vaccination strategies.

Trial lead, Professor Kim Mulholland from the MCRI, said the testing would be crucial as the world begins to deal with waning immunity at the current stage of the pandemic.

“All countries are struggling with the issue of how best to maintain COVID-19 immunity

in their populations,” said Mulholland.

“Our trial will specifically examine how best to vaccinate communities with follow-up booster shots and the timings around these subsequent booster doses.”

He added not only would it allow countries to stretch their vaccine supplies further and cut costs, but it also could improve the uptake as side effects are expected to be less serious. The trial would also test whether using a booster vaccine different from one's initial shots could provide a superior immune response.

The MCRI has previously taken a stake in global vaccine equity, publishing research on maximizing global vaccine supply and giving greater access to vaccines for a variety of diseases in developing countries. — ANI

NEWS IN BRIEF

S Korea reports 39,600 new COVID-19 cases

SOUTH Korea reported 39,600 new COVID-19 cases as of midnight Friday compared to 24 hours ago, raising the total number of infections to 17,504,334, the health authorities said Saturday. The daily caseload was up from 26,714 the previous day, but it was lower than the 43,286 recorded a week earlier, according to the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency (KDCA). The health authorities believed that the daily caseload has been on the decline following the Omicron variant-driven resurgence, which peaked in the middle of March. Among the new cases, 26 were imported, lifting the total to 32,147. The number of infected people who were in a serious condition stood at 419, down four from the previous day. — ANI

Tunisia to stop using Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine

TUNISIA will stop using the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine (Janssen), the official Tunis Afrique Presse reported on Friday, citing a member of the country's scientific committee for fighting COVID-19.

Riad Daghfous, the expert, was quoted as saying that Tunisian health authorities will avoid using Janssen after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) decided to limit its use due to worrisome complications, including blood clotting.

The FDA's recommendation to restrict the use of Janssen, he said, was based on the results of a recent study that demonstrated this vaccine had caused blood clots in some people in several countries around the world.

So far, no such cases resulting from the use of Janssen were recorded in Tunisia, Daghfous added.

According to the expert, 1.3 million doses of Janssen have already been used in this country since the onset of COVID-19.

The Janssen vaccine was authorized for emergency use in the United States on 27 February 2021. — Xinhua

Sri Lanka to begin administering 4th dose of COVID-19 vaccine

SRI Lankan Health Minister Channa Jayasumana on Friday said that health authorities decided to roll out the fourth dose COVID-19 vaccination for those above the age of 60.

The decision was taken by the expert committee on COVID-19 attached to the health ministry, Jayasumana said.

The government will begin administering the fourth dose from Monday and those above the age of 60 years could take the shots in the vaccination centres across the country.

Sri Lanka began administering the COVID-19 vaccines early last year and has to date vaccinated over 80 per cent of those above the age of 12, ac-



Workers transport Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines at the Bandaranaike International Airport in Colombo, Sri Lanka, 31 March 2021. **PHOTO: SRI LANKAN PRESIDENT MEDIA DIVISION/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA**

ording to the health ministry.

Over 7 million people have already been administered the third dose.

The country has recorded 663,503 confirmed cases and 16,507 deaths in total so far from the virus. — Xinhua

China's dynamic zero-COVID policy continues yielding positive results

CHINA'S epidemic control policy has proved to be science-based and effective, continuously yielding positive results in containing COVID-19.

China is a populous country of some 1.4 billion people, with about 267 million aged 60 and above. It is necessary and important for China to use the

dynamic zero-COVID policy to defend its large number of vulnerable elderly people.

Considering the disparities between different regions in terms of development and medical resources, any relaxation of epidemic prevention and control would undoubtedly lead to widespread infections, and

consequently a huge number of severe cases and deaths. China's dynamic zero-COVID approach does not necessitate the elimination of all infections nationwide, but instead focuses on detecting and controlling the cases as early as possible, and taking measures to cut off transmission at the community level. — Xinhua

ECONOMY

WORLD/AD

Xi warms up China's economy, but virus narrows options



President Xi Jinping has offered state backing for tech, infrastructure and jobs to revive China's economy. A bullet train runs in Zhengzhou, capital of Central China's Henan Province, 1 September 2016. PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE

PRESIDENT Xi Jinping has offered state backing for tech, infrastructure and jobs to revive China's economy, but analysts warn growth will continue to wilt

until Beijing drops its rigid virus controls. Two and a half years since the coronavirus first emerged in Wuhan, China is the last major

economy still closed off to the world, despite its relatively low death toll. Lockdowns across dozens of cities — from the manufac-

turing hubs of Shenzhen and Shanghai to the breadbasket of Jilin — have wreaked havoc on supply chains over recent months, crushing small businesses and trapping consumers at home.

That has imperilled Beijing's full-year growth target of about 5.5 per cent, with forecasters anticipating that around one percentage point may be shaved off that figure.

"We remain deeply concerned about growth," Nomura analysts said this week. "We believe the Omicron variant and zero-Covid strategy represent the dominant challenges to growth stability."

Yet China's Communist leadership insisted Thursday that the country will stick "unswervingly" to zero-Covid, with

a meeting chaired by Xi declaring that "persistence is victory".

To curtail the growing economic damage, Beijing has offered words of respite to the tech sector from rolling regulatory crackdowns and promised to pump prime the economy with an "all-out" infrastructure campaign.

But observers say rallies may be temporary as long as the state's reflex remains to hammer down the virus caseload at all costs.

"(The measures are) all very welcome... but how many more bridges and how many more sports stadiums are going to help us in creating an environment of predictable growth?" European Chamber president Joerg Wuttke told reporters on Thursday. — AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tunisian PM underlines importance of reforming public institutions

PRIME Minister Najla Bouden Romdhane said on Saturday Tunisian government will not privatize strategic public institutions because they play a crucial role in the implementation of the country's economic and social policies.

In her speech on the sidelines of a ceremony to celebrate International Labor Day, Najla Bouden Romdhane stressed the importance of reforming these public institutions through implementing a restructuring program and putting in place a legal and regulatory framework to increase their competitiveness.

Despite the country was facing a difficult situation when the current government took office, the government administration has so far made positive accomplishments, according to the prime minister. She said her country has managed to pay back its international and domestic debts, pay the wages on time, and supply its citizens with basic food products while fighting against smuggling. According to her, the civil service reform "will be based on the digitalization and modernization of the administration, as well as good human resource management and the development of the payroll system."

The prime minister also vowed to improve the country's working environment by creating more opportunities and boosting creativity and innovation. — Xinhua

Inflation in Laos accelerates to 9.9 pct in April

INFLATION in Laos increased to 9.9 per cent year-on-year in April from 8.5 per cent in March, mainly due to the higher prices of fuel, consumer goods and the continuing depreciation of the Lao

kip. Inflation jumped from 6.25 per cent in January to 7.3 per cent in February, reaching 8.5 per cent in March, according to the latest statistics from the Lao Statistics Bureau.

Increases in global oil

prices as a result of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine have hit fuel-importing countries hard, leading to increases in domestic fuel rates of up to 86.3 per cent in Laos.

Rising oil prices are

impacting the transport price index, causing an increase in the price of goods that depend on fuel for their production or transport. In addition, the price of gold has increased to 36.8 per cent. —Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V AS SOPHIA VOY.NO. (217W/218E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V AS SOPHIA VOY.NO. (217W/218E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **9-5-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/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 SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (7/2022-2023)

Open Tenders are invited for the following operation in Myanmar Kyats.

Sr. No	Tender No	Description	Remark
(1)	OS-001 (2022-2023)	24" Yadana Offshore Domestic Gas Pipeline Intelligent Pigging	MMK

Tender Closing Date and Time : 15th July, 2022 (15:00 Hrs)

Tender Document shall be available during office hours commencing from 16th May, 2022 at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, Building No. 44 (Complex), Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

Tender Documents shall be submitted in person to Offshore Oil and Gas Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, Bilding No. 44 (Complex), Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar before tender closing date and time.

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Phone: +95-67-411275/411331

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTER CHANGING

The foregin manufacturer **SHANDONG TOPAGRI LIMITED**, would like to change distributor of the following products, (registered by **AGRIMAN MYANMAR CO.,LTD** to Pesticide Registration Board, Myanmar), from former distributor **MYANMAR THET NAY MIN CO.,LTD** If any object or enquiry, please contact to Pesticide registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein Township, Yangon, from here to next 14 days. **AGRIMAN MYANMAR Co.,LTD**. No(Da Out Chite-8/49), Between 43x42 Street, Mahar Myaing 1st Ward, Mahar Aung Myay Tsp, Mandalay. Ph-09769368158

Sr	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number	Registration Type
1	AM-Super King 1 EC	Emamectin Benzonate 1% EC	P2018-4197	Provisional

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTER CHANGING

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Sr	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number	Registration Type
1	Top-Prince 50SC	Fipronil 50g/l SC	P2017-3411	Provisional

ADVERTISEMENT

CHANGING THE NAME OF INSECTICIDE TRADING

The foreign manufacturer ZIBO NAB AGROCHEMICALS LIMITED will import and distribute the following insecticide registered in Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board changing trading name.

Sr	Old Name	New name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number	Registration Type
1	NAB-Super Queen 20SP	Super Queen	Acetamiprid 20% SP	P2018-4078	Provisional
2	NAB-Min Thar 32.5SC	Min Pro	Azoxystrobin 20% + Difenoconazole 12.5% SC	P2018-4232	Provisional

It is Therefore announced to come and reject within two weeks to Joint Secretary Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein in wishing to make any objection in respect of the said changing trading name of insecticide.

Address- Topagri Myanmar Co.,Ltd. Block(2/C), No(17), Nawady Housing, HlaingTharyar Township, Yangon, Myanmar. Ph-09883759773

CHANGING THE NAME OF INSECTICIDE TRADING

The foreign manufacturer SHANDONG TOPAGRI LIMITED will import and distribute the following insecticide registered in Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board changing trading name.

Sr	Old Name	New name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number	Registration Type
1	AM-Super King 1 EC	Eimartet	Emamectin Benzonate 1% EC	P2018-4197	Provisional

It is Therefore announced to come and reject within two weeks to Joint Secretary Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein in wishing to make any objection in respect of the said changing trading name of insecticide.

Address - AGRIMAN MYANMAR Co.,LTD. No(Da Out Chite-8/49), Between 43x42 Street, Mahar Myaing 1st Ward, Mahar Aung Myay Tsp, Mandalay. Ph-09769368158

CHANGING THE NAME OF INSECTICIDE TRADING

The foreign manufacturer SHANGHAI TOPCHEMS INDUSTRY CO.,LTD. will import and distribute the following insecticide registered in Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board changing trading name.

Sr	Old Name	New name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number	Registration Type
1	Top-Prince 50SC	Top Shark	Fipronil50/I SC	P2017-3411	Provisional

It is Therefore announced to come and reject within two weeks to Joint Secretary Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Bayint Naung Road, West Gyogone, Insein in wishing to make any objection in respect of the said changing trading name of insecticide.

Address - AGRIMAN MYANMAR Co.,LTD. No(Da Out Chite-8/49), Between 43x42 Street, Mahar Myaing 1st Ward, Mahar Aung Myay Tsp, Mandalay. Ph-09769368158

PESTICIDES DISTRIBUTER CHANGING

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Sr	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Registration Number	Registration Type
1	NAB-Super Queen 20SP	Acetamiprid 20% SP	P2018-4078	Provisional
2	NAB-Min Thar 32.5SC	Azoxystrobin 20% + Difenoconazole 12.5% SC	P2018-4232	Provisional



MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND FINANCE INTERNAL REVENUE DEPARTMENT

NOTICE TO FILE INCOME TAX RETURN, ANNUAL SALARY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL COMMERCIAL TAX RETURN

- Income Year or the Year in which Sale proceed or Receipt is accrued:** Income year or the year in which sale proceed or receipt is accrued (reporting period), to file a return from October 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.
- Return Receiving Offices:** Current (old) taxpayers have to file the returns at relevant revenue offices where their taxation matters are assessed. For the new company that is non-taxpayer must first apply to the Centralised Taxpayer Service Unit to register as a taxpayer, and define the revenue offices where their taxation matters are assessed and file the returns to the revenue offices designated by the Centralised Taxpayer Service Unit. For an individual who is non-taxpayer, must file the returns to the relevant township revenue offices.
- Methods of filing a return:** Returns can be filed by either of the following three methods -
 - Filing in person:** In the case of return filing in person, return is considered filed on the date it is stamped as received by the Department.
 - Filing by mail:** In the case of return filing by mail, return is considered filed on the date of the postmark.
 - Filing by electronic mail:** In the case of return filing by e-mail, return is considered filed on the date it is received electronically by the Department and if that date falls on a day on which the Department is not open to the public for business, the document is considered received on the next succeeding day on which the Department is open for business. Electronic Filing means submitting a tax return using the Electronic Filing Management System. In order to ensure the accuracy and completeness of information submitted tax return using the Electronic Filing Management System, the tax payer's signature records (original) must filed by mail or appropriate ways to the relevant tax office. The user guide video files on how to register for an electronic tax return and how to submit an electronic tax return can be found on the Internal Revenue Department's Website at www.ird.gov.mm > Media Menu (<https://www.ird.gov.mm/my/content/video>). (Note: Taxpayers of Large Taxpayers' Office and Medium Taxpayers' Offices in Yangon are required to file the tax return electronically.)
- Completing the Return:** The following are required -
 - Taxpayer must use respective tax return forms of the Internal Revenue Department. Tax return forms are available at the relevant tax offices and Internal Revenue Department's website at www.ird.gov.mm.
 - Taxpayer is required to complete the return properly and he/she has to attest to the accuracy and completeness of the return.
 - The Return must be signed by taxpayer. If a tax return or part of a tax return was prepared for reward by some other person, that paid preparer must also sign the return.
- Due Date:** June 30, 2022 (Thursday)
- Penalties:** A person who fails to file a tax return on time is liable to a penalty equal to the greater of -
 - Five percent of the amount of tax owing, plus further one percent of the amount of tax for each month or part of a month during which the failure continues, but not beyond the time when the Director General issues an assessment; and
 - K 100,000
- Rights of Taxpayer:** Taxpayer can apply the time limit prescribed for filing a tax return at relevant revenue offices if the taxpayer required to file applies for the extension of the time limit.
- Enquiries:** Enquiries may be made at the relevant revenue offices and please contact the following Taxpayer Service Units for further questions -
 - Centralised Taxpayer Service Unit
No. 128/132, 2nd floor & 3rd floor, Pansodan Street (Middle Block), Kyauktada Township, Yangon
Ph: 01-8389311, 01-8389322, 01-8378370
 - Taxpayer Service Unit (Naypyitaw)
Building No. 46, Internal Revenue Department
Ph: 067-3430522, 067-3430533
 - Taxpayer Service Unit (Mandalay)
65th Street, between 22nd and 23rd Streets,
Aung Myae Tharzan Township, Mandalay
Ph: 02-4030192

Internal Revenue Department

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GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Hong Kong's former No 2 John Lee wins leadership race

JOHN Lee, the Hong Kong government's former No 2, was selected as the city's next chief executive in an uncontested election on Sunday, becoming the first person to secure the top job after rising through the ranks of the police.

As the sole candidate, Lee received 1,416 votes from the 1,461-member Election Committee mainly consisting of pro-Beijing members, according to the returning officer.

Lee, 64, will be sworn in

for a five-year term on 1 July, the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong's handover from Britain to China and the halfway point of Beijing's "one country, two systems" policy that was put in place in 1997 and set to last for 50 years until 2047.

Lee was appointed secretary for security in 2017. He played a major role in pushing for an extradition bill in 2019 and directed the police response to the subsequent large-scale protests against the bill.

During his tenure as the top security official, the Hong Kong government cracked down on several pro-democracy newspapers, including Apple Daily, which folded on 24 June 2021.

Following the closure, Lee was promoted to chief secretary for administration, the post considered second-in-command, under Chief Executive Carrie Lam, who decided not to seek re-election citing family reasons.

Lee's victory had been



John Lee, the Hong Kong government's former No. 2, was selected as the city's next chief executive in an uncontested election on Sunday. **PHOTO: KYODO**

considered a sure thing since the security hard-liner and only candidate favored by Beijing was

confirmed in mid-April as the sole runner in the leadership election. — Kyodo

Colombian cartel stages 'armed strike' over leader's extradition

A Colombian drug cartel has set fire to dozens of vehicles, retaliating over the extradition of the group's leader to the United States on trafficking charges, authorities said Friday.

Dairo Antonio Usuga, known as "Otoniel," led Colombia's largest narco-trafficking cartel, known as the Gulf Clan.

The 50-year-old was the most wanted person in Colombia until his arrest last October, and now faces life in prison if found guilty.

Members of the Gulf Clan launched a four-day "armed strike" on Thursday, causing unrest in areas where it is influential, including the northern departments of Antioquia, Córdoba, Sucre and Bolívar.

Over the past two days "more than a hundred vehicles

(...) were hit", said Interior Minister Daniel Palacios.

Officials have offered a \$7,300 reward for information on those responsible.

On a tour of Antioquia, journalists witnessed six armed men stopping a vehicle and forcing out its occupants before setting it alight.

The United States accuses Usuga and the Gulf Clan of trafficking at least 73 tons of cocaine into the US between 2003 and 2012.

Usuga, who is due back in court on 2 June, has pled not guilty to charges of criminal enterprise and international cocaine manufacturing and distribution.

Hoping to root out the Gulf Clan, the Colombian government has created "a specialized research unit". —AFP

Northern Ireland resumes count for historic election

NORTHERN Ireland on Saturday resumed counting ballots from an election that has put the nationalist Sinn Fein party on course for a historic victory.

As the count restarted from Thursday's complex proportional voting, the former political wing of the IRA paramilitary group had secured 18 seats for the 90-seat legislature.

The party, which wants a referendum on reunifying Ireland a century after Northern Ireland was created as a Protestant statelet, is targeting 28 seats to claim the role of first minister for leader Michelle O'Neill.

After winning her own seat Friday, O'Neill called it "the

election of a generation" and "time for real change".

But Sinn Fein has been downplaying prospects for an imminent referendum on ending UK sovereignty over Northern Ireland, saying it could see one being held in the next five years.

The pro-UK Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) occupied the role of first minister in the outgoing Stormont assembly, before it collapsed the executive in protest at post-Brexit trading rules between the UK and EU.

DUP leader Jeffrey Donaldson said the government in London should rip up the so-called Northern Ireland Protocol, which unionists argue

threatens their place in the wider UK. "The government need to act decisively on the protocol and until they do, I won't be nominating ministers to the executive," he told the BBC late Friday, after the DUP's vote share slid.

Without DUP endorsement of a new executive, Northern Ireland's government cannot function, and the parties would have 24 weeks to resolve their differences or face a new election.

The other big winner was the cross-community Alliance party, which said its strong showing in third place underlined the need for Northern Ireland to move past old divisions. — AFP

Violence problem in US not seem to be going away: media

VIOLENCE problem in the United States doesn't seem to be going away anytime soon, reported Yahoo News on Thursday, citing experts.

Data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation shows that the country experienced its largest-ever recorded annual increase in homicides in 2020, compared to 2019. The homicide rate rose nearly 30 per cent in 2020 and increased again by 5 per cent in 2021, said the report, adding that violent crimes such as mass shootings and assaults have also

increased since 2019.

Several experts attributed the spike in violence to three factors in interviews with Yahoo News.

They noted that the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted all aspects of life, forcing nationwide lockdowns that led to increased stress and anxiety among the population.

Howard Kurtz, professor of sociology and criminal justice at Southwest Oklahoma State University, was quoted as saying that as people were locked away from the outside

world, violence and frustration ensued.

Experts believed that another reason for concern is the growing political polarization and distrust in US institutions. Alongside this distrust is also a sense of lawlessness stemming from police violence, according to the report.

Americans' lack of trust in law enforcement, education, the government and the economy feeds social discord, Dennis Kenney, a professor at John Jay College, told the news outlet. —Xinhua



Usuga has pled not guilty to charges of criminal enterprise and international cocaine manufacturing and distribution. **PHOTO: COLOMBIAN PRESIDENCY/AFP**

South Korea's new president set to get tough on North



Incoming South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol has not ruled out pre-emptive strikes on the North. PHOTO: AFP

SOUTH Korea's hawkish new president will be sworn in Tuesday, and he looks set to get tough with Pyongyang, departing from what he has called the "subservient" approach of his predecessor.

For the past five years, Seoul has pursued a policy of engagement with North Korea, brokering summits between Kim Jong Un and then-US president Donald Trump while reducing joint US military drills Pyongyang sees as provocative.

But talks collapsed in 2019

and have languished since, while the nuclear-armed North has dramatically ramped up weapons tests, conducting 15 so far this year, including the launch of its largest-ever intercontinental ballistic missile.

Unlike outgoing President Moon Jae-in, who saw North Korea as a negotiating partner, incoming leader Yoon Suk-yeol sees the country as an adversary, said Cheong Seong-chang of the Center for North Korea Studies at the Sejong Institute.

Yoon has pledged to officially define Pyongyang as South Korea's "principal enemy", Cheong added, and has not ruled out pre-emptive strikes on the North.

This hard-line stance appears to have already annoyed Pyongyang. On Thursday, North Korean propaganda website Uriminzokkiri said Yoon was stirring up "confrontational madness" and it was "preposterous" for him to discuss pre-emptive strikes. — AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Russia steps up Ukraine assaults ahead of Victory Day parades

UKRAINE said civilians had been evacuated from a besieged Mariupol steel plant on Saturday as Russian forces unleashed new bombardments across the country ahead of Victory Day festivities in Moscow.

The Azovstal steel mill is the last pocket of Ukrainian resistance in the devastated port city and its fate has taken on a symbolic value in the broader battle since Russia's invasion.

"All women, children and the elderly have been evacuated from Azovstal," Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said.

Fighting continues on many fronts, and Ukraine's defence ministry said it had destroyed another Russian vessel — a Serna-class landing craft — in the Black Sea.

"The traditional parade of the Russian Black Sea fleet on May 9 this year will be held near Snake Island — at the bottom of the sea," the ministry added. Russia did not immediately confirm the incident.

Ukraine's defence ministry had earlier said Russian forces

had resumed their assault on the Azovstal site, despite talk of a truce to allow trapped civilians to flee.

On Monday, President Vladimir Putin will celebrate the World War II Soviet victory over Nazi Germany with a traditional Victory Day parade.

According to Russia's defence ministry, 77 aircraft will conduct a flypast, including the rarely-seen Il-80 Doomsday plane that can withstand a nuclear attack.

Eight Mig-29 fighter jets will fly over Moscow's Red Square forming the letter "Z" — the

mark of Russia's military assault in Ukraine.

The Russian campaign has run into tough resistance — and provoked Kyiv's western allies into slapping sanctions on the Russian economy and Putin's inner circle.

But with Victory Day approaching, Ukrainian officials fear more intense missile and artillery bombardments and renewed assaults as Moscow scrambles for symbolic wins.

Donetsk regional governor Pavlo Kyrylenko said there had been "massive bombardments" along the frontline. — AFP



Russian forces marching through Red Square for the rehearsal of the Victory Day parade in Moscow. PHOTO: KIRILL KUDRYAVTSEV/AFP

Russia to remain "forever"

SINCE failing to take Kyiv early on in the war, Russia has refocused its offensive on the south and east of Ukraine.

Taking full control of Mariupol would allow Moscow to create a land bridge between the Crimean peninsula, which it annexed in 2014, and separatist, pro-Russian regions in the east.

In those regions, separatists said they had removed Ukrainian and English language traffic signs for Mariupol and replaced them with Russian ones.

Locals want to see proof that "Russia has come back here forever," said Denis Pushilin, head of the breakaway region of Donetsk.

In neighbouring Lugansk, Ukrainian officials said on Friday that Russian forces had almost encircled Severodonetsk — the easternmost city still held by Kyiv — and are trying to storm it.

Kherson in the south remains the only significant city Russia has managed to capture since the war began. — AFP

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Here are the latest developments in the war in Ukraine:

UN Security Council adopts first declaration on war

MARKING its first declaration on Ukraine since Russia's February 24 invasion of its neighbour, the UN Security Council unanimously adopts a text backing Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' efforts to find a "peaceful solution" to the war.

THE declaration stops short of supporting a mediation effort by Guterres, as was laid out in an earlier version of the text.

"THE Security Council expresses deep concern regarding the maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine," the text adopted Friday said. THE 15-member council includes Russia, which at the end of February vetoed a resolution condemning the invasion and asking Moscow to pull out its forces.

Eastern city surrounded

RUSSIAN forces have almost encircled Severodonetsk, the easternmost city still held by Ukraine, a local official says.

OLEKSANDR Striuk, the head of the Severodonetsk military administration, says on Ukrainian television that Kyiv's army is so far "repelling these attacks" but the Russians were pressing on.

SOURCE: AFP

Pope says NATO may have caused Russia's moves in Ukraine: Politico

POPE Francis said the "barking" of NATO at Russia's door might have led to Russia's military operation in Ukraine, US news portal Politico has reported.

"While he (the Pope) might not go as far as saying NATO's presence in nearby countries 'provoked' Moscow, it 'perhaps facilitated' the invasion," said

the report.

The pope made the remarks in an interview with Italian newspaper Corriere della Sera published Tuesday. —Xinhua

South Korea's new president set to get tough on North

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SPORT

SEA Games Football: Myanmar snatch late winner over Timor-Leste



Myanmar team striker Maung Maung Lwin (white jersey) attempts to pass over the Timor-Leste defender during the Group A match of the SEA Games men's football tourney at the Viet Tri Stadium, Viet Nam on 8 May 2022. PHOTO: MFF

MYANMAR snatched a late 3-2 win over Timor-Leste when Defender Aung Wunna Soe scored in injury time in their Group A tie of the SEA Games men's football event that was played at the Viet Tri Stadium.

Myanmar head Popov used his favorite players including Maung Maung Lwin, Win Naing Tun, Myat Kaung Khant, and Lwin Moe Aung.

Timor-Leste, who lost to

the Philippines in the opening match, responded well to Myanmar team with brilliant tactics.

Myanmar team dominated the match in the first half and created many goals and scored two leading goals. The leading goals for Myanmar were scored by Win Naing Tun in the 37th minute and Htet Phyo Wai in the 41st minute.

In the second half, the Myanmar team made up to five sub-

stitutions and changed the pitch. However, Timor attack back and Myanmar struggled until the last minute to win by three points. Defender Aung Wunna Soe scored the valuable goal for Myanmar in the 90 + 5 minutes of the match. Myanmar U-23 will play against the Philippines on 10 May in the second match of the group. The Philippines beat Timor-Leste 4-0 in the opening match.—GNLM

Nantes beat Nice to win French Cup final



Ludovic Blas scored the only goal in the French Cup final as Nantes beat Nice. PHOTO: AFP

NANTES won the French Cup for the first time in 22 years on Saturday, beating Nice 1-0 in the final at the Stade de France.

Ludovic Blas drilled home a penalty at the start of the second half to bring Nantes the club's first major trophy since winning the Ligue 1 title in 2001.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine I would

coach Nantes and win a trophy," said Antoine Kombouare, an ex-Nantes player who was the first coach sacked by Paris Saint-Germain following the Qatari takeover.

"We came from nowhere. We could have finished in Ligue 2 last year. Now we're going to play in the Europa League and the Champions Trophy, it's hard

to believe. "It's incredible, almost a miracle." Nantes, who only avoided relegation in a play-off last season, lifted the French Cup for the fourth time and qualified for Europe for the first time in two decades.

For much of the season, Nice, owned by Ineos, the group chaired by Monaco-based British petrochemicals billionaire Jim Ratcliffe, looked certain to qualify for the Champions League but after a recent stumble could miss out on Europe altogether.

"It's disappointing. When you get to the final and have this magnificent trophy, you do everything to try and win it," said Nice coach Christophe Galtier.

After the two finals played in an almost entirely empty stadium due to the pandemic, a sell-out crowd of around 80,000 packed the Stade de France – roughly two-thirds Nantes supporters. — 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.

Man City move closer to Premier League title, Arsenal boost top four bid

MANCHESTER City moved a step closer to retaining the Premier League title with a 5-0 demolition of Newcastle, while Arsenal beat relegation-threatened Leeds 2-1 to boost their bid for a top-four finish on Sunday.

Pep Guardiola's side took control before half-time at the Etihad Stadium thanks to goals from Raheem Sterling and Aymeric Laporte.

Rodri got City's third after the break before Phil Foden and Sterling struck in stoppage time as they stormed back to the top of the table.

Liverpool had knocked the champions out of pole position despite dropping two points in a 1-1 draw against Tottenham on Saturday.

But City are now three points clear of Liverpool, with three games left for both

teams. Guardiola's men hold a goal difference four better than the Reds.

Quadruple-chasing Liverpool are next in action at Aston Villa on Tuesday, while City head to Wolves 24 hours later.

City's stroll against Newcastle was the ideal way to recover from their painful Champions League semi-final exit against Real Madrid on Wednesday.

Real had scored twice in the final seconds of normal time before winning in extra-time, leaving Guardiola to lament there were "no words to help" his players get over the loss.

But City can exorcise those demons by winning a fourth English title in five seasons and this was a step in the right direction. —AFP