

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits Russian Science Academy in Ulan-Ude, Siberia Branch of Mongo, Tibet and Buddhist Studies Institute, Cancer Ward in Nuclear Medicine Centre and Locomotive Workshop

THE Myanmar high-level delegation led by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing accompanied by Mr Aleksey Sambuyevich Tsydenov, the Head of State of the Government of the Republic of Buryatia and members visited yesterday morning the Russian Science Academy in Ulan-Ude, the Cancer Ward in the Nuclear Medicine Centre and the Locomotive Workshop.

First, State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his delegation members arrived at the Soviet Square in Ulan-Ude. They were welcomed by the Head of the Buryatia State Government. They posed for a group photo in front of the Statue of Mr Lenin, the historic national leader of the Soviet Union.

Then, the delegation proceeded to the Russian Science Academy in Ulan-Ude, the Siberia Branch of Mongo, Tibet and Buddhist Studies Institute where they were welcomed by Mr Bazarov Bois Vandovich, the director of the Academy, and



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing pays observation tours at the locomotive workshop in Ulan-Ude on 10 September 2022.

the responsible officials. Next, the delegation members were conducted round the Academy Cam-

pus and briefed on the ancient literature, culture and arts, the paintings, the Tipitaka Buddhist

Canonical Manuscripts written in the Tibet Language, the ancient astrological texts, the documents

recording the alterations and derivations of the Tibet and

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Those wishing to enter the legal fold can contact respective townships' Red Cross Society, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, Social Welfare Office and social welfare organizations authorized by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement in addition to reception centres in border areas, Tatmadaw units and police stations

THE Information Team of the State Administration Council has released statements inviting CDM staff, students and youths, who are in border areas and ethnic armed groups, they can contact the nearest reception centres in border areas, Tatmadaw units and police stations if they want to enter the legal fold and the government will guarantee their lives following the rules and regulations.

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. Meanwhile, 3,156 education workers, who were absent from their duties, another 1,009 people, who want to withdraw the cases that were opened against them, and 231 PDF members have contacted and returned to the legal fold. Then, they were given back to their parents systematically and the numbers of people who enter the legal fold and those who wish to are rising. Therefore, the government is making efforts to accept more numbers of those people.

The government opens reception centres in bor-

der areas for those who would like to return to the legal fold. Moreover, those wishing to return home can contact respective townships' Red Cross Society, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, Social Welfare Office and social welfare organizations authorized by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. It is guaranteed that they will be able to lead their daily lives peacefully.

*Information Team
State Administration Council*

Myanmar traditional lanterns reaching Mandalay market for Thadingyut Festival 2022

MYANMAR traditional lanterns and related products can be found in the Mandalay market with a small price hike compared to the previous year, said U Myint Htwe, a lantern manufacturer.

"We made lanterns throughout our past generations and sold them at wholesale prices. We sold them at as low prices as possible so that buyers do not need much capital. We also created a new lantern design with lotus bud drawing this year. We produce a lot of original lanterns only near the full moon day of the Thadingyut Festival. Many orders came in. We have done toy lanterns such as cars, ships

and animals in advance. Even though the price of raw materials has gone up, lantern prices just slightly increase than the last year," he continued.

In the production of lanterns, over 12 types of lantern toys that children loved such as aeroplane, motorcars, ships and animals were made with glass papers and oil papers imported from China. The price ranges from K500 and up to tens of thousands owing to the size and design of a lantern.

"For it is a seasonal product, we have to make lanterns in Tawthalin (before Thadingyut) and distribute them to local re-

tailers. Retail prices and wholesale prices are different. If the aeroplane lantern's wholesale price is K2,000, the retail price can go up to K2,500-3,000. Retail prices can be determined depending on the type of lanterns," he elaborated.

Those seasonal products for the Thadingyut Festival are conveyed and sold all over Myanmar. It is one of the Myanmar handicraft arts and can be depicted with glass papers, oil papers and Cephalostachyum bamboo. It is also a Myanmar tradition of Thadingyut month. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)/GNLM



Artisans are seen making Myanmar traditional lanterns in a variety of designs. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG

COVID-19 vaccine drive continues in various states, regions



A local from Danubyu Township in Ayeyawady Region gets COVID-19 vaccine shot yesterday.

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 students above 12, 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 8,185 people from twenty-six townships in Ayeyawady Region, 2,026 people from three townships in Rakhine and Chin states, and 5,404 from seven districts in Mandalay Region, respectively.

Similarly on that day, healthcare officials gave the vaccines to 2,354 students from twenty-six townships in Ayeyawady Region, 1,853 students from three townships in Rakhine and Chin states and 638 students from seven districts in Mandalay Region.

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

262 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 10 September, total figure rises to 616,663

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **616,663** after **262** new cases—**19** imported and **243** local transmission—were reported on 10 September 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **594,223** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll still stands at **19,442** without more casualties. —MNA

Committing electoral fraud and using unscrupulous ways to fix the election will tarnish the image of the State and delay the democratic process of the country

THE election is a national duty linked to the prestige of the State. Only when the election is free and fair, will multiparty democracy desired by the people flourish and only then will the nation have higher prestige in political history and among the international community. Committing electoral fraud and using unscrupulous ways to fix the election will tarnish the image of the State and delay the democratic process of the country. The voting fraud in the 2020 multiparty democracy general election tarnished the image of the State's efforts to achieve a democratic culture.

(The excerpt from the speech delivered by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on the Occasion of the Eighteen Month of the Assumption of State Duties by the State Administration Council on 1 August 2022)

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets Head of Government of Republic of Buryatia

CHAIRMAN of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing held talks with Head of Government of the Republic of Buryatia Mr Aleksey Sambuyevich Tsydenov at the Tengeri Hall of Mergen Bator Hotel in Ulan-Ude on 9 September evening.

It was attended by Union ministers, senior military officers, officials of the Republic of Buryatia and business persons.

They exchanged views on cooperation works in the health sector, exchangeable conditions between the hospitals, natural resources exploration techniques, electric locomotives, diesel locomotives, steam-fired locomotives and train coach production processes, engine driving techniques for the development of the rail transport sector, cooperation works in rail-related matters and proper collaboration in various sectors

in addition to the capability to diagnose the diseases using nuclear technology and treat the disease with the most modern technologies.

After the meeting, the Senior General and Head of Government of the Republic of Buryatia greeted cordially and took documentary photos.

While enjoying dinner hosted by the Head of Government of the Republic of Buryatia, famous artistes of Buryatia performed their traditional songs and dances.

After the dinner, the Senior General and the Head of Government of the Republic of Buryatia exchanged commemorative gifts, and the Senior General gave cash prizes to the traditional dance troupes.

— MNA

The Senior General presents the gift of Myanmar to the Head of Government of the Republic of Buryatia.



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visits Russian Science Academy in Ulan-Ude, Siberia Branch of Mongo, Tibet and Buddhist Studies Institute, Cancer Ward in Nuclear Medicine Centre and Locomotive Workshop

FROM PAGE-1

Mongo Languages throughout the ages and other ancient Parabaiks inclusive of the palm leaf manuscripts from Myanmar.

The explanations were listened to with great interest by SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, who not just listened but raised questions. Afterwards, he put

his signature on the guest books, and then, the delegation members posed for a group photo.

Next, the SAC Chairman Prime Minister and the delegation members proceeded to the Cancer Ward in the Nuclear Medicine Centre where they were welcomed by Ms Ludupova Evgenya, the Health Minister of the State Government of the

Republic of Buryatia and the responsible officials, who explained the process of diagnosing through the use of atomic ray and providing of medical treatment as well as the capacity of the medical apparatuses. The SAC Chairman Prime Minister shot questions on matters related to the potential cooperation in the health sector.

Afterwards, SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and the delegation members proceeded to the locomotive workshop in Ulan-Ude where they were conducted round the locomotive workshop and briefed by Mr Olovyannikov Aleksei, the Minister of Transport of the State Government of the Republic of

Buryatia, on production, repair and maintenance of the variegated types of the locomotives being done at the workshop as well as the capacity of the locomotives and fixing of the engines and accessories. The SAC Chairman Prime Minister raised questions, and had a group photo taken in front of the workshop, it is learnt.—MNA

Community Centre is a place of public interest where people can seek help and service is provided through cooperation: SAC member



SAC Member Mahn Nyein Maung sprinkles scented water onto the Mingala pillar at the ground-breaking ceremony for the construction of a community centre in Pantanaw Township.

A community Centre is a place of public interest, where people can seek help and service is provided

through cooperation. Additionally, this is also a place where people can learn and exchange

knowledge and seek necessary information for discussions on matters of regional interest, said

Mahn Nyein Maung, a member of the State Administration Council.

He mentioned above at a ceremony held at Plot 1 of Myokwetthit Ward in Pantanaw Township, Ayeyawady Region yesterday to break the ground for the construction of a community centre.

Addressing those attending the ground-breaking ceremony, Mahn Nyein Maung explained how effort is being exerted for the construction of the community centre in order that the centre can produce the human resources that will bring benefit to the region.

The community centre will include a public library, a meeting room, a training hall, a reading room for the children and a fitness centre. He went on to say that the administration institutions, the departments concerned and the local people

are required to exert concerted effort to ensure the emergence of a quality community centre, to sustain and further develop the centre. Afterwards, he expressed his appreciation to all who have rendered their part to enable the construction of the community centre, said Mahn Nyein Maung, a member of SAC.

At the ground-breaking ceremony, State Administration Council Member Mahn Nyein Maung, Regional Chief Minister U Tin Maung Win, South-West Command Commander Maj-Gen Aung Aung, Regional Government members and the responsible personnel drove the wedge at the designated places respectively at the prescribed time. Then, they all splashed the scented water. Afterwards, the person in charge of the company which will construct the community centre explained their plan and the work progress. — MNA

MoTC Union Minister inspects Dala, Dagon Port shipyards in Yangon Region

UNION Minister for Transport and Communications Admiral Tin Aung San visited Dala and Dagon Port shipyards yesterday and inspected the operations.

The Union minister and officials arrived at the Dala Shipyard in the morning.

In the meeting hall of the shipyard, the engineer-in-chief explained the preparation of vessels, conditions of long-standing smelter workshop in Dala Shipyard that should be dismantled, conditions of blacksmith workshop, and decommissioning of coal warehouses in line with procedures, completion of roof of Dala Shipyard's ancient building (diesel plant) and the paint, improvement of water flow around the dock and status of sewer repairs and sanitation.

Next, the Union minister urged officials to ensure that the passageways of the factory in Dala Shipyard, workshops,

and circuits around the dock are always clean and tidy and to carry out regular maintenance and improve the current situation.

The Union minister also inspected the workflow.

Then, the Union minister and party arrived at the Department of Marine Administration on Theinphyu Street and met with the employees in the meeting hall of the DMA.

During the meeting, the Union minister said that the employees of the department should follow the law, rules and regulations according to their respective sectors, work hand in hand in the implementation of the tasks successfully, ensure transparency at all levels in operations, hold regular employee rallies and events, and follow COVID-19 precaution measures regarding the health of the employees, and instructed them to take strict actions according to



MoTC Union Minister Admiral Tin Aung San inspects the liquid oxygen plant in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township.

the level of enforcement as per the SOPs set by the Ministry of Health.

Afterwards, the Union minister and party in the afternoon arrived at the Dagon Seikkan shipyard, the shipyard

factories, and workshops and in Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township and inspected the vessels being prepared for loading, Oxygen production and distribution of the newly built liquid oxygen plant. He also toured and in-

spected the safety measures.

The Union minister exhorted responsible personnel to build and repair as per the Yard Standard and to make efforts to stand as an economically cost-effective shipyard. — MNA

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MoHT Union Minister attends 16th ITE HCMC 2022, high-level forum in Viet Nam

THE Ministry of Hotels and Tourism of Myanmar participates in activities of international and regional countries to improve the tourism industry and market status actively and also joins the international travel expo to promote the image of the country and tourist destinations.

MoHT Union Minister Dr Htay Aung attended the 16th International Travel Expo Ho Chi Minh City (ITE HCMC 2022) and high-level forum, which took place from 8 to 10 September.

The ITE HCMC 2022 was conducted under the title of “Growth Forward Together” with the high-level tourism forum.

The Union minister attended the event of promoting and exploring the potential of “Bleisure” Travel in Ho Chi Minh City and Viet Nam during the COVID-19 outbreak on 7 September at noon.

The government-private representatives discussed Bleisure Travel which means running businesses during the travel to save time and expenditure and develop the new styles for tourism in the COVID-19 period,

supportive effects of culture, natural resources and innovative living styles, quality services in accommodation sectors during the trip, streamlined and safe trips for passengers provided by airports and air transport industry and cooperation work of hotels, tourism industry and aviation industry to meet the estimated 1.7 million economy-relaxation tourists in Ho Chi Minh City and Viet Nam in 2025.

Then, the officials studied the housing project drafting processes that support the development of Bleisure Travel of Viet Nam.

The Union minister also attended the dinner at GEM Centre in Ho Chi Minh hosted by Vietnamese officials for tourism ministers, superior officials and customers of inbound and outbound trips.

During the dinner party, Chairman of the People’s Committee of Ho Chi Minh City Mr Phan Mai made an opening speech and the artistes entertained the history of Viet Nam and traditional dances.

On the morning of 8 September, the Union minister attended



MoHT Union Minister Dr Htay Aung takes the documentary group photo at the event.

the opening ceremony of the 16th ITE HCMC 2022 at the Saigon Exhibition and Convention Centre (SECC).

Then, the high-level tourism forum ‘Recovery and Development Solutions for Sustainable International Tourism’ was held.

At the forum, the officials shared their efforts for the recovery of the tourism industry during the Covid-19 pandemic

and better the tourism industry with meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions.

Then, the Union minister visited the booths of the Myanmar tourism marketing association at the expo.

At noon, the Union minister received Cambodian Tourism Minister Dr Thong Khon at Renaissance Hotel in Viet Nam.

They openly discussed the FAM Trip between Cambodia

and Myanmar, the promotion of bilateral relations in tourism and the launching of a travel booth for tourist destinations of two countries at the ITB Berlin travel expo to be held in Germany in March 2023.

There were 260 travel booths from 25 countries at the 16th International Travel Expo Ho Chi Minh City (ITE HCMC 2022) and a high-level forum. — MNA

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, decoration accessories, mobile parts, car parts and vehicles confiscated

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

An on-duty inspection team under the instructions of the Customs Department conducted inspections at the Yangon International Airport Cargo Warehouse on 6 September.

Officials captured K473,775,000 worth of auto parts and phone accessories that were different from the Import Declaration (ID). The action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

On 9 September, an inspection team made inspections and seized a total of 1.4572 tonnes of illegal raw teak floors worth K961,752 from two vehicles (approximately K51 million) in West Malit village in Hlegu township. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

Afterwards, on 10 September, an on-duty team con-



Seized illegal items at the warehouse of Yangon International Airport.

ducted inspections under the Kayin State Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force. They confiscated K1,650,000 worth of duty-free 55 rolls of floor linoleum that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) at the Kawkareik (Tadakyoe) Combined Checkpoint. The action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

Similarly, a total of 5.8198

tonnes of illegal timbers including teak worth K1,582,912 were captured in the Binedar forest reserve in Kyauktaga township of Bago district.

Therefore, seven arrests (approximately K528,969,664) were made on 6, 9 and 10 September, according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee. — MNA

Public Notice

1. The Anti-Corruption Commission has established corruption prevention units within ministries to effectively curb corruption.
2. The ACC used SMS on the mobile phone to ask the public who seek services at an office of the department of the relevant ministries via Short Code No “1111” for feedbacks, including the Public Feedback Programme-PFP.
3. According to the PFP, the right replies of the citizens via Short Code No “1111” will provide the quality of services of each department and the requirements for corruption prevention to be fixed.
4. Therefore, the public should make a reply to the questions of the ACC and corruption prevention units of the ministries via SMS at Short Code No “1111” and such doing is a supportive measure for PFP, and the people are urged to cooperate in the operations.

Anti-Corruption Commission

Answer “1111” to fight against corruption

Answer “1111” to improve services

Let’s work together to eliminate corruption towards prosperity

CURRENT AFFAIRS



Over 2,800 pilgrims, 74 foreign tourists visit Kyaiktiyo Pagoda in August

A total of 2,879 local devotees and 74 international pilgrims visited the renowned Kyaiktiyo Pagoda in Mon State in August, according to the pagoda board of trustees.

The Buddha Pujaniya festival is annually held from the full moon day of Thadingyut to the full moon day of Kason. There are up to three million pilgrims in the

regular season.

“Pilgrimage is low. Not many travellers are coming to visit here due to travel hardship, security and Covid-19. Transport costs and fuel prices are also expensive. Some could not open their shops until now,” vendor Ma Kay Thi Lwin told the Global New Light of Myanmar.

Hotels and restaurants are opened and mountain vehicles are also arranged in a rotation system for the convenience of visitors. There are 6,908 local visitors and 34 foreign tourists in June and 7,480 locals and 97 foreigners in July respectively, according to the pagoda board of trustees. — TWA/GNLM

The photo shows the Kyaiktiyo Pagoda with pilgrims.

One dead, two injured in two trucks accident

A driver was killed when two trucks collided with one another and slammed into two houses in Phayagyi Township of Bago Region on 9 September.

The incident took place near the 68/4 milepost of the old Yangon-Mandalay Expressway at 11

pm on that day.

One man was killed and two were wounded in the accident. The respective township social welfare teams took the dead and injured persons to the Bago General Hospital for proper medical treatment. — TWA/GNLM



The scene of the accident.

Broken rice prices on the rise in high demand



Variegated types of rice in the market.

THE broken rice prices are on the rise in the Yangon rice market recently.

The export quality of broken rice is priced at K37,000-38,000 per bag and K35,000-36,000 per small bag of 2-3-4 broken rice, said Ko Win Oo, a rice trader, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

The price of unfinished rice is still on the rise. The 90-day rice is K49,000-50,000 per bag and K42,000-43,000 per bag of double cropping rice.

Depending on the rice quality, it produces 20 to 28

bags of 108 pounds and the remaining weights are the broken rice and husk. The numbers of broken rice are lower than the number of rice bags. Therefore, there is a low production rate of broken rice and so the price of broken rice raises when the demand is high. Normally, the rice prices depend on the broken rice content.

The broken rice content in rice bags becomes lower than before, said Ma Nilar Oo, who purchases rice to sell at her home retail shop.

The production costs of

chicken feed and alcohol are also high as the broken rice prices are on the rise. The prices of eggs also rise, said the chicken farmers.

It produces one 110 pounds rice bag and about 28 broken rice bags (3,080 pounds) per 100 baskets of rice and the broken rice fetches K1.1 million in minimum, the rice merchants shared their opinions.

Between 13 and 19 August, the country exported 2,320 tonnes of broken rice via the sea route earning \$0.808 million. — TWA/GNLM

10 illegal Bengalis arrested in Mindon Township

THE village administrator of Kyatwa village reported the arrival of 10 illegal Bengalis in Kyatwa village about 19 miles south of Mindon Township of Magway Region to the Myaukpyin Police Station at 4:30 pm on 6 September.

According to the investigation, they are 10

males aged 13-19 from Minbya, Kyauktaw, MraukU and Buthidaung townships of Rakhine State.

A combined team carried out investigations and found out there are about five still to be arrested. The suspects were charged under the Immigration Act. — TWA/GNLM

Ten illegal arrestees are pictured in Mindon Township.



LOCAL BUSINESS

Sunflower oil and peanut oil stand at identical retail prices

NORMALLY, peanut oil has the highest price in the edible oil market, while sesame oil and sunflower oil are usually priced roughly at K2,000-3,000 less than peanut oil per viss.

However, the price of peanut oil and sunflower oil are sold at the same price in the Yangon retail market, said Ko Hla Aung, who sells rice and peanut oil in Lanmadaw Township.

In the market, well-known brands of peanut oil retail at K17,500 per viss, and some brands of sunflower oil are also selling at this price.

Even a low-priced brand of sunflower oil costs K14,400 per viss and it is seen that the quantity sold is limited at this price.

In the edible oil market, only sunflower oil can be seen. Sunflower oil is sold under different brands at different prices.

In the middle of 2022, the

retail price of well-known brand peanut oil was K8,500 per viss, and in about three months, the price has tripled to around K17,000.

The retail price of sunflower oil has risen in the retail market, and the retail price of peanut oil may also rise in days, said a peanut oil retailer.

As the price of peanuts increases, the price of peanut oil increases. There are different selling prices of peanut oil depending on the quality and price of the peanut.

The wholesale prices of edible oil in the Mandalay market are K5,500-5,800 per viss of S 1 peanut oil, K13,500-14,500 per viss of special peanut oil with soybeans costing K3,200.

On a national scale, in the 2022/2023 financial year, one million acres of sunflower plantations will produce an average



Different brands of edible oil bottles are seen at the shopping centre.

of around one hundred million visses of sunflower oil (200,000 tonnes), thus there is potential to adequately meet the domestic consumption oil demand, U San Aung, who is studying the prices of cooking oil, told the Global

New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

In the domestic edible oil market, peanut oil, sesame oil and domestically produced sunflower oil have entered the palm oil market.

Local oil buyer Ko Min Min

Tun told the GNLM that this year, various brands of sunflower oil from abroad have taken their place in the domestic oil market, replacing domestically produced sunflower oil. — TWA/GNLM

Price fluctuation in black gram persists



The prices of black grams remain high although the price changes are unstable.

THE prices of black grams remain high although the price changes are unstable, according to the Myanmar beans and pulses market. Last August, black gram prices spiked at K2.1 million per tonne in the local beans market. Although the black gram prices rotate around K2 million per tonne starting from the first week of September, the price stands at K2,010,000 per tonne at present.

Price fluctuation in the local black gram market is based on the daily currency exchange rate. The export, supply and demand of black gram are steady currently as stated by the Ayeya Trade Centre of the Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization.

In addition, much rain hampered the yield of black grams this season in India, the main purchaser from Myanmar. New black grams are entering the market on daily basis. The black gram price is on the downside in

the Indian market.

Being a country with a great requirement for beans, India will continue buying Myanmar's black grams and pigeon peas (red gram). The prices depend on the current foreign currency exchange rates in addition to the policies of foreign purchaser countries. Therefore, the price of black grams may rise again if foreign currency exchange rates surge, stated the Ayeya Trade Centre.

India confirmed to buy 0.25 million tonnes of black grams and 0.1 million tonnes of pigeon peas annually from the 2021-2022FY to the 2025-2026FY as per the MOU with Myanmar. Price fluctuation will be monitored since it can change according to India's demand, increases in fuel prices and foreign currency exchange rates.

In September 2021, bean prices soared due to the forex record high at K3,000 per dollar.

Black gram price also recorded K2 million per tonne in the local market. So, the current price hit the record high year on year.

Myanmar imported 556,020.728 tonnes of beans and pulses worth US\$448.380 million via the maritime route and 142,173.547 tonnes worth \$96.213 million via land borders, totalling 698,194.275 tonnes worth \$544.593 million at present.

Myanmar also imported 1,242,775.231 tonnes of beans and pulses worth \$966.407 million via sea route and 786,920.651 tonnes worth \$604.3 million through border trade posts in the previous year, totalling 2,029,695.882 tonnes worth \$1570.707 million.

Myanmar produce around 0.4 million tonnes of black grams and 0.05 million tonnes of pigeon peas (red gram) annually.

Myanmar Pulses, Beans, Maize and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association (MP-BMSMA) stated that the black gram imported to India was mainly cultivated in Myanmar and others such as pigeon peas (red gram), mung bean and peas were also grown in Africa and Australia. — NN/GNLM

3,300 companies struck off register in past 8 months due to AR absence: DICA

A total of 3,300 companies have been struck off the register in the past eight months as they fail to submit annual returns (AR) on the online registry system, MyCO, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

This year, 400 companies each in January, February and March, 300 in April and 500 in May, 400 each in June and July and 55 in August did not file annual returns on MyCO respectively, according to DICA.

The DICA has notified any registered company which fails to file its AR on MyCO is to be suspended, under 430 (F) of Myanmar Companies Law, according to the DICA's notification.

The registration and re-registration of companies on the MyCO website commenced on 1 August 2018, in keeping with the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

All registered companies need to file AR on the MyCO registry system within two months of incorporation, and at least once every year (not later than one month after the anniversary of the incorporation), according to Section 97 of the law.

According to Section 266 (A) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public companies must submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5) simultaneously.

All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within 28 days of the financial year ending, as per Section 53 (A-1) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

As per DICA's report, thousands of companies were suspended for failing to submit AR forms before the due date. Newly established companies are required to submit ARs within two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns.

The DICA has notified that any company which fails to submit its AR within 13 months will be notified of its suspension (I-9A). If it fails to submit the AR within 28 days of receiving the notice, the system will show the company's status as suspended. Companies can restore their status only after shelling out a fine of K50,000 for the AR fee, K100,000 for restoration of the company on the Register, and K100,000 for late filing of documents, totalling K250,000.

If a company fails to restore its status within six months of suspension, the registrar will strike its name off the register, according to the DICA notice. — NN/GNLM

OPINION

ARTICLE BOOKRACK

Continue preservation of traditional events in the month of Tawthalin

IN MYANMAR, people are friendly with natural water areas such as lakes, rivers and creeks where they swim or operate their livelihoods of fishing. Naturally, Tawthalin, the month of the Myanmar calendar, shows the calm of the water surface in rivers and creeks due to fine weather.

Since time in the monarchical era, the traditional boat races have been organized in rivers and creeks in proper nature so as to select outstanding rowers to be royal naval men. Hence, Myanmar lads showed off their brilliant skills in the boat races and if they can

be selected as royal naval men, their future will be satisfactory.

Myanmar's forefathers left a good legacy of holding the regatta festival. They skillfully utilized the waterways for transport and sports to enhance personal capacity. They knew that only then, will their high capacity in the water utilization process be useful in defending the State and engaging in livelihoods.

Of them, swimming and rowing skills are high sports capabilities for Myanmar citizens. Without forgetting the nature of Myanmar which grows up in the natural environment endowed with traditional and conventional farming such as agriculture and livestock sectors, Myanmar people should sustain their skills and hand them down to new generations.

Taking an advantage of the fine weather in Tawthalin, the month of the Myanmar calendar, it is necessary to start transporting travellers along waterways and operate livelihoods based on water sources, while selecting the best rowers to be able to compete in international rowing contests so as to bring honour to the State.

Truly, sports activities based on waterways can contribute much to the skill enhancement of athletes who join international competitions to secure medals. So far, Myanmar rowers and swimmers have bagged gold, silver and bronze medals in SEAP Games, Southeast Asian Games, Asian Games as well as invitational cups thanks to the encouragement of the government.

Truly, sports activities based on waterways can contribute much to the skill enhancement of athletes who join international competitions to secure medals. So far, Myanmar rowers and swimmers have bagged gold, silver and bronze medals in SEAP Games, Southeast Asian Games, Asian Games as well as invitational cups thanks to the encouragement of the government.

As such, now is the time to launch sports training as part of preparations before competition in the contests. Those Myanmar athletes need to emphasize the improvement of their skills, stamina and sporting spirit in order to ease the difficulties in training as well as in competitions. Whatever it may be, nobody should forget victories based on the traditional occurrences and events which started in the month of Tawthalin and they should preserve these traditions of Myanmar for long-term existence to be able to hand them over to new generations.

(CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY)

Ceremonial Barges and Boats

1. Pyi Ciyi Mun
2. Karaweik
3. Nawara
4. Thone Lu Pu Zaw
5. Lin Zin Ka Taw
6. Pa Thone
7. Pyi Kone
8. Thara Bu
9. Lawka Beik Hman
10. Dwa Laung
11. Thuwa
12. Than Thu Mara
13. Manoke Thiha
14. Naga Deva
15. Thatkadan
16. Lwan Kyin
17. Tharaka
18. E Kin
19. Thara Beik Hman
20. Kama Kaw
21. Thinka Net

22. Hlaw Ka Taw Gyi
23. Ginga Zeya Hlaw
24. Kaw-ka Nuda
25. Thu Yaung
26. Keinnari
27. Keinnara
28. Pyinsa Yupa
29. Thatta Yupa
30. Nawa Yupa
31. Dattha Yupa
32. Dwa Dattha Yupa
33. Thone Lu Tauk Pa
34. Tala Hein
35. Shwe Tone
36. Shwe Nan Sin

War Boats

1. Yan Naing Hlaw Ka
2. Phone Taw Naing
3. Pyi Lone Ya Taw
4. Thura Nga Gyin
5. Set Na Ya Shwe
6. Min Taya Set Kyi
7. Pegu Nainggan
8. Sit Hlyin Aung

9. Thu Ye Tu lut
10. Ye Hlyant Kyaw Taw
11. Ye Mun Taung
12. Pyi Lone Naing
13. In Byaw
14. In Ma
15. Taungoo In Ma
16. Zimme In Ma
17. Pyay In Ma Taw
18. Bye Ta Yaw
19. Tha Phyu Hlaw Ka
20. Thu Ye Kyaw
21. Sit Hlyin In Ma

22. Kyaw Khaung
23. Kaung Myit Sit
24. Ye Sit
25. Marabin Hlaw Ka
26. Pyi Lone Yu
27. Thu Ye Pala Hwet
28. Zala Kha Pin
29. Aza Lone
30. Phone Taw Nainggan

Racing Boats

1. Let Thin
2. Let Ywe

3. Pyi Lone Ant
4. Ywe Kyi
5. Pyi Lone Kyaw
6. Pwe Taing Kyaw
7. Pwe Lone Tin
8. Twe Taing Aung
9. Pwe Taing Aung
10. Myit Taing Naing
11. Twe Taing Win
12. Shwe Tanga
13. In Pyaw
14. Tha Lwin Pyu
15. Kyaw

16. Htwet Taing Ya
17. Pyaing Taing Ya
18. Lu Lin Kyaw
19. Kat Tu
20. Ku Root
21. Thanpan
22. Lone Pyi
23. Shwe Laung
24. Pyi Lone Ya.

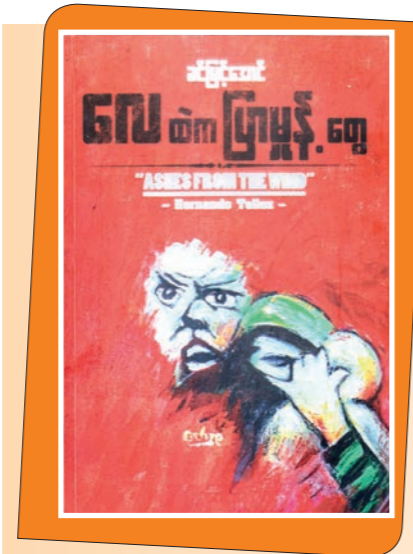
The last Royal Regatta held by the last Myanmar King was recorded by one Myanmar Chronicle "Konbaung Set Maha Yazawun Taw Gyi" (Royal Chronicle of Konbaung Dynasty) as follows: -

"On the 11th Waxing of Tawthalin, nobles and high officials came out to the shore of the Ayeyawady on the western direction of the Golden Capital to make arrangements for the celebration of the annual boat festival. Mingyi Min Htin Maha Sithu, Deputy Minister and Lord of Wet Ma Sut Town took the charge of preparation for the races. The first boat at the front had no match to compete with. So, it was kept aside. Then two pairs turned up - Let Ywe Gyi and Let Thit Hlaw Ka Taw Gyi in one pair; and Pyi Lone Ant and Ywe Gyi in another pair. They ran the race. Later the following boats came in sequence in the racing line - 12 Hlaw Ka Taw Gyi Boats; 22 Hlaw Ka Taw boats such as Paleik Shwe Khe, Asey Khan Taung Lone, Pwe Taing Kyaw, Htwet Taing Ya; 28 rowing boats such as Shwe Tone, Min San, Taung Lone Hmaing, Shwe Laung Gyi, Yin Pone, Mingala Yan Hnin, Kho Taung Shwe Khe; 29 Laung Taw boats such as Thone Lu Tauk Pa, Thone Lu Pu Zaw, etc; 45 war boats belonging to royal gunnery; various Hlaw Ka Taw boats belonging to the nobles and Ministers and High Officials ... On the 13th waxing moon, 22 ships such as Setkya Yin Pyan, the sea voyager, Yatana Yin Thar, Yatana Yin Pyan, and Setkya Yan Hlwin the riverine ships competed. Finally, the two rowing boats Kho Taung Shwe Khe and Mingala Yan Hnin had another round of the race, because objections were raised when Mingala Yan Hnin got defeated in the first race held the previous day. The royal permit was obtained.

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Tawthalin — Myanmar Traditional Regatta

By Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja, Sithu Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt



Book Title - Ashes from the Wind by Hernando Tellez

Translator - Khin Myint Aung

Printing House - AZ

Publishing Date - December 2019 (1st Edition)

Price - K3,500

Ashes from the Wind by Hernando Tellez

I would like to introduce for this week a book to the readers who love to read international novels. This translated novel was published by the daughter of the translator to mark her father's 80th Anniversary Birthday. To be exact, this book is not a novel; this is a book of collected short stories the translated versions of which have already been published in magazines and journals. The translator is also a writer who draws the paintings, too. According to the foreword by Phyo Htein, a close friend of her father, who is a writer-cum-poet, it seems that the cover painting should have been illustrated by her father himself although the name of the illustrator is not mentioned

in the imprint of the translated book published. This book is the second work of the translator; the first work is about a Russian novel depicting anti-war sentiment.

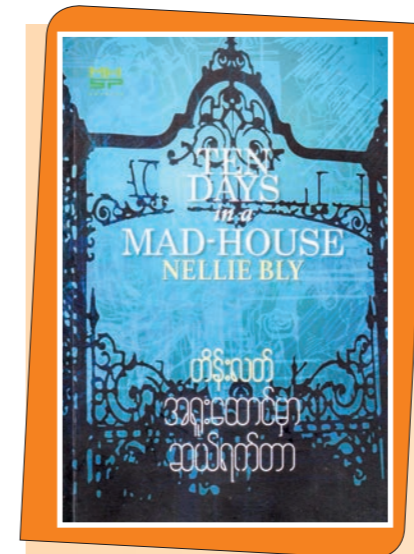
The book under review is a collection of 32 short stories. 'Kyunma Sar Phat Chin Dei' is one among them, depicting the harsh life of a girl called Duan Yuan, who was given a sentence with rigorous labour. She was made to do tough tasks as a blacksmith in a village. Matter-of-factly, she was punished for no obvious reason. This event took place in 1976 when the Gang of Four reigned in China. Not only was the girl given the punishment but also her parents were imprisoned for allegedly

participating in paving the path to capitalism. Duan Yuan had to live together with her grandma, having to do odd jobs and leading a difficult life. Amidst her woes, she kept an ardent desire to read. The title of the book is, "I want to read". This novel gives a message that a country where most people do not read will be a country with the blind.

Another short story that appeals to me is, "Ma Na Ge", which depicts the mentality of a statue carved in honour of a late hero of the ancient period. The statue is erected in a park in the town. People arriving at the park paid respect to the statue. With the passage of time, the statue became proud, very often boasting of his being unrivalled,

saying that he was standing tall, towering things under him. Since then, his old friends, who belonged to the same species of stone, were no longer pleased with him because of his high pride. At one midnight, the statue collapsed into pieces which were laid on the road leading to the capital. This short story is in fact a satire, giving the readers a lesson from the downfall of a proud person.

The third one is the title story, "Ashes from the Wind". Another one is called, "The Tears of a Stone". Both stories were written to give a message to those who are not aware of the degradation of the natural environment. Another one is, "Dabar Kyun", which depicts the woes and miseries of the Slavery System whereas another one is there yet, depicting the unmatched maternal love. The title of the story is, "Maha Hna Lon Tha — the Great Heart". Last but not the least, there is still one I would like to discuss. This story bears the title 'Kaung Ma Lay'...Dagei Gabya", which depicts the self-sacrificing spirit of a girl who took care of the watermelon plantations. The message is that the poor are rich in terms of spiritual wealth. This story is very entertaining, making the readers unable to stop reading till the end of the story.



Book Title - Ten Days in a Mad-House by Nellie Bly

Translator - Hein Latt

Printing House - Maha

Publishing Date - February 2020 (1st Edition)

Price - K2,000

Ten Days in a Mad-House by Nellie Bly

WHAT makes this book different is that both the original writer and the Myanmar translator are journalists. The original writer is an American in the name of Nellie Bly whereas the translator is a famous writer called Hein Latt, a veteran journalist. Nellie Bly became famous for this work. Nevertheless, her great fame was not won in an easy way, having undergone an ordeal. She had to assume insanity to enable her admission to an insane asylum. Additionally, she was also sued by her employer for publishing this great book, which depicts her attempt to go against restrictions on the freedom of the press, advocate for women's rights and contribute to the freedom fighting. For her great contributions to the said noble causes, she was given by the government an award for excellent performance for the cause of women in 1998.

The world where she was working gave her an assignment, which required the as-

sumption of insanity in order that she could obtain first-hand information concerning the general situation and the treatment of the patients with insanity at the Blackwell's Island Insane Asylum. This was a very delicate mission, and so, she was asked if she could accept such an assignment. She wrote in Chapter I how she hesitated to assume feigned insanity at the psychiatric hospital.

Upon arrival at the lunatic asylum, she was asked to shower naked. As she was not a mad person like others, it was quite difficult for her to obey such an order from the nurse, who was rather assertive with her command. After a moment, the writer realized her situation and tried her best to abandon her feeling of shame, following suit of her fellow inmates. "We're all naked but none of us is looking at one another", she thought to herself. Then only did I realize how free I was without a dress. I jumped into the bathtub. What a great moment! I was

happy even. She depicts the different attitudes to nature by the sane and the insane.

Under feigned insanity, she was able to collect facts and figures. Among them, one interesting thing is that all the rooms are kept under lock and key. I was wondering how the warders could open the doors of all rooms in case of emergency. It is extremely dangerous for the inmates, numbering 300 in total. In that case, they will be killed by the fire. If only the main door was secured with one lock, the inmates could survive the outbreak of fire. In addition, she found out that the inmates could be satisfied with their meals only when there were donors. When the well-wishers did not come to donate food, the inmates could not satiate their desire to enjoy good food. Thanks to her revelation, the New York City authorities have appropriated USD one million more per annum than ever before for the care of the insane.

ARTICLE/ENVIRON WORLD

Tawthalin - Myanmar Traditional Regatta

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So these two boats competed again. This time Mingala Yan Hnin plucked the flower of victory. So ended the Royal Regatta.”

Ceremonial barges and boats had their own legends and histories. They performed special functions for specific occasions. They were put in charge of the Officers concerned. They were stout, ornate, and mostly gold gilt. Some had a palace-like structure or pavilion on them. Figures of mythical creatures such as Garuda the bird, Naga the dragon, Unicorn, Keinnari, Keinnara, Human-faced female and male birds, Manoke Thiha (human-faced and two-lion-bodied Sphinx), Ogre,

Sakka the Thunder god, Brahma, Deva, Pyinsa Yu Pa, etc: adorn them to depict their legends.

War boats were not heavily built nor elaborately decorated. They were slim, light and mobile so that they could be easily carried about by their rowers. For decoration, they chose the figures of animals noted for courage, bravery, fighting ability, fidelity, strength and beautiful or regal appearance. Thus elephant, lion, tiger, bull, buffalo, horse, mountain goat, etc: were the favourites among land animals. Crocodile, shark, Nga Gyin Fish, Whale, Makara or Magan from the watery world and Karaweik, Sheldrake, Peacock, Zewazo, Setkawut, Hornbill, Kingfisher etc: from the

winged creatures were selected to adorn war boats. Mostly only heads were used. They were either carved in the body of the boat or affixed at the front.

Racing boats did not have the above-mentioned ornate decorations but they were gorgeously painted. They only cared for their names which must be auspicious, inspiring, prideful, good sounding and above all astrologically correct! (Thus, for example “Pyi Lone Ant” means “Wonder of the whole country”, “Pyi Lone Kyaw” means “Famous throughout the whole country”, “Twe Taing Aung” means “Winner of Every Match”, “Pyaing Taing Ya” means “Prizes winner of every competition”, “Myit Taing Naing”

means “Winner of every race held in every river”.)

If any unusual object is seen on a racing boat, it is none other than a propitiatory offering presented to the Nat spirits to help win the race such as sprigs of Eugenia, special flowers or a scarf with special colour as prescribed by the Divinity consultant or charms or mantras believed to have occult power, written or inscribed on a square paper or metal plate stuck or nailed on the inside of the boat. Rowers also keep such charms and amulets on their bodies but they hide them from the public.

Prize distribution took place on the final day of the Regatta. Their Majesties in person or their

Deputies gave the prizes to the winners. Prizes varied from Pusoe (a long piece of cloth for man's wear), gaungpaung (turban), puwa (scarf) pieces of textile, silk, velvet to money in pure silver – 100 ticals, 200, 300, 500, 1000 ticals. The winners after receiving their rewards paid obeisance three times and departed.

Boat races were held throughout the open season when the special occasion arose – pagoda festival, military display, the celebration of war victory, and visit of distinguished guests or dignitaries. Today Myanmar boat races have revived thanks to the joint effort of the Government and the Public. ■

Scientists develop direct hydrogen-from-air tech



Photo taken on 3 September 2022 shows a clean energy booth at the environmental services exhibition during the 2022 China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) in Beijing, capital of China. PHOTO: XINHUA/HAN XU

HYDROGEN, a form of clean energy, can be directly produced from the air with electrolysis technology powered by renew-

able energy, according to a study published in the journal Nature Communications.

The newly-developed tech-

nology makes it possible to convert solar or wind energy into fuel through electrolysis of water, even in areas with water shortages.

A group of scientists from the Ganjiang Innovation Academy under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the University of Manchester and the University of Melbourne jointly developed an electrolytic cell prototype. It can in situ absorb moisture in the air, instead of using liquid water, and produce hydrogen via electrolysis.

Powered by solar or wind energy, the prototype operated for 12 consecutive days producing stable performance, the paper said.—Xinhua

Heatwave batters Spain's Mediterranean mussel crop

“THERE'S nothing left here,” sighs Javier Franch as he shakes the heavy rope of mussels he's just pulled to the surface in northeastern Spain. They are all dead.

With the country hit by a long and brutal heatwave this summer, the water temperature in the Ebro Delta, the main mussels production area of the Spanish Mediterranean, is touching

30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit).

And any grower who hasn't removed their molluscs in time will have lost everything.

But that's not the worst of it: most of next year's crop has also died in one of the most intense marine heatwaves in the Spanish Mediterranean.

By the end of July, experts said the western Mediterrane-

an was experiencing an “exceptional” marine heatwave, with persistently hotter-than-normal temperatures posing a threat to the entire marine ecosystem.

“The high temperatures have cut short the season,” says Franch, 46, who has spent almost three decades working for the firm founded by his father, which has seen production fall by a quarter this year.—AFP

Shipping giant changes course to save Sri Lanka whales

ANIMAL rights activists on Friday cheered a move by a shipping giant to alter course in Sri Lankan waters to avoid collisions with blue whales, the world's largest mammals.

The island's southern coast has an unusually high density of blue whales, classed as endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, and is one of the world's busiest international shipping lanes. Campaigners believe more than a dozen of the gigantic animals — the largest ever to have lived on Earth at up to 30 metres long and 150 tonnes — have been killed in collisions with commercial ships in the last decade.

There have also been occasional reports of fishermen dying when their boats were run down by container ships in the area, a rich fishing ground.

International activists and local environmentalists have for years pressed authorities to shift the east-west shipping routes 15 nautical miles further offshore.

The Geneva-based Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), one of the world's biggest container carriers, announced Thursday that it had voluntarily adjusted its routes around Sri Lanka by that distance to reduce the risk of accidents involving whales, dolphins and porpoises.—AFP



In this file photo taken on 26 March 2009 a blue whale swims in the deep waters off the southern Sri Lankan town of Mirissa. Animal rights activists on 9 September 2022, cheered a move by a shipping giant to alter course to avoid collisions with blue whales, the world's largest mammals, in Sri Lankan waters. PHOTO: ISHARA S. KODIKARA / AFP/FILE

Hong Kong extends digital vaccine pass to kids as young as five

HONG Kong will extend a digital vaccination pass that controls which premises residents can enter to children as young as five years old, authorities announced Thursday.

The new rules mean any child above the age of five will need to produce a proof of vaccination QR code to enter restaurants, swimming pools, libraries, and other venues.

Hong Kong adheres to a looser version of China's zero-Covid policy, under which infections are quashed with stringent border controls, lockdowns and social-distancing measures. It also deploys a "Leave Home Safe" app to store vaccination records and monitor movements.

Those wishing to enter most public premises must scan a QR code that shows their vaccination status. Until now it only applied to people aged 12 and above. But by the end of September, children aged five

and above will need to have had at least one vaccine dose within the last three months, and two doses by 30 November.

Under Secretary for Health Libby Lee said children can use paper certificates, while parents can store their children's vaccine records on their phones.

Hong Kong's leader John Lee threw his support behind the plan.

"All data and expert opinion have fully affirmed that vaccination has a positive effect on children's health protection," he said.

However some public health experts have expressed concern. "There is no ethical nor scientific justification to coerce or mandate vaccination in children," David Owens, a Hong Kong doctor who has written a series of analyses of Hong Kong's pandemic response, wrote on Twitter Thursday.—AFP



Children wearing face masks play outside in Hong Kong, south China, 26 March 2021. PHOTO: XINHUA/LO PING FAI

Canada approves Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for kids under 5

HEALTH Canada Friday approved Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine for use in children under 5 years old.

The federal health department updated information of the approved COVID-19 vaccines on its website saying that available data supported the effectiveness and safety of the vaccine in preventing COVID-19 in the age group of six months through four years.

The benefit-risk profile of the vaccine was considered favourable in that age group for use as a three-dose primary series with two doses given three weeks apart followed by a third dose given at least eight weeks after the second dose.—Xinhua

N Korea to begin Covid-19 vaccine campaign around November: state media

NORTH Korea will begin vaccinating its people against Covid-19 around November, state media said Friday, about a month after the country declared victory over the virus.

It is the first time the isolated regime officially announced its plans for vaccination since the start of the pandemic.

"Along with responsible vaccine administration, we need to recommend that all citizens wear a mask to protect their own health starting November," leader Kim Jong Un said, according to Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Health experts in the country believe North Koreans' antibody levels — acquired during the epidemic which the regime confirmed in May — will decrease by October, Kim added.

Friday's KCNA report did not elaborate on where the vaccines were from.

The regime last year rejected planned shipments of AstraZeneca's Covid vaccines, arranged by the World Health



Members of the North Korean army supply medicines to residents at a pharmacy, amid growing fears over the spread of the coronavirus disease, in Pyongyang 18 May 2022. PHOTO: KYODO

Organization's COVAX scheme, due to concerns over side effects, according to a South Korean think tank.

The impoverished nation, which has maintained a rigid blockade since the start of the pandemic, confirmed an outbreak of the Omicron variant in the capital Pyongyang about four months ago.

Leader Kim — who fell ill during the outbreak — declared victory over the virus last month and ordered the lifting of the

country's "maximum emergency epidemic prevention system" as officially reported cases fell to zero. It had been believed that the North did not vaccinate any of its 26 million residents, but Seoul-based specialist site NK News has reported Pyongyang may have received some from its key ally China.

North Korea refers to "fever patients" rather than "Covid patients" in case reports, apparently due to a lack of testing capacity.—AFP

US begins clinical trial to test monkeypox vaccine

US health authorities announced Thursday they would carry out a clinical trial to test different dosing strategies of the Jynneos monkeypox vaccine, amid uncertainty over its effectiveness.

The trial will enroll 200 adults aged 18-50 across the country, and is sponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

The Jynneos vaccine, manufactured by Denmark-based Bavarian Nordic, has been approved by the United States for the prevention of smallpox and monkeypox in people aged 18 and older. But while the highest-risk group, men who have sex with men, are encouraged to get the vaccine, there is no clear picture of how well it works in real world settings. The new trial isn't designed to produce an efficacy estimate, but rather

measure the immune response of different dosing levels and administration methods.

"NIAID's trial of JYNNEOS will provide important information on the immunogenicity, safety, and tolerability of alternative dosing approaches that would expand the current supply of

vaccine," said NIAID director Anthony Fauci in a statement.

Among the participants, one group will be injected subcutaneously — that is, under the skin. The vaccine is based on attenuated virus that is modified so it can't replicate, and is given in two doses 28 days apart.—AFP



The trial will enroll 200 adults aged 18-50 across the country, and is sponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. PHOTO: PATRICK T. FALLON / AFP

ECONOMY WORLD

Cambodia sees better-than-expected inflows of international tourists: minister

THE number of international tourists to Cambodia has increased at a faster-than-expected pace, prompting the kingdom to lift its target to two million tourists for 2022, up from earlier forecast of one million, Tourism Minister Thong Khon said on Saturday.

The Southeast Asian nation received 998,272 international visitors in the first eight months of 2022, up 720 per cent compared to the same period last year, according to Ministry of Tourism's latest report.

In August alone, the kingdom welcomed 254,813 foreign holidaymakers, up 2,680 per cent compared to the same month last year, the report said.

During the January-August period this year, neighbouring Thailand topped the chart of the international tourist arrivals to Cambodia, followed by Viet Nam, China, the United States and Indonesia, the report added.

"Based on these latest figures, Cambodia is expected to attract from 1.5 million to 2 million international tourists in the

entirety of 2022," the minister told Xinhua.

Khon attributed the sharp rise to the kingdom's full reopening of its borders to all travellers, tourism development strategies, and high COVID-19 vaccination rates. Tourism is one of the four pillars supporting Cambodia's economy. In the pre-pandemic era, the country greeted up to 6.6 million international tourists in 2019, generating gross revenue of 4.92 billion US dollars, according to the Ministry of Tourism. —Xinhua



Tourists visit the Temple of Preah Vihear in Cambodia. PHOTO: XINHUA

Japan unveils inflation-relief steps, broader package eyed for Oct.

THE Japanese government decided Friday on a new relief package to cope with accelerating inflation, featuring a 50,000 yen (\$350) cash handout programme for low-income households and steps to keep gasoline

and imported wheat prices at current levels.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida also instructed officials to draw up a more comprehensive economic package next month, as economists expect slower

growth for the world's third-largest economy due to higher import prices, largely blamed on Russia's war in Ukraine and a relentless drop in the yen.

The decision comes at a critical time for Kishida as he faces one of the biggest challenges during his roughly 10 months in office — falling public support amid scrutiny over a state funeral for the late former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the ruling party's ties with the controversial Unification Church.

"It is one of the top priorities for the administration to protect people's livelihoods and business in the midst of a global price surge," Kishida told a government meeting, noting that urgent response is needed. "We will take bold steps seamlessly." —Kyodo



The price of imported wheat that the Japanese government sells to millers will be kept at its current level. A grain harvester collects wheat on the field near the village of Zgurivka in the Kyiv region, Ukraine, 9 August 2022. PHOTO: CFP/CGTN

US midterm voting may affect fate of Indo-Pacific Economic Framework

WITH the US-led Indo-Pacific Economic Framework evolving as a vague economic cooperation initiative, President Joe Biden seems to have succeeded in avoiding politicizing trade at home ahead of the November midterm elections.

But depending on the outcome of the elections, when

control of Congress will be at stake, the Democratic president may shift to an "ambitious" trade approach and strive to make the fledgling IPEF initiative into a more substantial regional economic engagement amid China's growing clout, some trade experts say.

Just two months ahead of the

8 November voting, U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai and Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo were in Los Angeles with officials from 13 IPEF partners, including Japan, India and some from Southeast Asia, touting how the framework would fuel economic activity and investment throughout the region. —Kyodo

CPEC alleviates Pakistan's energy shortage, promote renewable energy goals: official

PAKISTAN'S Minister for Power Khurram Dastgir Khan said on Thursday that power projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) helped Pakistan in alleviating severe energy shortages while promoting renewable energy goals.

"Pakistan was massively short of energy as there were 18 hours of blackouts across the country back in 2014. China has come to our support to overcome the energy crisis by adding clean and green energy to the national grid," the minister said while addressing a seminar on CPEC power projects here.

A few years back when Pakistan was going through tough times and no country was willing to believe in the coun-

try, China brought investment under the framework of the CPEC, overhauling Pakistan's infrastructure and solving the energy crisis, Khan said

He said that the power sector has become the most significant sector for the country's financial viability, highlighting the need for modernization of the sector with Chinese technology for economic growth.

The minister said that Pakistan's future energy landscape will be based on the utilization of indigenous renewable sources including hydro, solar, wind, coal and nuclear, adding that China is the most crucial and valuable partner for the country in tapping indigenous clean energy potential. —Xinhua



The aerial photo taken on 6 August 2019 shows the Sahiwal Coal Power plant in Sahiwal, Punjab Province, Pakistan. PHOTO: XINHUA/AHMAD KAMAL

BMW teams up with CATL, EVE to build battery factories in Europe, China

GERMAN carmaker BMW is building four gigafactories with its Chinese partners, Contemporary Amperex Technology Co. Limited (CATL) and EVE Energy, to produce a new generation of more powerful electric car batteries, the company said on Friday.

China's battery manufacturers CATL and EVE will be involved in the construction of two factories each in Europe and in China. In addition, two more factories are planned in North America. According to BMW, all six gigafactories will have a production capacity of up to 20 gigawatt hours.

The batteries produced in the new plants will have a 20 per cent higher energy density, allowing faster charging and 30 per cent more driving range. "The newly-developed



A technician checks equipment on an assembly line of Contemporary Amperex Technology in Ningde, Fujian province. PHOTO: XINHUA

sixth generation of our lithium-ion cells will bring a huge leap in technology," said BMW AG board member Frank Weber.

Compared to its predecessor, the new battery cell would reduce the cost of high-voltage storage by up to 50 per cent, according to BMW. The German

luxury carmaker is seeking to "bring manufacturing costs for fully-electric models down to the same level as vehicles with state-of-the-art combustion-engine technology."

The new generation of batteries is designed to be not only more powerful and less expensive, but

also more environmentally friendly. CO2 emissions in cell production is to be reduced by up to 60 per cent.

To this end, all project partners are to use green electricity in production while the required lithium, cobalt and nickel are to be partially recycled.—Xinhua

GM unveils electric SUV aimed at middle class

GENERAL Motors unveiled an electric sport utility vehicle Thursday with a starting price tag of \$30,000, positioning the model for consumers priced out of the growing segment.

The 2024 Equinox EV, which will be available in fall 2023 has a starting price of \$30,000, less than half the average price of EVs now available in the market. "We are at a turning point where EVs will be the mainstream choice for the next generation of customers and Equinox EV will lead this charge for us," said GM Chief Executive Mary Barra.

The launch is part of an aggressive EV build-out strategy by the auto giant amid a gradual industry-wide shift towards emission-free vehicles, which includes battery plants and massive investment under its Ultium

banner. "With the flexibility of GM's Ultium Platform, we are bringing to market vehicles at nearly every price point and for every purpose." The gasoline version of the Equinox was GM's second most popular vehicle in 2021 after the Chevrolet Silverado, a pickup truck.

GM described the model as part of the "compact SUV segment," where it will be "the most affordable EV in its class," the company said in a news release. However, GM's initial affordable EV offering, the Chevy Bolt, suffered from recalls due to battery problems.

GM had previously disclosed that the Equinox would be intended for middle-income consumers, saying in January the vehicle would start at \$30,000 at an event to launch the electric Silverado.—AFP

European taxi drivers stage Uber Files protest in Brussels

OVER 300 taxis from Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain and Switzerland blocked the roads in Brussels on Thursday, with drivers demanding clarity on the Uber scandal and pledging to defend their interests from what they perceive as unfair competition from the private passenger transport company in the sector.

The demonstration followed the "Uber Files" investigation in July, which exposed through leaked internal documents how the company circumvented regulations and approached lawmakers, as it expanded its services throughout Europe.

European taxi associations are now calling for thorough investigations at both European and national levels into leaked Uber

data, including more than 124,000 internal files, memos, calendars, WhatsApp messages and other data files from the period 2013-2017. "We have come to demonstrate here in Brussels in front of the European Commission because there have been failures at the European level, which has allowed Uber to interfere in the transport market throughout Europe, and even on the other side of the Atlantic," Zerrad Younes, president of "Elite Taxi Belgium", the organizer of the demonstration, said. "We want to defend our rights against Uber and the (ride hailing) platform (it operates), (because it) wants us to remain unprotected and without minimum wage", added Angelo, a taxi driver from the Italian association.—Xinhua

Brazil's vehicle output up 43.9% in August

BRAZIL'S vehicle production grew 43.9 per cent in August year on year, the National Association of Automotive Vehicle Manufacturers reported on Friday.

According to the report, 237,961 units were manufactured in August, compared to 165,330 in the same month of 2021.

Automotive production in Brazil, Latin America's largest economy, increased 8.7 per cent in August compared to July. Meanwhile, 46,793 vehicles, including cars, trucks, buses and agricultural machinery, were

sold abroad in August, up by 58.9 per cent from the same month last year.

"For the first time in a year and a half, we managed to operate without any factory completely shutting down in August," said Marcio de Lima Leite, president of the association. "The flow of semiconductors has finally started to improve, although we are still going through a supply restriction phase."

Leite said the market in general performed well in August, with sale orders of 209,000 units, the best in 19 months.—Xinhua



Volkswagen is the largest automobile producer in Brazil. PHOTO: AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MSC FORTUNE F VOY.NO. (SB235A)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MSC FORTUNE F VOY.NO. (SB235A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **11-9-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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GLOBAL AFFAIRS

EU nations agree joint approach on energy prices

THE energy ministers of the European Union (EU) member states on Friday agreed a common position on temporary emergency measures to curb energy prices, according to senior officials.

They have tasked the European Commission to present “a robust and tangible proposal in a matter of days,” Czech Minister of Industry and Trade Jozef Sikela said after the extraordinary Energy Council meeting in Brussels.

“We will do whatever it



Facilities to receive and distribute natural gas are seen at a section of the Nord Stream 1 pipeline in Lubmin, northeastern Germany, on 30 August 2022. **PHOTO: ODD ANDERSEN/AFP**

takes to help our citizens and companies who are facing high

energy prices,” he said.

The ministers identified

four main areas where the member states expect the Commission to act, including capping the revenues of electricity producers that face low production costs, a possible price cap on gas, measures for a coordinated electricity demand reduction across the EU, and measures that would help to solve the issue of decreased liquidity.

EU’s Energy Commissioner Kadri Simson told journalists after the meeting that “There is no one solution that will signifi-

cantly lower energy prices and ensure our security of supply”.

“We need to keep up our work and our determination on all fronts: diversification of supplies, demand reduction and investments in renewables,” she said.

Simson said that the EU was working bilaterally with its trading partners to negotiate more affordable prices. She acknowledged that nothing was decided yet and said that “we will be proposing unprecedented measures next week”.—AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Risks rising for the West as Ukraine war drags: analysts

RUSSIA’S war against Ukraine appears to be settling into a grinding conflict that could last years and prove increasingly risky for Kyiv’s Western allies, analysts warn.

Faltering public patience for key military and financial aid to Ukraine could unleash political turbulence, especially if inflation and other economic woes worsen, they say.

Other geopolitical tensions — for example between Washington and Beijing over Taiwan’s independence — would likely further erode support for Ukraine. That could lead to quiet but mounting pressure on Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky to negotiate an end to the hostilities, despite the con-

sequences of letting an invading nation retain seized territory.

“A scenario where China is increasingly aggressive, a Trump-like president is elected in 2024, and populist forces gain ground in Europe is a scenario where Russia could be a quasi-winner whatever happens on the ground in the next six months militarily,” said Bruno Tertrais of the French Foundation for Strategic Research (FSR).

European challenges

Some 70,000 protesters rallied in Prague this month, accusing the Czech government of putting Ukraine’s plight above its own citizens facing a spike in winter heating costs.—AFP



Cold Response 2022 is a long-planned exercise bringing together thousands of troops from NATO Allies and partners. Soldiers from the Norwegian Armed Forces operate a tank as they participate in the international military exercise Cold Response 22, at Setermoen, North of in Norway, on 22 March 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

Russia reinforces Kharkiv in bid to counter Ukraine push

RUSSIA said on Friday it was despatching reinforcements to the Kharkiv region in eastern Ukraine where Kyiv’s forces have announced robust gains as part of a broader counter-offensive.

State media broadcast footage of columns of Russian tanks, support vehicles and artillery travelling along paved roads and dirt tracks, emblazoned with the letter “Z”, the symbol of Moscow’s invasion.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said that Russia’s push to send reinforcements showed Moscow was paying “huge costs” in its bid to capture and hold Ukrainian territory.

A Moscow-installed official in the region, Vitaliy Ganchev, said in televised remarks that “fierce battles” were underway near Balakliya, a town in the Kharkiv region that Ukraine said it had recaptured on Thursday.

“We do not control Balakliya. Attempts are being made to dis-

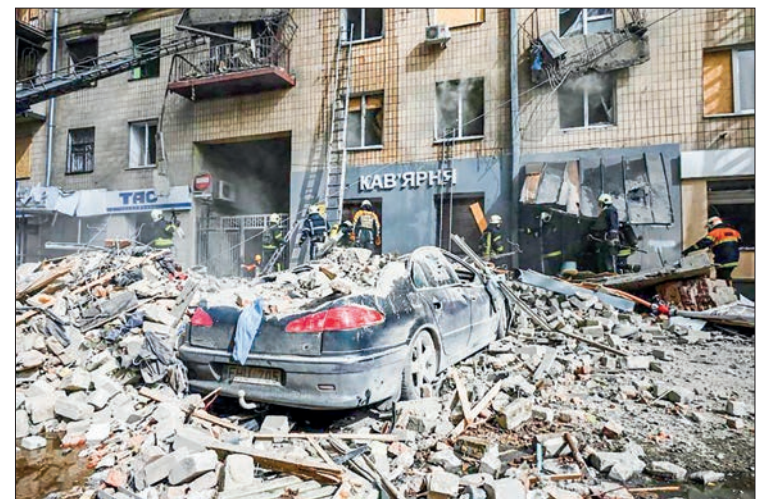
lodge the Ukrainian forces, but there are fierce battles and our troops are being held back on the approaches,” Ganchev said.

“Now Russian reserves have been brought there, our troops are fighting back,” he added.

His comments come after President Volodymyr Zelensky shared footage late on Thursday

showing camouflage-clad Ukrainian soldiers holding his country’s blue-and-yellow flag in Balakliya.

The town, which had been under Russian control for around six months and had a pre-war population of around 30,000 people, fell easily and early on to Russian forces who invaded in February.—AFP



Firefighters search in the rubble after an apartment was hit by a missile strike in Kharkiv. **PHOTO: AFP**

Russia says foiled arson at military building

RUSSIA’S FSB security service said Friday it had arrested three suspects after foiling an attempt to set fire to a military building near Saint Petersburg.

Attacks on military buildings have multiplied since the Kremlin launched a military campaign in Ukraine in Feb-

ruary.

The FSB said three residents of the city of Vyborg, about 140 kilometres (85 miles) north of Saint Petersburg, had “tried to set an administrative building belonging to the defence ministry on fire”.

An investigation was

launched over an “attempted terrorist attack” — a crime carrying heavy prison sentences.

Russian media have reported cases of dozens of buildings being targeted with Molotov cocktails or vandalized since the end of February.—Xinhua

British royals begin official period of mourning

KING Charles III and the royal family on Friday began observing a mourning period for Queen Elizabeth II that will last until seven days after her state funeral, royal officials said.

“Following the death of Her Majesty The Queen, it is His Majesty The King’s wish that a period of Royal Mourning be observed from now until seven days after The Queen’s Funeral,” the palace said in a statement.

“The date of the funeral will

be confirmed in due course,” it added.

The mourning period will be observed by members of the family, household staff and troops committed to ceremonial duties.

Flags at royal residences will remain at half-mast until the morning after the final day of royal mourning.

Royal gun salutes will be fired in London on Friday at 1:00 pm (1300 GMT) in Hyde Park and at the Tower of London,

with one round fired for each year of her 96-year-long life.

Royal residences will close until after the funeral.

Officials advised people wanting to lay flowers at Buckingham Palace to do so at dedicated sites in the nearby Green Park or Hyde Park.

An online Book of Condolence has been opened on the official royal website, royal.uk.

Details of official national mourning will be confirmed by the government later.— AFP



Mourners paid tribute to Queen Elizabeth II as Edinburgh prepared to receive her coffin. PHOTO: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mexican lawmakers approve contentious security reform

MEXICAN lawmakers on Friday approved a plan to put the National Guard under military control – a move that critics say hands too much power to the armed forces.

President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador created the new security force in 2019 with a civilian command to replace federal police accused of corruption and human rights violations.

His reform putting the National Guard under the defence ministry’s control was passed in the Senate by 71 votes in favour and 51 against, having already been approved by the lower house of Congress.—AFP

Venezuela, Colombia to reopen land borders, skies

VENEZUELA and Colombia said Friday they will reopen their shared land border later this month and resume commercial flights after renewing diplomatic ties severed in 2019.

The countries reestablished formal ties on 29 August under the leadership of Venezuela’s socialist president Nicolas Maduro and Colombia’s new leftist leader, Gustavo Petro.

Both assigned ambassadors to each other’s countries, and announced they also wanted to restore military cooperation.—AFP

Türkiye may turn to Russia if US blocks F-16 sales: Erdogan

PRESIDENT Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Friday that Türkiye may turn to countries such as Russia if the US fails to follow through a pledge to deliver F-16 fighter jets.

Türkiye was kicked out of a programme to replace a

wide range of fighter, strike and ground attack aircraft for NATO allies after it acquired an advanced Russian missile defence system in 2019.

But with US-Turkish relations warming in response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine,

US President Joe Biden told Erdogan in June that he would support the sale of less advanced F-16 jets.

This has failed to gain traction in Congress, whose support of military sales is required, because of concern among leading US lawmakers about Türkiye’s tough rhetoric against its traditional foe Greece.

“The US is not the only one selling war planes in the world. The UK, France and Russia sell them as well,” Erdogan told reporters after Friday prayers.

“It’s possible to procure them from other places, and others are sending us signals,” Erdogan said.

Erdogan has made a string of positive comments about Russia ahead of a scheduled meeting with President Vladimir Putin at a regional summit in Uzbekistan next week.—AFP



President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Friday that Türkiye may turn to countries such as Russia if the US fails to follow through a pledge to deliver F-16 fighter jets. PHOTO: AFP



A handout picture provided by the Iranian army official website on 11 September 2020, shows an Iranian navy warship during the second day of a military exercise in the Gulf, near the strategic strait of Hormuz in southern Iran. PHOTO: IRANIAN ARMY OFFICE/AFP

Pentagon combines sea drones, AI to police Gulf region

IRAN’S recent seizure of unmanned US Navy boats shined a light on a pioneering Pentagon programme to develop networks of air, surface and underwater drones for patrolling large regions, meshing their surveillance with artificial intelligence.

The year-old programme operates numerous unmanned

surface vessels, or USVs, in the waters around the Arabian peninsula, gathering data and images to be beamed back to collection centers in the Gulf. The programme operated without incident until Iranian forces tried to grab three seven-metre SAILDRONE Explorer USVs in two incidents, on 29-30 August and 1 September.

In the first, a ship of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps hooked a line to a SAILDRONE in the Gulf and began towing it away, only releasing it when a US Navy Patrol boat and helicopter sped to the scene. In the second, an Iranian destroyer picked up two SAILDRONES in the Red Sea, hoisting them aboard.—AFP



Shan United's Nanda Kyaw (red) poises to kick the ball during the Myanmar National League match against Yangon United at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on 10 September 2022. **PHOTO: MNL**

Yangon battles Shan to a draw in Thuwunna thriller

YANGON United played defending champion Shan United to a 0-0 draw in Week 11 of the Myanmar National League 2022 second-round match at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon yesterday.

Yesterday's match between two former MNL champions was a thriller, with Taunggyi-based Shan United attacking from the

start.

The excitement continued in the second half, resulting in sustained cheering and applause from the appreciative fans at Thuwunna Stadium.

Yangon players focused on breaking the tie score, but they could not change any opportunity to goals.

Both teams could not break the deadlock till the final whistle.

After the match, Shan United is still standing atop the Myanmar National League table with 10 wins and one draw while Yangon United is following Shan United with seven wins, two draws and two losses. —GNLM

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.

The Queen provided stability, says England's Euro winning coach

ENGLAND'S Euro-winning coach Sarina Wiegman paid a moving tribute to the late Queen Elizabeth II saying it was she who inspired as "a mother figure for people to seek stability and peace from".

Football, unlike horseracing, the Queen's favourite sport, along with rugby, cricket and golf has shut down completely this weekend as a mark of respect for the monarch who died on Thursday although it has not been universally welcomed.

The royal family is tied to football as Prince William, the Prince of Wales, is president of the Football Association (FA).

Wiegman said the Queen had taken the time to write a letter to her and the players after the Lionesses won the country's first major tournament since the 1966 men's World Cup in July -- both times at Germany's expense.

England's men's coach Gareth Southgate -- who will bid to win the World Cup later this year in Qatar -- said the Queen provided "stability and reassurance in the best and also most difficult of times".

Wiegman -- who guided her native Netherlands to the Euro trophy in 2017 -- said the Queen had been an inspiration to all.

"This summer she (the Queen) took the time to write to me and my players congratulating us for our success," said 52-year-old Wiegman.

"In that letter she called us an 'inspiration for girls and women'. 'It is you, your Majesty, who was the inspiration with your unrelenting work ethic, leadership, dignity and kindness.

"The national anthem sung with such respect by my players and staff, served as a reminder of what she meant to the country".—AFP

Deepening Tokyo Olympics bribery scandal casts shadow over 2030 bid



The northern Japanese city of Sapporo is bidding to host the Winter Olympics for a second time in 2030. **PHOTO: JIJI PRESS/AFP**

A bribery scandal engulfing last summer's pandemic-delayed Tokyo Games has thrown a dark cloud over Sapporo's 2030 bid and raised fresh questions in Japan about hosting the Olympics again.

Former Tokyo 2020 executive Haruyuki Takahashi was arrested on suspicion of bribery in August and more allegations were levelled against him last week in a widening investigation

into corruption at the heart of the Games.

The scandal comes at a bad time for the northern Japanese city of Sapporo, which is bidding to host the 2030 Winter Olympics.

Sapporo staged the Games in 1972 and is seen as a frontrunner despite competition from Vancouver and Salt Lake City.

Sapporo mayor Katsuhiko Akimoto and Japanese Olym-

pic Committee (JOC) president Yasuhiro Yamashita were scheduled to visit International Olympic Committee headquarters in Lausanne to talk up the bid later this month.

The delegation last week cancelled the trip, with Yamashita blaming a scheduling issue.

Akimoto said that it had "nothing to do with the bribery case surrounding the Tokyo Olympics".—AFP