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Sunday, 7 August 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.

Peace meeting concludes its second day in Nay Pyi Taw



The second-day meeting between the State Peace Talks Team and the SSPP delegation takes place in Nay Pyi Taw on 6 August 2022.

STATE Peace Talks Team held the second-day meeting with the Shan State Progress Party-SSPP at the meeting hall of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Centre in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The event was attended by State Administration Council member Union Minister at the Union Government Office (1) Chairman of the National

Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee Leader of the State Peace Talks Team Lt-Gen Yar Pyae, SAC Member Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun, Secretary of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee Lt-Gen Min Naung and Vice-Chairman (1) Sao Khur Tai, Vice-Chairman (2) Sao Khun Seng and Central Committee Member Sao Naw Leik from the

SSPP delegation.

At the second-day meeting, National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee presented the opinion of the committee in relation to the points that the group of political parties wants to amend the 2008 Constitution. Afterwards, both parties discussed peace and development matters and signed

the agreements resulted in three days of negotiations.

Then, SSPP Vice-Chairman (2) Sao Khun Seng and State Peace Talks Team Leader Lt-Gen Yar Pyae gave concluding remarks and presented books of the Diamond Jubilee Union Day published by the Ministry of Information, record books, Myanmar Encyclopaedia volume 1 and gifts. — MNA

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Objectives of 23rd Myanmar Traditional Cultural Performing Arts Competitions 2022

- (a) To uplift national prestige and integrity and to preserve the cultural heritage and national characteristics
- (b) To discover, preserve and uplift the traditional cultural heritage of performing arts of ethnic nationals and national cultural characteristics
- (c) To preserve traditional cultural performing arts in order to further revitalize adoration of the State and hand it down to new generation youths
- (d) To contribute much to the restoration of perpetual peace

Situations that require mandatory wearing of face masks announced

1. The Ministry of Health has been urging people to wear face masks to prevent the spread of the disease since the beginning of the outbreak of COVID-19.
2. As part of the personal protection rules for the COVID-19 disease that the public has to follow in their daily lives, they are informed that it is necessary to wear a face mask in the following situations: -
 - (a) being close to one person in a room;
 - (b) being with people in crowded places such as travelling in vehicles used by the public, railways, ships, planes; hospitals/health centres used by the public; offices, schools, markets, shopping centres, and nursing homes;
 - (c) Having any suspected symptoms of COVID-19 such as illness, cough, sneezing, stuffy nose, sore throat, physical discomfort, body pain, sudden loss of smell and taste.

Ministry of Health
25-7-2022

Announcement for opening reception centres to receive CDM staff, students and youths

THE State Administration Council has been striving for the all-round development of the country including economic, social, education and health sectors. In addition, security forces are performing their duties day and night so that the entire mass of national people in various regions across the Union should be able to lead their lives and earn their living in the peace of mind. The State Administration Council gives priority to achieving genuine and perpetual peace, building up the united strength of the national brethren.

In order to prevent the unnecessary loss of human resources, the State Administration Council has publicly invited the basic education staff who are absent from duty to resume their duties and those who take part in armed resistance under various names of groups, including PDFs, to return to the legal fold if they wish to, and is systematically receiving the returnees.

It is found that, due to the persuasion, instigation and coercion of CRPH and NUG terrorist groups, some CDM staff, students and youths went to the strongholds of some ethnic armed organizations and received training in arms, ammunition and explosives.

It is known that some of those who have completed the training no longer want to be involved in terrorist attacks and so they fled to the regions within and without the country and are working there for their living. When they see terrorist attacks with their own eyes, they cannot accept such terrible acts at all. On the other hand, they have come to believe in the government's five-point roadmap and its endeavour for durable peace. Moreover, they want to live peacefully in their hometowns again with their parents and relatives. Nevertheless, they cannot do so because of the coercion and intimidation by CRPH and NUG terrorist groups and their subordinates, it is learnt.

Therefore, the government is taking measures to be able to open reception centres in border areas for those who would like to return homes to their respective regions. Moreover, those wishing to return home can contact Tatmadaw units and police stations. It is guaranteed that they will be able to lead their daily lives peacefully.

Information Team
State Administration Council

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Diploma in Accountancy – DA (Part I) Course No 41 closed



The Diploma Course No 41 on Accountancy-DA (Part I) is in progress in Nay Pyi Taw on 5 August.

THE closing ceremony of the Diploma in Accountancy – DA (Part I) Course No 41 was held at 10 am on 5 August 2022 at the Assembly Hall of the Office of the Auditor-General of the Union in Nay Pyi Taw.

At the ceremony, Union Auditor-General Dr Kan Zaw delivered an address saying that this training is crucial for those who study accounting and auditing to get a good foundation and become accounting technicians; it is also an entrance to a course that enables continuing to learn from the level of accounting technicians to the accounting professions; and as accounting is a subject that can support the country's economic development, the trainees who complete the course need to perform their duties in compliance

with International Accounting Standards and meet the accounting qualifications; and also to take accountability and responsibility comply with ethics where they conduct the accounting work in government departments and private entities.

He, therefore, urged trainees who completed the course to become good citizens who can carry out the benefits of their departments and nation with diligence, dignity, intelligence, and integrity in their respective roles.

During the ten-month face-to-face training, 38 trainees from 17 departments/ entities of 13 ministries/organizations attended, and the examination will be held in the coming September.

The permanent secretary, the director-general (Audit De-

partment), the deputy permanent secretary, the deputy directors-general, responsible persons, the trainers and accomplished trainees attended the ceremony. Similarly, the Union Auditor-General also delivered an address at the closing ceremony of training No 100 of the Intermediate Level (Grade-2) and Advanced Level (Grade-3) Accounting and Office Work Proficiency Courses, held in the afternoon of that day at the Assembly Hall of the Office of the Auditor-General of the Union. During the three-month face-to-face training, 136 trainees for Intermediate Level (Grade-2) and 68 trainees for Advanced Level (Grade-3) totalled 204 trainees from Union Level Ministries/Organizations attended respectively. — GNLM

Further invitation to remnant groups to hold talks

DEMOCRACY as well as federalism requires equal rights. Talks will continue with the ethnic armed organizations to restore peace.

Good results came out from the talks with EAOs. Efforts will continue to restore peace by holding better talks.

Some EAOs cannot participate in the talks for various reasons. In line with the firm implementation of two political visions, the government further invites remnant groups to hold talks.

(The excerpt from the speech delivered by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in meeting with ministers of Yangon Region government on 9 June 2022.)

Steering Committee on Compiling Myanmar Industrial History holds coordination meeting

THE coordination meeting of the Steering Committee on Compiling Myanmar Industrial History was held in Yangon Region Friday.

First, Union Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than said the history of Myanmar's industry sector is compiled for new generations to improve their science, engineering and technological knowledge. All should participate in creating a major paper regarding science, engineering and technology including principles and technological facts in developing the industry sector, and to ensure the sustainability of developed industries.

The attendees of the meeting need to discuss frankly pub-

lishing the historical facts of Myanmar's industry.

At noon, the Union minister met officers who completed the basic course for pre-civil servants and public servant management diploma course (8) at the electrical lab and electrical skill training hall in Mayangon Township.

Meanwhile, the Union minister shared the facts regarding the international Fundamental Engineering (FE) exam using PowerPoint.

Then, he gave cash awards to outstanding trainees who won the Excellent Award and Outstanding Award in literature at the training courses and cordially met officers. — MNA



The coordination meeting of the Steering Committee on Compiling Myanmar Industrial History is in progress.

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,

A student in Kyaukpyu Township, Rakhine State gets COVID-19 vaccine shot on 6 August.

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.

Yesterday, doctors and nurses from public hospitals, medical teams from the Tatmadaw, relevant healthcare workers in collaboration with volunteers gave COVID-19 vaccines to 3,690 people from twenty-six townships in Ayeyawady Region, 613

people from three townships in Rakhine State, and 8,611 local people from seven districts in Mandalay Region, respectively.

Similarly on that day, healthcare officials gave the vaccines to 2,717 students from twenty-six townships in Ayeyawady Region, 1,718 students from four townships in Rakhine State and 6,101 students from seven districts in Mandalay Region.

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

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanmar Alinn, the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit www.moi.gov.mm/mal, www.moi.gov.mm/km, www.moi.gov.mm/nlm and www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper.

News and Periodicals Enterprise

20 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 6 August, total figure rises to 614,190

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 614,190 after 20 new cases were reported on 6 August 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 592,985 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 19,434 without more casualties.—MNA

Over 160 endangered Dalmatian pelicans take refuge in Indawgyi Lake

IN the Mohnyin District of the Kachin State lies the Indawgyi Lake, the biggest in Myanmar and home to regional birds and migratory birds. Over 160 endangered Dalmatian pelicans take refuge here this rainy season.

Officials conducted the survey on water birds at the Indawgyi Lake in October 2016 and made yearly records about migratory birds, and are also taking records of region forest bird species monthly this year.

In August 2022, about 240 birds of eight species of migratory birds, and water birds remain at this site and 1,612 birds of 10 water bird species and 746 birds of 54 forest bird species are also living there. Among endangered species, Dalmatian pelicans, watercocks, Asian Openbill, Ixobrychus Sinensis, Little Ringed Plover, Plover, black-crowned night heron, and River Tern are inhabiting the Indawgyi Lake. Over 32,000 migratory and water birds took refuge in January 2021 and over 26,000 birds this January.



In the Mohnyin District of the Kachin State lies the Indawgyi Lake, the biggest in Myanmar and home to regional birds and migratory birds. Over 160 endangered Dalmatian pelicans take refuge here this rainy season. **PHOTO: KANU**

In Ramsar site criteria for the Indawgyi Lake, it supports over 20,000 migratory birds yearly. Among the water birds, one per cent of the globally endangered birds winter there yearly and the world is interested in Indawgyi Lake. It also exposes the achievement of Myanmar's cooperation works with international coun-

tries in wildlife conservation processes.

The Indawgyi Lake museum and pagoda in the lake compound lure the interest of local and foreign travellers and they can enjoy the migratory birds, water birds, regional birds, wildlife and beauty of nature. So, it supports the nature-based tourism industry.

“Wildlife conservation is a moral and philanthropic livelihood. We have to protect their lives and some people are not satisfied with our doings. But we conducted education programmes and so the people become to know how important Indawgyi Lake's sustainability and their keeps are.

The bird species, fish and wildlife animals are such a proud national duty. The tourism industry earns income from having these species. There are some migratory birds there this rainy season and the Dalmatian pelican migrant there,” said U Maung Win, an official of the Indawgyi Lake Wildlife Sanctuary.

Over 100 square miles wide Indawgyi Lake boasts 94 fish species with 35 commercial fish species and two rare fish species – Microphis Dunckeris and Syngnathidae (pipefish).

The residents and departmental officials are working together in the fight against the destructive elements on the Indawgyi Lake ecosystem and biodiversity, nature-based tourism industry and incomes of locals. Moreover, the officials conduct patrols in the lake, regular education programmes, measure the water level, and collect bird data, fish species and fish conserving zone to ensure the sustainability of the lake. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/GNLNM



The office building of the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM).

CBM raises exchange rate to K2,100 per dollar

THE Central Bank of Myanmar has increased its reference currency exchange rate from K1,850 per dollar, which remained unchanged over four straight months, to K2,100 per dollar on 5 August.

The CBM announced that the people have to change their foreign incomes into Myanmar kyats starting 3 April within one day at K1,850 per dollar, and exchange other foreign currency at K1,850 per dollar.

However, the reference exchange rate rose to K2,100 per dollar but it must exchange only 65 per cent of export incomes. Therefore, the people can keep 35 per cent of export incomes in dollars. When the CBM reference exchange rate was K1,850 per dollar, it was over K2,500 per dollar in the market. Therefore, it has a large impact on the export of agricultural products and the export volume declined, said the merchants.

Moreover, the dollar price is not stable and the Myanmar kyat price drastically declines. The local gold prices also become high and it reaches K2.4 million per tical of pure gold in the market.

Therefore, the authorities inspected the foreign exchange counters and gold entrepreneurs.

In September 2021, the foreign exchange rate hit a record over K3,000 per dollar while K2,220,000 per tical of pure gold in the local market. — NN/GNLNM

Public Notification

THE Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee was reconstituted under the State Administration Council's Order No 366/2021 dated 10.12.2021, and action is being taken effectively against illegal trade under the law.

The following telephone numbers, fax and email address can be reached to safely report information in connection with illegal trade.

Auto telephone number - 067 409 883
Mobile phone - 09 404339969
Fax - 067 409 886
Email address - antiillegaltradeinfo@gmail.com

Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

Public Notification

THE Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee was reconstituted under the State Administration Council's Order No 366/2021 dated 10.12.2021, and action is being taken effectively against illegal trade under the law.

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

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

Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

Advertisements disallowed on YBS and taxi vehicles

ACCORDING to the Yangon Region Public Transport Regulatory Committee (YRTC), YBS and Taxi vehicles will no longer be allowed to post advertisements due to the increase in advertisements that are not in line with the city's characteristics.

The Yangon Region Government has instructed that advertising on YBS vehicles and commercial vehicles will not be allowed since it affects the beauty of the city and does not match the features of the city.

The Road Transport Administration Department (RTAD) and the Yangon Region Public Transport Committee informed YBS bus companies and taxi owners.



A YBS bus is seen with advert stickers on its side.

"The Yangon regional government has instructed us not to continue sticking advertisements on YBS vehicles and taxis that do not conform to the characteristics of the city," said Yangon Region Private Transport Supervisory Committee (YRTC) Joint Secretary U Lian Cin Mang.

Advert stickers on YBS vehicles and commercial vehicles were previously approved by the RTAD after collecting advertising fees.

The Directorate of Road Transport will not renew the registration of YBS passenger vehicles and taxis if there are advertisements on their vehicles. — TWA/GNLM

Admission of medical students to be cancelled unless they register



The University of Medicine (1) Yangon.

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Health, if the 659 students, who have transferred to study at various medical universities under the Ministry of Health, do not report to their respective medical universities by 12 August, they will be removed from the admission list.

The names of 659 students who were allowed to transfer to vacant positions of the first year (5/2022) course at various medical universities under the Department of Human Resources for Health, Ministry of Health were announced on 2 August.

All these students passed their matriculation examination in Biology, Chemistry, and Phys-

ics subjects.

Among them, 65 were permitted to transfer to the University of Medicine (1) Yangon, 46 to the Medical University (2) in Yangon, 74 to the Medical University (Mandalay) and 21 to the University of Medicine (Magway), respectively.

Similarly, five students were permitted to transfer to Medical University (Taunggyi), 43 to the University of Dental Medicine (Yangon), and 52 students to the University of Dental Medicine (Mandalay).

In addition, 54 students had the opportunity to attend the University of Pharmacy (Yangon), 20 to the University of Pharmacy

(Mandalay), 40 to the University of Medical Technology (Yangon), 34 to the University of Medical Technology (Mandalay), 73 to the Nursing University (Yangon), 56 to the University of Nursing (Mandalay) and 76 to the University of Community Health (Magway).

Students who have been admitted to various medical universities must register at the admitted universities from 3 August. The original score list, the 2020 matriculation certificate and National Scrutiny Card (original) must also be submitted and reported to relevant medical universities by 12 August, according to the Ministry of Health. — TWA/GNLM

Black bean, pigeon pea prices hike by K500,000 per tonne each within 5 months

ON 6 August, the black bean FAQ/RC was priced at K1,780,000 per tonne in the Yangon market while K2,050,000 per tonne of SQ/RC and K17,85,000 per tonne of pigeon pea. The price of mung bean (Pakokku) was K2,580-K2,750 per viss, mung bean (Kayan Shwewah) at K2,750-K2,835 and chickpea at K3,500-K3,600.

On 5 August, the black bean FAQ/RC was priced at K1,667,500 per tonne while K1,932,500 per tonne of SQ/RC and K1,612,500 per tonne of pigeon pea. The price of mung bean (Pakokku) was K2,850-K2,670 per viss, mung bean (Kayan Shwewah) at K2,665-K2,750 and chickpea at K2,450-K3,550. One day later, the black bean is priced at K112,500 per tonne and K172,500 per tonne of pigeon pea in the Yangon market.

The Central Bank of Myanmar has increased its refer-



Various beans in the market.

ence currency exchange rate from K1,850 per dollar to K2,100 per dollar and announced to change the 65 per cent of export incomes into Myanmar kyats. Therefore, the export bean prices are likely to become high, said bean market analysts.

On 7 February, the RC black bean was priced at K1,218,000 per tonne, RC pigeon pea at K1,306,000 per tonne. After five months, the RC black bean rose by K562,000 per tonne and RC pigeon pea by K470,000 per tonne.

On that day, the export

FOB bean prices were \$630-\$650 per tonne of FAQ black bean, \$690-\$710 per tonne of FAQ pigeon pea and on 6 August, it was \$870-\$890 per tonne of FAQ black bean and \$850-\$870 per tonne of FAQ pigeon pea, according to daily data.

Therefore, the export

FAQ black bean price rose by \$240 and AFQ pigeon pea by \$160 within five months. The country exported 1.75 million tonnes of beans and pulses worth \$1324.27 million in one year. In the first four months of the 2022-2023FY, the country exported 558,700.276 tonnes of beans and pulses worth \$426 million.

The bean prices are high this year and the foreign income from bean export will be higher than in previous years. Moreover, the black bean and pigeon pea prices of 6 August are K500,000 per tonne more than the same period of last year.

On 2 October 2021, the black bean was priced at K1,875,000 per tonne and it cannot be known exactly whether the prices in 2022 will be higher. In 2021, the pigeon pea price was below K1.6 million per tonne. — TWA/GNLM

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, restricted goods, consumer goods and vehicles confiscated

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

An inspection team led by Myanmar Police Force conducted the inspections on 4 August under the instructions of the Mon State Anti-Illicit Trade Task Force,

Officials confiscated 2,000 kilogrammes of restricted chemical – Ammonium Nitrate – worth K3.6 million at the Shwethanlwin Tollgate in Belin Township. The action was taken under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

Similarly, a team led by the Yangon Region Forest Department carried out inspections under the supervision of the Yangon Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force on 5 August.

They seized a total of 6.1236 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K311,822 in the Oakkan forest reserve in Taikkgyi Township



of Yangon North District. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

In addition, a total of 17.828 tonnes of illegal teak, ironwood and other timbers worth K8,566,372 were confiscated in

Confiscated vehicle in Bago Region.

the Bago, Thayawady and Pyi districts on 4 August, and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

Afterwards, on 6 August, a team led by the Myanmar Police Force confiscated an unregistered Honda Air Wave car (approximately K2.5 million), and the action was taken under the Export and Import Law.

In addition, a combined team under the Mandalay Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force impounded duty-free warm clothes and perfume detergent (ABC branded) worth K29,260,000 from a Nissan Diesel Tractor Head truck (approximately K27 million) near the Htonebo junction on the Yangon- Mandalay Road. The action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

Therefore, nine arrests (approximately K71,238,194) were made on three consecutive days from 4 to 6 August, according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee. – MNA



Seized goods in Mandalay Region.

Drugs seized in several townships

ILLICIT drugs were confiscated in the Bokpyin, Bahan, Kunlong and Loilem Townships, stated the Myanmar Police Force.

On 3 August, a combined team including members of the Taninthayi Region Police Force raided a house of the suspected Ma Htay Myint, located at the Yaengangyi Village of Yaengangyi Village-tract in Bokpyin Township and, Maung Zaw (aka) Than Zaw and Than Myo Oo were seen on the site together with the suspect. Four thousand and three hundred stimulant

tablets were impounded from the house at 10:50 am and the suspects were prosecuted under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law.

A coordinated team consisting of the Anti-Drug Police Force members found Kaung Htet Zaw (aka) Pyaung Gyi suspicious at the Yedashe Ward in Bahan Township at 12:30 pm on 4 August and 2,000 stimulant pills were confiscated from him during the inspection. The team also arrested the suspect Hla Soe along with 6,800 stimulant

tablets from his house which was located at the Shwenanthta Ward, Bahan Township, and the drug dealer Ma Ni Ni Ohn from her place at the Yedashe Ward, Bahan Township, according to the further investigation.

On the same day, a house of the suspected Ma Eee Swe, located at the Tarpangchawk Village of Tonkyet Village-tract in Kunlong Township, was examined by the combined Anti-Drug Police Force at 9:15 pm and 2,000 stimulant tablets were found from the site. Similarly, a Nissan AD Van vehicle driven by Win Naing (aka) Huu Sein accompanied by Htin Paw (aka) Sai Ohaw Lar, was stopped and searched by the combined team of the Anti-Drug Police Force on the Loilem-Taunggyi Road near the Hotint Village of Pangwoe Village-tract in Loilem Township. The team seized 30,000 stimulant tablets from them at 3:30 pm.

The Myanmar Police Force stated that the suspects are being prosecuted under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — MNA



Two arrestees are seen along with seized drugs and a saloon.

K158 million worth of raw opium impounded in Mandalay Region



Three arrestees are pictured together with seized raw opium and a lorry.

THE Anti-Drug Police Force seized 176.4 kilogrammes of raw opium worth over K158 million in the Thazi township of Mandalay Region.

The combined team consisting of the Anti-Drug Police Force searched a Mitsubishi Fuso 12 wheels truck driven by Pyae Phyo Tun accompanied by Myo Kyaw Thu and Thant Zin Ko at the Kywetatsone checkpoint in Thazi township in Mandalay region at 5 am on 2 August. They found 176.4 kilogrammes of raw opium worth over K158 million from the truck. According to the examination, raw opium will carry from southern Shan State to Sagaing Region and they are prosecuted under respective laws and perpetrators of the crime chain are being investigated and identified, it is learnt. — MNA

ARTICLE



PHOTOS: OTTHA

Living style, tradition and culture of Salon people

By Nyaung Oo Phee

MYANMAR is a country covered in natural beauty. It boasts of a picturesque scene of ice mountains in the northern beauty of countryside areas in the middle part where the Konbaung dynasty ruled, Shan hills, best scenes in the lower part where the historic features are concentrated and are also rich in marine resources and natural islands such as Myeik Archipelago and Salon Island in the southern part of the country.

Conservation of real features

The tourists have been especially interested in the Salon people living in Myeik Archipelago for more than 50 years. The Salon people are adept at swimming and diving and they do not live in a certain place permanently and so they are described as Sea Gypsy or Men of the Sea.

The Salon people go and search pearl, bird's nest, sea cucumber, squid, sea shell, oyster, seaweed, Ambergris, herb and honey, and sell them for their keeps. Currently, the Salon people are living in the islands near the Kawthoung district. They live together with their people but now Myanmar people also live there. They can be found near Lampi Island – Hein Ze, Wah Kyun, Maungmakan, Bay, Moscos Island, Ross Island, Mali Island and Kadan Island. They go around using Kaban boats in winter and summer

and live in long-legged huts in the rainy season. Now, they live in houses with sheets of corrugated iron and their living style becomes changing. Therefore, it needs to conserve its traditional living styles.

Religious faith

Although the living styles of Salon people are changing, their religious faith remains unchanged.

Their religious faith is Nat (spirit) worship. The Jalan Kyun Sayadaw delivered the sermons of Buddha and so the number of Buddhist Salons increased. Similarly, they also conserve their Nat worship.

The Nat mentors or shamans are the most powerful and play a crucial role in religious, funeral and living affairs. The Salon people believe that they would get good fortune and care of spirits in their wedding, funerals, funerals and fishing after paying respect to the Nats under the management of Nat mentors. They offer alcohol, chicken, dolphin, turtle, duck blood, paddy, corn, betel quid and honey to their traditional Katoy-Nat.

Birth

When the Salon people give birth to a child, they make donations to good Nats under the control of Nat mentors for good health. They dip the child in the water three times to get recognition of the god of the sea and

good spirits. Nowadays, they no longer do such acts and the Salon children have a gift as they can dive in the water for over 15 minutes. The Nat mentors choose a name for the newly born child. The Nat mentors are very important to the Salon people from their birth to death.

Marriage

The Salon people usually tend to marry at a young age. The groom-to-be formally asks for the hand in marriage of the bride-to-be. If the parents of the bride-to-be accept the engagement, they discuss with the nat mentor to choose the proper wedding date, and they invite the spirits with food. On the wedding day, the Nat mentor invites the spirits to hold up two hands shaking the body and blowing a flute. Then, the hands of the bridegroom and bride are put on the hands of the Nat mentor and the Nat mentor makes a wish for their marriage in the Salon language. They adopt the one husband has one wife system. The parents give the traditional Kaban boat and fishing materials to the newly wedded couples. During the wedding, the body of the Nat mentor will shake after inviting the Nat spirit and enjoy the alcohol, roasted chicken, fish and other foods. Meanwhile, the participants also dance happily.

Toil

Before leaving for the sea,

the Salon people offer alcohol, honey and food to nats and also the captured things when they return. They also firstly offer the sea animals captured around the islands and then they cook.

The squid fetches good price after pearl. Therefore, the Salon people tie the kaban boat behind the fishing boat when they go fishing. It shows the sense of oneness with the sea. The experience in heavy storm is a gift of nature for Salon people. They live on the shore only if they have to shelter from the storm in the rainy season. Now, they get used to living on the shore.

Death

The dead body of Salon is buried on the island that they select together with their possessions that they use when they are alive aiming to get a proper way of living in next good life. During the funeral occasion, their relatives deliver words to the deceased ancestors to take care of them and their positive actions. They believe that the deceased ones have to go to the hell and heaven. So, they celebrate ghost festival for the ghost and devil at the cemetery once a year especially in January. During the festival, the nat mentor invite the traditional katoy-nat and offer food. They also invite the deceased persons. Then, the nat mentor dance and the relatives play drum and dance happily.

Preservation

If they are feeling sick, they make donation to devil. They believe in good spirits and evil spirits, and they rely on the nat mentor from birth to death. They go to hospitals and clinics to see the doctors nowadays and they also continue adopting their traditional ways. They value their traditional festivals and held a traditional festival in Lampi Island village in Kawthoung District in February 2004. It could lure the interest of tourists. They still preserve their traditional festivals.

Living style and tradition

Salons or Mawken are sea gypsies and well-adverse in the nature of sea. The Salons live in Myeik Archipelago – Jalan, Bocho, Ma Kyine Kalat, Nyaungwi, Zardatgyi, Lampi, Langan and Don islands. The Salons from Myanmar are among the minorities who live at the sea in the world and it is such a pride not only for Taninthayi Region but also for the whole country. The small population of Salon people supports the tourism industry of the country. Therefore, here is the living style and tradition of Salons, sea gypsies who live in the far south of Myanmar, highlighting that the conservation of tradition and culture of one ethnic group will ensure the human resources and cultural heritages.

Translated.

OPINION

ARTICLE BOOKRACK

Breastfed babies to raise physical and mental growth

AUGUST, the eighth month in the Gregorian calendar, is significant among other months, in honour of breastfeeding mothers who are playing a key role in nurturing babies and arranging nutritious supplies.

Babies under five, pregnant mothers and breastfeeding mothers are the most vulnerable to suffering from impacts of nutritious deficiency for various reasons including family's low income and lesser awareness of nutritious consumption.

A large number of babies and mothers have a narrow range of knowledge of false traditional food consumption customs, lesser cookery skills of preparing nutritious foods, suffering from an infection of viruses and lesser knowledge of nurturing babies. These facts are the root causes of the deficiency of nutrition for those babies and mothers.

As such, the authorities and charity organizations as well as pregnant and breastfeeding mothers themselves need to accelerate breastfeeding their babies for nutritious promotion in line with this year's theme of the World Breastfeeding Day 2022: Step Up for Breastfeeding, Educate and Support.

The authorities and social organizations organize the campaign of world breastfeeding week in the first week of August every year to promote the nutrition of those mothers so as to share nutrition with their babies to become healthy and strong children in the future.

In the second week of August, the authorities and people from social organizations actively join the campaign of giving vitamin-A pills to fortify the children, immunizing the pills to the children for vermifugation and raising awareness of consuming nutrition.

The nutrition promotion week campaign will be staged for pregnant mothers and breastfeeding mothers with the active movements to give micro-nutritious pills and vitamin B1 tablets to pregnant mothers and breastfeeding mothers as well as to raise health awareness for them to efficiently consume nutritious meals and foods.

The arrangements for eliminating iodine deficiency, mostly in breastfeeding mothers falls on the fourth and last week of August when the authorities and departmental officials will provide iodized salt to the people as well as provide medical checkup on the people suffering from iodine deficiency and related diseases.

The World Health Organization-WHO recommended that it is necessary to give just breast milk to babies from the newly-born age to the sixth month and then provide breast milk together with appropriate supplementary foods to babies till two years old. In fact, the breast milk of mothers is the best nutrition and the most potent medicine for babies to have physically and mentally full growth.

As such, the authorities and charity organizations as well as pregnant and breastfeeding mothers themselves need to accelerate breastfeeding their babies for nutritious promotion in line with this year's theme of the World Breastfeeding Day 2022: Step Up for Breastfeeding, Educate and Support.

ASEAN-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership: A new impetus for deepening closer cooperation

By Aung Ko Min (MOFA)
ASEAN Affairs Department

Establishment of ASEAN

8 August 2022 marks the 55th anniversary of the establishment of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). ASEAN was founded on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok, Thailand, with the signing of the ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration) by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. Brunei Darussalam then joined on 7 January 1984, Viet Nam on 28 July 1995, Lao PDR and Myanmar on 23 July 1997, and Cambodia on 30 April 1999, making up what is today

the ten Member States of ASEAN.

When ASEAN was established in 1967, the Cold War loomed over all countries and the region was rife with tensions and conflicts. Due to ASEAN's steadfast aspirations and strong commitments to maintaining peace and stability, ASEAN has been able to prevent the escalation of conflicts in the region through peaceful means and diplomacy.

Over the five decades, ASEAN continues to evolve as the primary driving force in fostering regional collaboration and main-

taining its central role in regional cooperation mechanisms. In this regard, ASEAN could successfully develop friendly relations and mutually beneficial partnerships with eleven Dialogue Partners, four Sectoral Dialogue Partners and four Development Partners, including with a number of regional and international organizations and institutions.

Among ASEAN's Dialogue Partnerships, ASEAN plus China stands out as the most vibrant and dynamic Dialogue Partnership with the most substantial cooperation in all fields across three ASEAN Community Pillars. At this important juncture, Myanmar is actively playing as

a close and friendly neighbour of China in the roles of the Country Coordinator for ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations, Co-chair of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation and Co-chair of consultations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.

Milestones in ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations

ASEAN and China commenced Dialogue Relations in July 1991, when former Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen was invited to the opening ceremony of the 24th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Kuala Lumpur as a guest, marking the start of the formal relations between the

two sides. At this Meeting, he expressed China's keen interest to cooperate with ASEAN for mutual benefit. Subsequently, China was accorded full Dialogue Partner status at the 29th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in July 1996 in Jakarta.

China was the first ASEAN Dialogue Partner acceding to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) in October 2003, the first to forge a Strategic Partnership with ASEAN in the same year with the signing of the Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity at the 7th ASEAN-China Summit in Bali, and the first to openly state its readiness to sign



Map of the ASEAN Member States and the People's Republic of China

the Protocol to the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ).

In 2005, ASEAN-China relations had been further strength-

ened by establishing 46 mechanisms of cooperation at various levels in 16 fields, including 12 at the ministerial level between ASEAN and China. Since then ASEAN

and China have completed three plans of action for the period of 2005-2010, 2011-2015, and 2016-2020.

SEE PAGE-10 >>



Book Title - Simple health tests to monitor your health
Author - Dr Khin Moe Moe
Publishing House - Knowledge Book Centre
Publication Date - September 2020 (1st Edition)
Price - K3,000

The author expressed and interpreted it through metaphor and encouraged readers in her preamble, "Don't chop with an axe if a needle can pierce it".

The book contains the following contents: How to check your health within 30 seconds, How self-medical checkups, How the body signals health warning signs, and How your body parts starting from the head, hair, facial parts, hands, legs, armpit, urine, abdomen to male and female reproductive organs can tell you about your health.

There is also a famous saying, "Prevention is better than cure" in the medical field. Early detection offers the best chance of cure.

This book enlightens you about health checks you can do at home. Self-tests are fast, easy and inexpensive. It takes minutes to check yourself. If one can follow health guidelines as per guidance provided by this book, it will bring health benefits, I truly believed.

will. However, people should not neglect a healthy lifestyle. The human body is like a machine. Any failure in a machine must happen without having the right amount of maintenance. Similarly, a lack of self-care will put one's health at risk.

A regular medical checkup will prevent, avoid and manage diseases at their early stages.

Simple health tests to monitor your health

A wide variety of answers will be responded to the question "What matters most in the life of a human".

Indeed, a general answer to this is "Good health is the most important thing". An unhealthy person might consider he or she has no hope and it is not worth living without good health. The future looks dim for them.

When people are in good health, they tend to forget the important value of health. When one suffers from something, everything is lost. At that time, all he wants is good health and well-being. There's a famous saying that "Health is wealth", meaning that health is the greatest asset of human beings.

If it is meant to happen, it



Book Title - No Earlier than Expected
Author - Hnin Aye Wai
Publishing House - East Sky
Publication Date - September 2020 (1st Edition)
Price - K2,000

No Earlier than Expected

THE author is the wife of U Ko Ko Lay, former editor-in-chief of The New Light of Myanmar English newspaper. Her experience as an administrator at the Hninsigon Home for the Aged makes a greater contribution to this book. This book offers health articles, the author's experiences and a selection of knowledge-based articles.

Articles such as "Lifestyle of over 70-year-old woman" highlight dos and don'ts for the elders, "Being elderly in our country is a great blessing", "We cannot reverse the ageing process", "Herbs", "Health knowledge is helpful", "Allergy alert", "Cleaning routine", "May people with epilepsy have

a normal life", "Patient", "How I dealt with grape-like multiple ovarian cysts", "Longing for return", "Want to grow taller?", "Snoring while sleeping?" and "Indiscipline habits of spitting mucus and saliva" are included in this book.

Furthermore, 30 other knowledge-based articles are added to the book. We have witnessed how people keep the dollar note carefully without damaging or having an ink stain. People said they are excessively attentive to propriety. We should have held our own currency notes as carefully as we hold dollars. Printing currency notes has to spend State's funds. We should properly

hold new currency notes, the author pointed out in the article entitled "No Earlier than Expected".

Similarly, the author referred to Sayagyi U Thaug Htut's remark that "What I truly believe and will believe in life is that the teacher plays a pivotal role in determining the success or failure of the education system. Quality education needs qualified teachers with the right mindsets. This way, the education system will reap fruitful results" in her article entitled "Teacher is a gardener: Teachers are the backbone of the education system".

ARTICLE

ASEAN-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership: ...

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The new Plan of Action (2021-2025) was adopted in November 2020 by the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN and China.

In 2008, China designated its first ambassador to ASEAN and established its Permanent Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta in 2012. In 2011, the ASEAN-China Centre (ACC) was established in Beijing to further promote friendly exchanges and cooperation between ASEAN countries and China in the areas of trade, investment, education, culture, tourism, and information and media.

Myanmar's Coordinatorship for ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations

On 3 August 2021, the Philippines officially turned over its role as Country Coordinator for ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations to Myanmar during the virtual ASEAN-China Post Ministerial Conference. Since then, Myanmar has discharged her duties as Country Coordinator for the 2021-2024 term in further advancing the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership to new heights.

The year 2021 was a significant year for ASEAN and China since it marked the 30th anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations. To commemorate the 30th anniversary, a Special ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held on 7 June 2021 in Chongqing, China. The Meeting marked accomplishments and milestones in 30 years of relations and reflected on the direction of future cooperation, which is among the most substantial in ASEAN's external relations.

Establishment of Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

China is the first Dialogue Partner requested to establish the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) with ASEAN, leading the way for other Dialogue Partners who would like to do so. China's proposal stemmed from the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership Vision 2030 which was adopted at the 21st ASEAN-China Summit in November 2018, where the two sides agreed to "advance the China-ASEAN Strategic Partnership

to new heights". In Southeast Asia, China has already established Comprehensive Strategic Partnerships bilaterally with eight ASEAN Member States, including Myanmar.

Upon receiving China's proposal for CSP, Myanmar as the Country Coordinator made strenuous efforts in negotiations between the ASEAN Member States and China through various channels. Finally, ASEAN's agreement to establish the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between ASEAN and China was highlighted in the Chairman's Statement of the 24th ASEAN-China Summit which was held on 26 October 2021. In this regard, under Myanmar's Coordinatorship, ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations could have set another milestone with the establishment of the ASEAN-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership that is meaningful, substantive and mutually beneficial.

Moreover, Myanmar played a crucial and active role in the preparatory process of the ASEAN-China Special Summit to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations which was successfully held via videoconference on 22 November 2021. The Special Summit was attended by His Excellency Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China together with his ASEAN counterparts and it was co-chaired by President Xi Jinping for the first time. As a key outcome, the Special Summit adopted a Joint Statement of the ASEAN-China Special Summit to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations in which ASEAN and China jointly announced the establishment of an ASEAN-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Myanmar's Coordinatorship for negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC)

As the Country Coordinator for ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations, Myanmar has to play another crucial role as negotiator and co-chair for the negotiations on the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC), one of the most substantive issues between ASEAN and China. Although Myanmar is not a claimant state, My-

anmar attaches great importance to maintaining peace and stability in the region. In this regard, Myanmar co-chaired a series of virtual meetings for the 33rd, 34th and 35th ASEAN-China Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (JWG-DOC) with China on 14-15 October 2021, 10-11 November 2021 and 8-9 March 2022 respectively and the 36th JWG-DOC Meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia on 25-27 May 2022.

At those meetings, both sides emphasized the completion of the textual negotiations of the second reading on the Single Draft Negotiating Text of the COC (SDNT) by the end of 2022 in line with the leaders' aspiration to expedite the COC negotiations. Both sides commended the considerable progress in the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties (DOC) and the substantive negotiations towards the early conclusion of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) that is in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The 37th Meeting of the ASEAN-China Joint Working Group (JWG) on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea is tentatively scheduled to be held at the end of August 2022 in Yangon, Myanmar, depending on the COVID-19 situation.

Upcoming Activities under Myanmar's Coordinatorship

Following up on the key deliverables of the ASEAN-China Summits last year and in preparation for the upcoming 25th ASEAN-China Summit this November 2022, Myanmar as the Country Coordinator has been relentlessly working with the ASEAN Member States and China. Five key deliverables have been set for this year's ASEAN-China cooperation Agenda, namely the upgrade of the existing Plan of Action to implement the ASEAN-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, a Joint Statement on the 20th Anniversary of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), an ASEAN-China Joint Statement

on promoting common development, a Joint Statement on food security cooperation and the signing of the ASEAN-China Technical Cooperation Agreement to strengthen collaboration between ASEAN and China in support of ASEAN Community building and integration.

Economic and Trade Cooperation

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, trade and investment between ASEAN and China have kept growing, fully showing comprehensiveness, depth and a promising future of ASEAN-China cooperation. Trade volume between the two sides jumped from less than eight billion US dollars in 1991 to 684.6 billion US dollars in 2020, an increase of more than 80 times. The two sides became each other's largest trading partners for the first time in 2020.

China was the first Dialogue Partner to start negotiations on a Free Trade Area (FTA) with ASEAN in 2002. ASEAN and China are committed to working towards upgrading the ASEAN-China FTA which would address emerging trends such as digitalization, the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and sustainability, and deepen cooperation in areas such as competition, consumer protection and MSMEs amongst others.

Moreover, China was the first ASEAN FTA partner to ratify the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), the world's largest FTA, covering 3.8 billion people and one-third of the global GDP. With the entry into force of the RCEP on 1 January 2022, the ASEAN's trade connectivity with China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia and New Zealand will further grow, and therefore, this trade pact will surely bring about economic development, social progress raising the living standards and well-being for peoples in the region and beyond.

People-to-People Linkages

Despite the impact of COVID-19, the people-to-people and cultural exchanges between ASEAN and China have maintained strong momentum. The personnel exchanges have exceeded 65 million in 2019, and there are nearly 4,500 flights between Southeast Asian countries

and China every week. Meanwhile, the two sides exchanged more than 200,000 foreign students and formed more than 200 pairs of sister cities.

Empowering and equipping youth with knowledge and skills through education cooperation is important for regional's stability and prosperity in the long term. In this regard, China proposes 2022 as the ASEAN-China Youth Year, and China will release a list of cooperation activities in support of the ASEAN youth. Considering that sustainable development cooperation covers a wide range of vibrant issues, China has suggested the theme for 2022 to be Sustainable Development Cooperation with a focus on bringing the development of low carbon transformation, economy, energy, and industrial upgrading.

The ASEAN-China Young Leaders' Scholarship (ACYLS) programme, which was officially launched in 2019, helps enhance the capacities of youth and nurture their ability to appreciate each other's culture as well as foster deeper understanding and friendship among peoples. The programme is being implemented through the "Jakarta channel" with joint collaboration among the Mission of the People's Republic of China to ASEAN, the Permanent Mission of Myanmar as the Country Coordinator and the ASEAN Secretariat. The ACYLS programme provides full scholarship stipends and other facilities to qualified young citizens from the ASEAN Member States and China annually. For the 2022 ACYLS programme, seventy-two young citizens from the ASEAN Member States were awarded as ACYLS scholars in its various Master's, Doctoral and Research programmes. Besides, it is encouraging to note that China will increase the number of scholarships and exchange programmes in the near future.

Due to the synergizing of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025 between China and ASEAN, a large number of projects are being implemented, bringing tangible benefits to the people in further promoting regional connectivity and people-to-people linkages.

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ASEAN and China will also discuss formulating an ASEAN-China Tourism Promotion Plan in the post-pandemic era to expand cultural and tourism exchanges between the two sides.

ASEAN-China COVID-19 Vaccine Cooperation

Another concrete step of close cooperation between ASEAN and China is in the area of anti-pandemic measures and COVID-19 vaccine production. China was the first partner of ASEAN contributing USD one million to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund since its establishment in April 2020, and to date, China has already contributed a total of USD six million to the Fund. China has provided a great number of emergency medical supplies to ASEAN countries, including dispatching medical expert teams and building virus-testing labs. China has provided more than 600 million doses of vaccines to all ASEAN Member States and that serves as a testament to strong ties amidst challenges. ASEAN and China continue to work closely in facilitating post-pandemic recovery, including through the implementation of the Programme on Public Health Emergency Preparedness Capacity (PROMPT) and the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF).

Moreover, as one of the front-runners in global vaccine

research and development, China has been closely collaborating with ASEAN countries in areas such as vaccine effectiveness monitoring and vaccine research and development. China has been continuously providing medical supplies to Myanmar in fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic, including assisting Myanmar to be able to domestically produce the Myancopharm COVID-19 vaccine to boost the country's vaccination rate. The Myancopharm COVID-19 vaccine, processed with the Ready to Fill (RTF) system in the Myanmar Pharmaceutical Industry, was manufactured by the Ministry of Industry of Myanmar in collaboration with the Sinopharm China National Biotech Group (Sinopharm CNBG) of the People's Republic of China since April 2022. The Myancopharm COVID-19 vaccine is now widely administered across Myanmar, and over four million doses have been successfully produced domestically as of July 2022. It can be given safely to pregnant and lactating mothers, including children from five years of age, and it can also be perfectly used as a booster dose for people aged 18 and above. The successful production of the Myancopharm COVID-19 vaccine plays a critical role in getting the pandemic under effective control in Myanmar, and it clearly demonstrates solidarity and friendship between Myanmar and China.

Moving forward to closer cooperation under the ASEAN-China CSP

Today, the development of both ASEAN and China has entered into a new era with the establishment of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP), and ASEAN-China relations embrace new opportunities and broad prospects. Under the implementation framework of the ASEAN-China CSP, several areas have been highlighted, such as enhancing cooperation in trade and investment through the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area and the effective implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement, digital economy, cybersecurity, connectivity including land-air-sea connectivity, clean energy and environment protection. Both sides are grasping this opportunity to enhance the coordination of development strategies, to advance ASEAN-China closer cooperation advanced in all dimensions, at all levels and in multiple areas.

Over the past 30-year journey, ASEAN and China have enjoyed good neighbourliness, mutual trust, mutual support and mutual benefit. Myanmar is truly proud of assuming Country Coordinatorship for ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations at this crucial juncture of building on past success and opening up new vistas by joining hands for the future. In this connection, Myanmar will

keep the current momentum and will redouble her efforts as the Country Coordinator and a close friend and good neighbour of China in further promoting the existing ties and deepening closer cooperation between ASEAN and China in many more years.

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COVID-19 SITUATION UPDATE WORLDWIDE

India's daily COVID-19 caseload breaches 20,000 mark again



Carton boxes of the Covishield vaccine developed by Pune based Serum Institute of India (SII) are unloaded at the Mumbai airport on 24 February 2021, as part of the COVAX scheme. PHOTO: AFP

INDIA'S daily COVID-19 caseload Friday again surpassed the 20,000 mark after remaining below it for the past five days, officials said.

According to federal health ministry data released on Friday morning, 20,551 new cases of COVID-19 were reported during the past 24 hours, taking the total tally to 44,107,588 in the country.

The cases reported on Friday mark an increase in comparison to 19,893 cases on Thursday.

With the reporting of fresh cases, India's active caseload

currently stands at 135,364.

The country also logged 70 related deaths during the past 24 hours, pushing the overall death toll to 526,600 since the beginning of the pandemic, the ministry said.

With the increase in cases, the daily positivity rate stands at 5.14 per cent and the weekly positivity rate was recorded at 4.64 per cent, the ministry data showed. The ministry said so far 43,445,624 people have been successfully cured and discharged from hospitals, of whom 21,595 were discharged during the past 24 hours.—Xinhua

ECONOMY WORLD

China, Türkiye hold forum to boost economic ties

A forum aimed at boosting financial cooperation between Türkiye and China has brought together leading figures in finance, technology, and governance in Istanbul.

The Belt and Road Financial Cooperation Forum held on Thursday focused on topics such as digital economy, green economy, technological development and innovation, cultural exchanges, and sustainable development.

Liu Yuhua, minister counsellor of economy and commerce at the Chinese embassy in Türkiye, said that in addition to cooperation in traditional fields, China and Türkiye have been expanding their cooperation in emerging fields such as finance, medicine, new energy and digital economy, bringing benefits to the two peoples.

"We have been in mutual exchange and communication for over a thousand years. We



People are seen at Taksim square in Istanbul, Türkiye, 25 February 2021. PHOTO: XINHUA/XU SUHUI

work together for the common welfare and development of the economies. We are proud that the friendship between Türkiye and China has increased day by day in the last 51 years," he said.

Gao Xiangyang, chairman of ICBC Turkey and Istanbul Businessmen and Industrialists Association, said the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) meets the actual

needs of Türkiye's development and has effectively promoted the country's infrastructure and economic and trade development.

Mahmut Kayacik, executive director of Türkiye Wealth Fund, presented details about the newly established Istanbul Finance Centre, inviting Chinese firms' participation and support. —Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

US exports hit new record in June, lowering trade deficit

AMERICAN exports set another record in June, narrowing the US trade gap for the third consecutive month, according to official data Thursday.

Goods and services exports rose by \$4.3 billion last month to \$260.8 billion, topping the prior record set in May, while imports fell by \$1 billion, the Commerce Department reported.

That trimmed the US trade deficit by 6.2 per cent to \$79.6 billion, the data showed.

Sales of US goods abroad were boosted by gold, natural gas, aircraft, and foods and feeds.

Petroleum exports were the highest on record at \$29.1 billion, but petroleum imports also hit an all-time high of \$27.8 billion, the report said.—AFP

Oil prices settle higher Friday, notch sharp weekly losses

OIL prices rose on Friday, but suffered marked losses for the week.

The West Texas Intermediate for September delivery added 47 cents, or 0.5 per cent, to settle at 89.01 US dollars a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude for October delivery increased 80 cents, or nearly 0.9 per cent, to close at 94.92 dollars a barrel on the London ICE Futures Exchange.

Oilfield services firm Baker Hughes reported Friday the number of US oil rigs, an early indicator of future output, fell by 7 this week to 598.—Xinhua

Japan farm exports in 2022 1st half hit record high as more dine out



Undated supplied photo shows Japanese sea urchin and other seafood exported to and sold in Hong Kong by major distributor Pan Pacific International Holdings Corp. PHOTO: KYODO

THE value of Japan's agricultural and seafood exports in the first six months of 2022 expanded 13.1 per cent from a year earlier, marking a record high for the period, as waning coronavirus cases encouraged more people to eat out, government

data showed Friday.

Exports in the January-June period totalled 652.5 billion yen (\$4.9 billion), supported by robust shipments to the United States as well as a weaker yen, according to the data released by the Ministry

of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

A range of items also hit record highs, with exports of scallops climbing 67.8 per cent to 38.7 billion yen and those of yellowtail rising 64.5 per cent to 20.9 billion yen. Both marine products were supported by growing demand from Japanese restaurants in the United States.

Japanese sake exports increased 33.7 per cent to 23.4 billion yen, lifted by online shopping.

Exports of strawberries, immensely popular in Asia, also increased by 29.7 per cent.

Meanwhile, exports of beef fell 5.2 per cent to 21.4 billion yen after the United States hiked tariffs sharply on Japanese beef shipments in late March.

By market, China was the biggest buyer of Japanese agricultural exports with a 18.0 per cent increase to 120.1 billion yen, followed by the United States, up 34.5 per cent to 104.6 billion yen.—Kyodo

Persistent container ship congestion in North Sea affects EU-Asia trade

THE congestion of container ships off German ports at the North Sea worsened, affecting the European Union's (EU's) trade with Asia, the German Kiel Institute for the World Economy (IfW Kiel) said on Friday.

As a result, cargo volumes in the Red Sea, the main trade route between the EU and Asia, were currently 21 per cent lower "than would be expected under normal circumstances," IfW Kiel said. "The gap is largely due to failing cargo from Europe to

Asia." Two dozen container ships were waiting for clearance at the ports of Hamburg or Bremerhaven for up to three weeks now, according to IfW Kiel. "Currently, the high dwell time of containers in particular is slowing down handling operations," a spokesperson for HHLA, a terminal operator at Hamburg's port, told Xinhua on Friday. The situation would be improved with various measures, such as the leasing of additional space for container storage.—Xinhua



Two dozen container ships were waiting for clearance at the ports of Hamburg or Bremerhaven for up to three weeks now, according to IfW Kiel. In the port of Hamburg (Germany), 7 March 2022. PHOTO: ODD ANDERSEN / AFP

Amazon to buy Roomba-maker iRobot in \$1.7 bn deal

AMAZON on Friday announced a \$1.7 billion deal to buy the maker of robotic vacuum Roomba in a merger that would play into the tech giant's artificial intelligence and smart home ambitions.

US-based iRobot is a global company that builds robots and "intelligent home" innovations, having introduced Roomba self-operating vacuums a decade ago, Amazon said in a release.

"Over many years, the iRobot team has proven its ability to reinvent how people clean with products that are incredibly practical and inventive," said Amazon



Amazon said it will buy iRobot for \$61 per share along with acquiring the company's debt. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

senior vice president of devices Dave Limp.

Amazon's deal to buy iRobot for \$61 per share along with acquiring the company's debt is subject

to approval of shareholders and regulators.

Colin Angle is to remain chief executive of iRobot after the purchase. The acquisition "re-

inforces Amazon's interest and market position in robotics and home automation, and underscores the strategic value of AI," Baird analyst Colin Sebastian said in a note to investors.

The Massachusetts-based company has a 30-year track record in robotics, and underlying software such as mapping and navigation, Sebastian said.

Amazon has been investing in smart home and automation technologies with acquisitions such as Ring doorbells, Kiva warehouse robots and self-driving startup Zoox.—AFP

Alibaba quarterly revenue flat for first time ever in June

CHINESE e-commerce giant Alibaba reported flat revenue growth on Thursday for the first time ever, as the country grappled with an economic slowdown and Covid-19 resurgences kept consumers jittery. Alibaba's performance is widely seen as a gauge of Chinese consumer sentiment, given its market dominance, and its revenue growth has slowed markedly over the past year.

Revenue came in at 205.6 billion yuan (\$30.7 billion) in the April-June quarter, beating analyst expectations despite being slightly below the

same period last year, following a decline in the company's China commerce segment revenue, Alibaba said. The company has been grappling with growing competition and economic fallout from strict Covid restrictions that have battered consumer sentiment, pushed the unemployment rate up and tangled supply chains. "Following a relatively slow April and May, we saw signs of recovery across our businesses in June," said Alibaba Group's chairman and chief executive Daniel Zhang in a statement.—AFP

UK's busiest container port set for 8-day strike

WORKERS at the UK's largest container port will hold an eight-day strike at the end of August, union bosses said Friday, in the country's latest industrial action over pay amid spiralling inflation.

"Workers at the port of Felixstowe will begin strike action later this month in a dispute over pay after peace talks... failed to produce a reasonable offer," the Unite union said in a statement.

Over 1,900 workers will hold eight days of strikes from 21 August until 29 August, it added.



Workers at the port of Felixstowe will begin strike action later this month. PHOTO: AFP

The union said port operator, the Felixstowe Dock and Railway Company, had "failed to improve on its offer of a seven per cent pay increase," with

inflation predicted to hit 13 per cent later this year.

"Felixstowe docks and its parent company CK Hutchison Holdings Ltd are both massively profita-

ble and incredibly wealthy. They are fully able to pay the workforce a fair day's pay," said Unite general secretary Sharon Graham.

Felixstowe, in east England, is the UK's largest container port and handles 48 per cent of containers brought into the country. "Strike action will cause huge disruption and will generate massive shockwaves throughout the UK's supply chain, but this dispute is entirely of the company's own making," said Unite's national officer for docks, Bobby Morton.—AFP

ING profits hit by Türkiye's hyper-inflation

DUTCH banking giant ING reported on Thursday a 20-per-cent drop in net profit in the second quarter, hit by soaring inflation in Türkiye and concerns about the global economy.

ING booked a profit of 1.18 billion euros (\$1.2 billion) in the three-month

period ending in June.

"The backdrop to ING's performance in the second quarter of 2022 was one of ongoing geopolitical uncertainty and pressure on the global economy," ING chief executive Steven van Rijswijk said in a statement.

"Despite these diffi-

cult operating conditions, I'm pleased with our results," he said, pointing to growth in ING's primary customer base and a rise in loans and deposits.

Revenue rose 3.7 per cent to 4.7 billion euros.

ING's net profit took a 277-million-euro hit from Türkiye's hyper-inflation,

which is close to 80 per cent.

The bank's profits were slashed by more than half in the first quarter, when results were affected by Russia's war in Ukraine, but ING said its "risk costs were significantly lower" in the second quarter.—AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NORDBORG MAERSK VOY.NO. (228W/231E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NORDBORG MAERSK VOY.NO. (228W/231E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **7-8-2022** 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.

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GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Greek government rocked by resignations over phone spying claims

GREECE'S conservative government was rocked Friday by a long-simmering surveillance scandal after its intelligence chief and a close aide to Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis resigned in the space of an hour.

Panagiotis Kontoleon offered his resignation due to management "errors" during his time in the role, Mitsotakis' office said in a statement.

The announcement that Kontoleon had resigned from his position at the head of na-



Intelligence chief Panagiotis Kontoleon resigned after mobile phone spying allegations. **PHOTO: YIANNIS PANAGOPOULOS EUROKINISSI/AFP**

tional intelligence service EYP came less than an hour after the secretary-general of the prime minister's office, Grigoris Dimitriadis, also quit.

The resignations came a week after the leader of the country's Socialist opposition party, Nikos Androulakis, filed a complaint with the supreme court over "attempted" spying on his mobile phone using Predator malware.

Two Greek journalists have also taken legal action this year

after they claimed to have been victims of surveillance.

Androulakis on Friday called for a special investigation by parliament into the incident.

"I never expected the Greek government to spy on me using the darkest practices," he said.

The government has consistently denied any state involvement, saying it had not bought software of that type, but the rows have sparked an outcry in the country.—AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

World food prices drop again after Ukraine grain pact: UN

WORLD food prices fell sharply in July, partly thanks to a deal between Ukraine and Russia lifting a sea blockade that had stopped Ukrainian grain shipments, a UN agency said Friday.

Food prices soared to a record high in March after Russia invaded Ukraine, raising fears that the conflict between two of the world's breadbaskets would spark hunger in countries re-

lying on their exports. While prices remain high, they have now dropped for a fifth straight month, falling by 8.6 per cent in July compared to June, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization's food price index. The index, which measures the monthly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities, was still 13.1 per cent higher than in July 2021.

The biggest drop was for vegetable oil prices, which fell by 19.2 per cent between June and July to hit a 10-month low. The cereal price index logged a monthly drop of 11.5 per cent, the FAO said.

The decline for cereals was led by a fall in world wheat prices, "partly in reaction to the agreement reached between Ukraine and the Russian Federation to unblock Ukraine's main Black Sea ports", the UN agency said.—AFP



Farmers harvest a wheat field in the Ukrainian Kharkiv region on 19 July 2022, amid Russian invasion of Ukraine. Russia and Ukraine on 22 July 2022 signed a landmark deal with the United Nations and Türkiye on resuming grain shipments that could ease a global food crisis in which millions face hunger. **PHOTO: SERGEY BOBOK/AFP**

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Here are the latest developments in the war in Ukraine:

Putin, Erdogan pledge to boost cooperation

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan pledge to boost political and economic cooperation, including in energy and trade, in a statement adopted following their second talks in 17 days.

"Despite the current regional and global challenges, the leaders reaffirmed their common will to further develop Russian-Turkish relations," the Kremlin says in a statement.

At the start of the meeting in Russia's Black Sea city of Sochi, Erdogan told Putin he hopes to open a "different page" in ties between Ankara and Moscow. NATO member Türkiye has sought to remain neutral in the face of Moscow's historic stand-off with the West over Ukraine. It has hosted peace talks between Russia and Ukraine, and in late July brokered a UN-backed agreement to resume grain deliveries from Ukrainian ports.

Russia accused of strikes on nuclear site

Ukraine accuses Russian forces of strikes near a nuclear reactor at Europe's biggest power plant at Zaporizhzhia in the country's south, which has been occupied since the early days of the invasion.

"Three strikes were recorded on the site of the plant, near one of the power blocks where the nuclear reactor is located," Energoatom, Ukraine's state-run operator of the country's nuclear power plants, says.

SOURCE: AFP

EU plan to cut use of Russian gas comes into effect next week

A European Union plan to cut gas use and help Germany wean itself off dependency on Russia will come into effect early next week, the bloc's presidency said Friday.

Last week, EU member states agreed to reduce their use of gas by 15 per cent over the winter, with exceptions for some

countries and despite opposition from Hungary.

Officials have since been working on the legal texts of the plan, which will be voluntary unless the member states agree to give the European Commission emergency powers. The EU's rotating presidency, held by the Czech Republic, announced Fri-

day the Council of the European Union — which represents member states — had formally adopted the plan.—AFP

An employee walks near pipelines at the Bulgartansgaz gas compressor station in Ihtiman, Bulgaria, 5 May 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**



Hiroshima marks 77th anniv. of atomic bombing amid nuclear threat

HIROSHIMA on Saturday marked the 77th anniversary of its atomic bombing by the United States, amid heightened concern in Japan and elsewhere over repeated Russian threats to resort to nuclear weapons amid the war in Ukraine.

Mayor Kazumi Matsui cautioned in a Peace Declaration at a memorial ceremony in the western city that even as civilian lives are being lost in the Russian aggression, reliance on nuclear deterrence is gaining momentum around the world. "We must immediately render all nuclear buttons meaningless," he said. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres was also present at the annual ceremony at the Peace Memorial Park near ground zero, becoming the first UN chief to

attend since his predecessor Ban Ki Moon in 2010.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who represents a constituency in Hiroshima, decried in his remarks the apparently declining momentum towards a world without nuclear weapons, calling on humanity not to repeat the tragedy of nuclear weapons use.

The prime minister said Japan will work to connect the "reality" of a deteriorating security environment and the "ideal" of a world without nuclear weapons.

With Hiroshima set to host the summit meeting of the Group of Seven nations next May, Kishida said he and the other leaders will pledge in front of a monument symbolizing peace to work together to safeguard universal values.—Kyodo



The Atomic Bomb Dome is seen from the venue holding a ceremony to mark the 77th anniversary of the world's first atomic bombing, at Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima, western Japan, 6 August 2022, in this photo taken by Kyodo. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Russia 'ready' to discuss prisoner swap after Griner jailed

RUSSIA said Friday it was ready to discuss a prisoner swap with Washington at the presidential level, a day after the drug conviction of US basketball star Brittney Griner.

Despite tensions soaring between Russia and the US since the launch of Moscow's military intervention in Ukraine, the former Cold War rivals appeared to be edging closer to a new prisoner exchange.

The White House has urged Russia to accept its offer

of a deal for the release of Griner and former US Marine Paul Whelan, who was sentenced to 16 years in prison on espionage charges.

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Friday said Moscow was willing to discuss the matter.

"We are ready to discuss this subject, but only within the framework of the (communication) channel established by presidents Putin and Biden," Lavrov told a press conference on a visit to Cambodia.—AFP



Griner was sentenced to nine years in a Russian jail on drug charges. **PHOTO: POOL/AFP**

Israel strikes kill top Gaza militant, triggering rocket barrage

ISRAEL pounded Gaza with air strikes on Saturday and a Palestinian militant group retaliated with a barrage of rocket fire, in the territory's worst escalation of violence since a war last year.

Health authorities in the enclave controlled by Hamas

Islamists said 10 people have been killed by Israel's bombardment, including a five-year-old girl, with 79 others injured. Israel's army estimated that its operation has killed 15 militants.

Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid said the Jewish state was

forced to launch a "pre-emptive counter-terror operation against an immediate threat" posed by the Islamic Jihad group, following days of tensions along the Gaza border. Israel and Islamic Jihad have both confirmed the killing of a top leader with the militant group, Taysir al-Jabari, in a Friday strike on a building in the west of Gaza city.

Islamic Jihad said the initial Israeli bombardment amounted to a "declaration of war", before it unleashed a flurry of more than 100 rockets towards Israel.

The rocket fire and Israeli strikes continued overnight, risking a repeat of an 11-day conflict in May 2021 that devastated Gaza and forced countless Israelis to rush to bomb shelters.—AFP



Israeli tanks deploy along the Gaza border. **PHOTO: AFP**

1968 plane wreckage found on Swiss glacier

WRECKAGE from a plane that crashed in the Swiss Alps in 1968 has been discovered on a glacier more than 54 years on, police said Friday.

The pieces emerged on the Aletsch Glacier in the south-

western Wallis canton, near the Jungfrau and Monch mountain peaks.

Wallis police said the wreckage was discovered on Thursday.

"Investigations have deter-

mined that the parts were from the wreckage of a Piper Cherokee, registration HB-OYL, which crashed at this location on 30 June 1968. Recovery work will be undertaken as soon as possible," police said.—AFP

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Hiroshima marks 77th anniv. of atomic bombing amid nuclear threat
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SPORT

Myanmar Wushu Team wins another gold, silver medals in 20th ASEAN University Games

THE 20th ASEAN University Games continued yesterday in Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand with the Myanmar Wushu Team winning one gold and one silver.

Myanmar's Ma Aye Thitsa Myint won one gold medal and Ma Myat Noe Eain won one silver medal in the women's wushu event held at the Sunee Tower yesterday morning.

In the women's wushu event 1,

a Mandala University's student, Ma Myat Noe Eain won the second silver medal with a score of 9.53.

In the women's wushu event 2, a Dagon University's student Ma Aye Thitsa Myint won the first gold medal with a score of 9.69.

Three athletes represented Myanmar Wushu Sports Team, and competed in six competitions in four

Wushu sports events and won two golds, two silvers, and one bronzes.

In the 20th ASEAN University Games, the Myanmar sports team participated in football, Sepak Takraw, archery and wushu events and have won two golds, two silvers and two bronzes. — MNA



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.

Arsenal mentality pleases Arteta in opening night win at Palace

MIKEL Arteta praised Arsenal's ability to ride out a second-half onslaught from Crystal Palace to make the perfect start to the Premier League season with a 2-0 win at Selhurst Park on Friday.

On the ground where the Gunners lost 3-0 in April to spark a late season collapse that cost them a place in the Champions League, Arteta's men held out

after Gabriel Martinelli's header gave them a deserved half-time lead. Marc Guehi's own goal late on then sealed the three points after Odsonne Edouard and Eberechi Eze had missed big chances for Palace.

"The win is the most important thing. To win the first match it builds confidence, momentum and then we can discuss the

things we have to improve," said Arteta.

"To win here you need to suffer. We've done it and that is part of the mentality we want to build."

Arsenal were beaten 2-0 at Brentford on the opening night of last year's season, which triggered their worst start to a league campaign for 67 years.

But they backed up their blistering pre-season form and rewarded the faith placed in Arteta with over £100 million (\$120 million) to spend in the transfer market.

Gabriel Jesus' arrival to fill the need for a centre-forward has been Arsenal's marquee signing of the summer and the Brazilian nearly marked his debut in style after just four minutes.

Jesus slalomed through the centre of the Palace defence and when his initial effort was blocked, Martinelli should have done better than slot the rebound wide of the target.—AFP



Gabriel Martinelli scored the opening goal of the Premier League season in Arsenal's 2-0 win at Crystal Palace. **PHOTO: AFP**

Badosa shuts down Gauff to reach WTA San Jose semi-finals



Spain's Paula Badosa gestures to the crowd after beating Coco Gauff in the quarter-finals of the WTA hardcourt tournament in San Jose, California. **PHOTO: AFP**

SECOND-SEEDED Spaniard Paula Badosa swept into the semi-finals of the WTA hardcourt tournament in San Jose on Friday with a 7-6 (7/4), 6-2 victory over rising US star Coco Gauff. Badosa, ranked fourth in the world, twice recovered from a break down in the opening set as she booked a final-four showdown with seventh-seeded Daria Kasatkina, a 4-6, 7-5, 6-0 winner over fourth-seeded

Aryna Sabalenka. Gauff, the 18-year-old who reached her maiden Grand Slam final at the French Open this year, was coming off a lively victory over four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka on Thursday night.

The sixth-seeded American appeared to be riding the momentum from that win as she emerged from an exchange of three breaks of serve with a 3-2 lead in the opening set on the way to a 5-3 advantage.—AFP