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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.

More than 960 water birds of 19 migratory bird species take shelter at Indawgyi Lake, third largest lake in Southeast Asia

By Nyein Thu (MNA)

MIGRATORY birds from the northern pole of the world start taking shelter at the Indawgyi Lake which is the third largest in Southeast Asia, located in Mohnyin District of Kachin State, as of the end of October this year. So far, 966 water birds from 19 rare migratory bird species inhabit there.

Number of migratory birds arriving at the lake slightly declines this cold season,



Grey-headed Swamphens.

compared with more than 970 water birds from 20 species took shelter in the same period of 2021. However, greening of the environment and conser-



Lesser Whistling Ducks are seen at Indawgyi Lake in Mohnyin Township of Kachin State. **PHOTOS: KANU**

vation of water resources and forest areas help the migratory birds take habitation at the lake.

Currently, some 200 Whimbrel birds, more than 30 Asian Openbill birds, some 20 little ringed plover birds, some 90

Common coots, some 200 seagull brown heads, some 90 seagull black heads, some 150 tufted ducks, five Common cranes, 10 black-bellied herons, 100 Whiskered terns and other water birds can be seen at the Indawgyi Lake. More than 3,200 domestic birds from 20 species

including little equal heron, Eurasian Curlew, common moorhen, Grey-headed Swamphen and other birds inhabit at the lake.

With regard to arrivals of migratory birds at the lake, Warden of Indawgyi Wildlife Sanctuary U Maung Win said, "More

than 970 water birds from 19 species have arrived at the lake this year, in comparison with 970 water birds in 20 species in the corresponding period of last year. We held the welcome to migratory birds last month by erecting the signboards for

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18 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 20 November, total figure rises to 633,005

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **633,005** after **18** new cases were reported on 20 November 2022 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **607,384**, including **76** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,487** on 20-11-2022 with no new deaths reported from the pandemic.

The country has vaccinated **30,753,806** people aged 18 and above for COVID-19 vaccines and **6,733,780** people aged under 18 years old till 19 November 2022.

Status of COVID-19 vaccination (as of 19 November 2022)

People aged 18 and above who received vaccines	30,753,806
People under 18 years old who received vaccines	6,733,780

According to the research, it is found that people who have been vaccinated do not suf-

fer severely from the disease, need not to be hospitalized and unlikely to die. If they have received booster shot, the death rates can be reduced more.

As such, the people need to follow the new normal way in living with COVID. Hence, all the people above five have to fully receive COVID-19 vaccination inoculated by the Ministry of Health free of charge. Six months after the vaccination, they have to take booster jabs at relevant health centres and ward/village administration offices without fail.

Moreover, they have to wear masks while in closed chambers and public places. They need to often wash hands with soap and water or the hand gel containing alcohol (at least 60 per cent) for 20 seconds.

People need to follow the social distancing rule and avoid the crowds as much as possible. While not wearing masks, if they cough and sneeze, they need to cover mouth and noses with elbows in line with the personal hygienic ways.

COVID-19 information can be browsed on the internet page moh.gov.mm of the Ministry of Health.—MNA

Appointment of Thai Ambassador to Myanmar agreed on

THE Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has agreed to the appointment of Mr Mongkol Visitstump as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Thailand to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in succession to Mrs Suphatra Srimaitreephithak.

Mr Mongkol Visitstump was born on 14 August 1967. He obtained a Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs and a Master of Arts in International Relations from the Thammasat University of Thailand.

He joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand in 1991 as Attaché, and has served in various capacities at the Ministry, the Royal Thai Embassies in Hanoi and Beijing, and the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Osaka. Currently, he is serving as Consul-General of the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Kunming, People's Republic of China.

Mr Mongkol Visitstump is married. —MNA

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More than 960 water birds of 19 migratory bird species take shelter at third largest lake in Southeast Asia

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the people to conserve these bird species but hunting them. In coming December, we have planned to raise the public awareness to protect these birds at the lake to inhabit and help them return home safely. As the government strives for conservation of bird species at the Indawgyi Lake for development of ecotourism services, inhabitation of migratory birds at the lake will be attractive to local and foreign tourists. Not only the Forest Department alone but local people needs to take responsibilities for conservation of migratory birds and wildlife animals at the lake as part of efforts for the local people to earn incomes from the ecotourism services. We collect data about water birds, forest birds and fish species in monitoring the lake and conduct the quality test and depth measurement of the lake in cooperation with the Environmental Conservation Department once three months. In fact, the Indawgyi Lake is an



Spot-billed pelicans are seen in water of Indawgyi Lake. PHOTO: KANU

important wetland as Ramsar site of the nation.”

The Indawgyi Lake is famous for fascinates site for local travellers with water surface views with the hills and forests in the background. It is home to more than 20,000 migratory

birds and domestic bird species including 10 endangered bird species in the world, critical endangered species of turtles, fish species, crocodiles and many species of fish. It is a wetland which is famous among the foreign tourists and bird watchers.

The Indawgyi Lake was designated the second Ramsar site in Myanmar apart from the Moeyungyi Lake in Bago, recognized by the Ramsar Secretariat on the World Wetlands Day which fell on 2 February 2016.

In accord with the motto

of this year for the migratory birds, “Dim the Lights for Birds at Night!”, the public campaign was conducted on 10 October this year at the wetlands such as Moeyungyi, Inlay and Indawgyi lakes not to harm flying of migratory birds in lighting at night. A total of 105 water bird species and more than 400 forest birds arrive at the Indawgyi Lake on a yearly basis.

The Indawgyi Lake is located on 100 square miles of land including the wildlife sanctuary and 214.67 square miles of the watershed area, totalling 314.67 square miles. It is surrounded by more than 4,000 feet high mountain ranges to be a habitat for rare mammals, migratory birds, hibernation birds, domestic birds and many fish species. The Tonle Sap Lake in Cambodia is the largest in Southeast Asia, followed by the Laguna de Bay Lake in the Philippines and the Indawgyi Lake in Myanmar.

Translated

Plan is underway to open agriculture institutes and livestock breeding institutes at BEHSs in each district

- During the period that we are taking the responsibilities, arrangements are being made to open agriculture institutes and livestock breeding institutes at basic education schools in each district.
- The opening agriculture institutes and livestock breeding institutes can cause turning out skilful human resources for agriculture, livestock breeding and industrial sectors.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with entrepreneurs from MSMEs in Pyay District on 4 October 2022)

Union Electric Power Minister visits small-scale hydropower and wind power plants in Stavropol Region

A Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister for Electric Power U Thaung Han who have already arrived in Russian Federation and Myanmar Ambassador to the Russian Federation U Lwin Oo and officials visited Barsuchkovskaya Small-scale Hydropower Plant and Kochubeevskaya WPP Wind Power Plant in Stavropol Region on 19 November.

At the Barsuchkovskaya small hydroelectric power plant, they were welcomed by the plant manager and officials, and the officials explained the power plant and the operation of the plant, and the Union Minister and members asked what they wanted to know.

Rosatom's Barsuchkovskaya small-scale hydropower plant is located in the Stavropol Region, and 11 power plants are being built in a cascade along the Stavropol Canal.



Union Minister for Electric Power U Thaung Han visits Barsuchkovskaya hydropower plant in Stavropol Region in Russia on 19 November.

The construction of the plant was completed in December 2020 and the installed capacity is 5.25 MW, and the power is being connected to the power system through a 35 KV power line.

The installed capacity of 11 power plants is 481.8 MW and hydroelectric power plants are efficiently constructed along the canal.

After that, the delegation vis-

ited the Kochubeevskaya WPP wind power plant and viewed the wind power structure in the plant area, and observed the conditions of connection with the power system.

Officials from the plant gave an explanation, and the Union Minister and members asked what they wanted to know.

The Kochubeevskaya WPP wind power plant, operated by the Rosatom company, is located in the Stavropol Region and it has been running since January 2021.

There are 84 wind turbines, each with 2.5 MW, and the total installed power is 210MW, which is about 600 million units per year, and is connected to the power system through a 330 KV power line. It has been built on an area of 160 acres and the total investment amount is about 28 billion Russian ruble.

The height of one tower is 150 meters, and the tower blade is 50 meters, and the total weight is 320 tonnes and it is easy and fast to build and install. The company is particularly interested in investing in Myanmar.—MNA

World Children's Day event held to mark UN Convention on Rights of Child



Union Minister for SWRR Dr Thet Thet Khaing speaking at ceremony to mark World Children's Day at the ministry on 20 November.

THE World Children's Day event was celebrated with hybrid system to mark the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Child at the Ministry of Social

Welfare, Relief and Resettlement yesterday, attended by Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Thet Thet Khaing.

In order to protect and promote the rights of children, the Focal Ministry is implementing the UNCRC children's rights in cooperation with civil society

organizations, relevant government departments, and INGOs/NGOs, the Union Minister said.

In carrying out child protection activities, plans are being implemented to cover all types of children, including children with disabilities, premature working children, migrant children, trafficked children, children without arms, children on the streets, and children facing legal action, the Union Minister continued.

Regarding gender-based violence including the violations against children's rights, and child rape, victim children or people can contact hot line number 1566 opened by the ministry.

As children are the future of a country, it is necessary to take

care of them based on four basic rights of children, namely Survival, Development, Protection and Participation, and create a better and safer future for them, the Union Minister added.

At the ceremony, a video about children's rights was presented, and children from Nay Pyi Taw Child Care Center and Nay Pyi Taw Pre-Primary Schools performed dances, and the Union Minister awarded prizes to those children.

The United Nations designated 20 November as the World Children's Day. Myanmar joined the UNCRC as member on 15 August 1991, and the commemorative day celebration has been held for 33 years.—MNA



Myanmar delegation to attend to 12th ASEAN+3 field epidemiology training network meeting

TWO representatives from the Department of Public Health departed from Yangon for Brunei via Thailand by air yesterday to attend 12th ASEAN+3 field epidemiology training network

Myanmar delegation seen at the airport before departure for Brunei on 20 November.

supervisory committee meeting to be held in Bander Seri Begawan, Brunei from 22 to 24 November.

The training network started in 2011 as a result of the 4th ASEAN Health Ministers meeting, and the steering committee of the training included representatives from 13 countries. The training network aims to cooperate among regional countries in infectious diseases,

sharing experiences and information and providing training for enhancement of capacity of health workers and so on.

In the meeting, they are going to discuss about digital health technology communication between countries, information sharing, infectious disease detection and surveillance and the effective use of healthcare services and vaccinations. —MNA

Illegal teaks, foodstuffs, consumer goods, industrial materials and vehicle impounded

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

An on-duty team under the supervision of the Customs Department made inspections at the Myanmar Industrial Port container checkpoint on 18 November. Officials found electrical accessories and industrial materials estimated at K35,780,620 which are not declared in the Import Declaration (ID). The officials searched two vehicles at the near of Min Lwin Kone village in Myawady-Hpa-an-Yangon highway. They found industrial materials estimated at K57 million that exceeded the Import Declaration (ID) and the two trailers and one Tractor Head estimated at K130 million. The total worth of seizures amounted to K222,780,620 and the actions were taken under the Customs Procedures.

Then, the combination team led by Anti-Illegal Task Force of Yangon International Airport and ports inspected at

the cargo garage of Yangon International Airport. They found 13 products estimated at K6.46 million and steelwares estimated at K7 million that are not declared in ID. The total worth of seizures amounted to K13.46 million and the actions were taken under the Customs Procedures.

In addition, an on-duty team under the supervision of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force of Taninthayi region inspected at the Pauktine bridge checkpoint. They found cosmetics products estimated at K23,237,500 and a Scania bus which is carrying the goods estimated at K65 million. The total worth seizures amounted to K88,237,500 and the action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

Similarly, an on-duty team under the led by the Customs Department inspected at Mayanchaung checkpoint in Mon State. They found tiles estimated at K1,499,400 that are not declared in ID and a Hino profia which is carrying the goods estimat-

ed at K90 million. The total worth of seizures amounted to K91,499,400 and the action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

An on-duty team under the supervision of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force of Sagaing Region inspected at the checkpoint of Tagoung ward in Sagaing Township on 19 November. They found 6,000 visses of frozen meat estimated at K30 million and the action was taken under the Import and Export Law.

Then, a combination team led by Regional Forest Department under the supervision of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force of Bago Region inspected on 20 November. They found 3.9588 tonnes of illegal teaks estimated at K1,683,208 in Bago and Toungoo districts and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

Therefore, 17 cases at an estimated value of K447,660,728 were taken action from 18 to 20 November, according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee. —MNA

MoNREC designates Moatwa 2 protected public forest



An aerial view of Moatwa 2 protected public forest.

THE Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation has designated the area of 850 acres in Kawlin Township, Kawlin District in Sagaing Region, as “Moatwa 2 protected public forest” as of 15 November 2022, under Notification No 164/2022 by exercising the authority conferred under Sub-section (e) of Section (6) of the Forest Law promulgated in September 2018.

The Moatwa 2 protected public forest is intended to conserve the watershed area for the cultivable lands of the

local people, aiming to fulfill the needs of the local people and protect the natural forests.

The forest is not only a place where many kinds of wood and valuable trees such as teak and sal but also a habitat for wild animals such as muntjac, red goral, red junglefowl and monkey. It is necessary to manage forest resources systematically and conserve a watershed area of the Thaw creek which flows into the Mu River.

MoNREC

Write for us

We appreciate your feedback and contributions. If you have any comments or would like to submit editorials, analyses or reports please email aungthuya@gnlm.com.mm with your name and title.

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

LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar manufacturing sector attracts \$179 million in past seven months

A total of 35 foreign enterprises pumped US\$179 million into Myanmar's manufacturing sector in the past seven months (April-October) of the current financial year 2022-2023, including capital expansion by the existing enterprises, as per the statistics released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

Myanmar attracted foreign direct investments of \$1.45 billion from 52 enterprises during April-October period. The majority of the investments brought into the manufacturing sector. Agriculture sector drew \$3.5 million from two projects. Power sector received \$817 million from 10 projects, while one enterprise put \$29 million in the real estate sector and two other foreign enterprises made an investment of \$413.068 million in the service sector respectively. Mining sector earned \$7 million from one project, while one enterprise also put investments of less than a million into the hotels and tourism sector and some capital expansion of the



An aerial view shows factories in Thilawa Special Economic Zone in Yangon.

existing businesses are also seen. Additionally, the livestock and fisheries sector saw a capital expansion of \$1.545 million.

The manufacturing enterprises and businesses that need a large labour force are prioritized to create job opportunities for the local community, according to Myanmar Investment Commission.

Although some labour-intensive enterprises faced financial hardship amid the COVID-19 negative impacts and the

political changes, the industry is now returning to normal after the COVID-19 vaccination programme for the workers, as per the HIS Markit's September report.

In a bid to boost factory productivity with a healthy workforce in the garment industry, Mobile Medical Check to garment workers took place in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw, supported by UNICEF Myanmar.

Moreover, Myanmar Garment Manufacturers Association

has organized Labour Law Awareness and WCC Training since July 2022, with the support of the UNICEF Myanmar. It aims to provide the soft skills needed for industrial development and create a better workplace for garment workers.

Additionally, the association launched voluntary labour compliance assessment-VLCA Online System in November 2022.

Myanmar's manufacturing sector is largely concentrated

in garment and textiles produced on the Cutting, Making, and Packaging basis, and it contributes to the country's GDP to a certain extent.

Myanmar has drawn foreign direct investment of more than \$647.127 million from 49 enterprises in the past mini-budget period (October 2021-March 2022). Of them, 40 foreign enterprises put investments in the manufacturing sector, pumping the estimated capital of \$202.667 million.—KK/GNLM

Sino-Myanmar major border crossing Kyalgaung yet to resume even after over 18 months

KYALGAUNG border post, which performed the majority of trade between Myanmar and China, has not resumed even after one and a half years, said U Min Thein, vice chair of Muse Rice Wholesale Centre.

China has restricted border access through the Muse-Kyalgaung (Mang Wein) border post between Myanmar and China amid the COVID-19 cases, since 30 March 2021.

On 18 October, Myanmar's officials and counterparts from Dehong, Yunnan Province negotiated the promotion of bilateral cross-border trade through a video conferencing.

"The Kyalgaung border crossing is yet to resume. We are ready for trade resump-

tion," said U Min Thein.

Prior to the pandemic, Kyalgaung was the busiest and biggest trade post and it performed the highest trade in the China-Myanmar border.

Those traders involved in Muse trade zone are relying on the Ruili city. There is a direct trade channel to Ruili through Kyalgaung point so the traders have a smooth transport. This route brings easier and better access to Ruili from Muse border post. Only when the Kyalgaung border post is reopened can the trade boost, traders elaborated.

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

Kyinsankyawt has resumed trading activity from 26 November 2021. Myanmar daily delivers rice, broken rice, rubber, fishery products, chilli pepper and other food commodities to China through Kyinsankyawt with the use of about 70 trucks and building materials, electrical appliances, pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, household goods and industrial raw materials are imported into the country with the use of 30 trucks.

Myanmar has opened five border trade zones with China; Muse, Lweje, Kanpaiti, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung. The majority of the trade is carried out through Muse land border, Ministry of Commerce's data indicated.—NN/GNLM

Rubber market sees gradual decline in prices

THE price of rubber is sinking to around K1,200 per pound, according to the rubber market in Mon State.

The price of rubber hit K1,600 per pound in the third week of September. The prices gradually declined to K1,180 per pound of sundried local 3 and K1,200 per pound of Ribbed Smoked Sheet Local 3.

Global demand for rubber, rubber production of the Southeast Asian nations and the market supply are contributing factors to the rubber price condition of Myanmar.

The rubber price in Mon State, a major rubber production state in Myanmar, is positively related to those factors as well, the traders elaborated.

Rubber is commonly produced in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago, and Yangon regions in Myanmar. As per 2018-2019 rubber season's data, there are over 1.628 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar, with Mon State accounting for 497,153 acres, followed by Taninthayi Region with 348,344 acres and Kayin State with 270,760 acres.

Seventy per cent of rubber produced in Myanmar goes to China. It is also shipped to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, the Republic of Korea, India, Japan, and other countries. Myanmar bagged more than US\$449 million revenue in rubber exports in the previous financial year 2020-2021.—NN/GNLM

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Technological, computer universities to admit enrolment till 30 November

THE Department of Higher Science and Technology under the Ministry of Science and Technology announced the last date of enrolment for the students who will attend technological universities and universities of computer studies.

In the announcement, these universities will admit enrolment of the students for first year (second semester)

and those from second year to doctorate courses till 30 November including the weekend but will not accept the overdue enrolment.

A second-day coordination meeting of these universities was held at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Science and Technology on 19 November. In the meeting, Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw said that

it is important for nurturing of human resources to develop a country and fulfillment of infrastructures and teaching aid machinery. He instructed officials to manage computerization process for academic and student affairs at both kinds of universities, uplifting staff capacity and preparing to apply a credit system along with KG+12 curriculum for students.—TWA/GNLM



A photo shows Thanlyin Technological University.

COVID-19 vaccine drive continues in various states, regions



Health staff administer Covid vaccines to locals in Hinthada Township.

VACCINATION is being carried out in full swing in various regions and states as the vaccination programmes are one of the most important activities in the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 disease.

Yesterday, doctors and nurses from public hospitals, medical teams from the Tatmadaw, and relevant healthcare workers in collaboration with volunteers gave COVID-19 vaccines to 2,260 people from twenty-six townships in Ayeyawady Region, and

153 people from Myingyan and Meiktila districts in Mandalay Region, respectively.

In addition, to assist in the

Local authorities distribute masks to local people in Yangon.



control and prevention of the COVID-19 disease, military officials from various military commands in collaboration with district and township administrative officials, departmental personnel and members of civil society organizations (CSOs) conducted educational campaigns such as prevention of COVID-19, wearing of masks in public places and distribution of masks to the locals at schools, markets, streets, city entry points and crowded areas in 44 townships in Yangon Region yesterday. — MNA



Some fishery workers are carrying the captured shrimps from Kyaukphu jetty.



Myanmar's shrimp to be exported are being processed at a factory.

Russia committed to monthly buy hundred tonnes of Myanmar shrimp

RUSSIA has been undertaking to monthly purchase hundreds of tonnes of Myanmar's shrimp, according to the Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF).

"Exportation of fishery product exports to Russia will happen ASAP. We are making efforts to export hundred tonnes of shrimp every month," Major-General Zaw Min Tun, leader of SAC information team said.

Recently, Russia's Roscongress Foundation arrived in Myanmar and met senior officials. The two countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the fishery exports to Russia.

Myanmar will primarily ship shrimp produced by Taninthayi Region. The effective date of the MoU is under negotiation by the two parties, MFF said.

Additionally, Russia has provided technical assistance regarding deep sea fishing. The cooperation in the fishery sector will begin soon.

Myanmar and Russia have signed a Government to Government pact for technical assistance for the value-added fish and shrimp production and fishery product exports to Russia.

Myanmar bagged nearly US\$440 million from fishery prod-

uct exports as of 11 November in the 2022-2023 Financial Year, which was over \$8 million lower than that of the corresponding period last year. Myanmar's fishery exports generated an income of \$439.942 million between 1 April and 11 November of the 2022-2023 FY, which plummeted from \$448.386 million in the similar period of the 2021-2022 mini-budget period. The figures indicated a decrease of \$8.444 million from the year-ago period, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics showed

Myanmar shipped the fishery products to external markets by sea and cross-border posts. Myanmar's fishery products are exported to Japan and European countries through maritime trade, while fish, shrimp, crabs and other fishery products are delivered to the neighbouring countries China, Thailand, India and Bangladesh via the cross-border channels.

Myanmar exports raw aquaculture products from farms and caught by onshore and offshore fishing businesses to the external markets. Additionally, aquaculture products are also exported after being processed at the cold storage facilities.—TWA/ GNLM

Price gap narrows to K1,350 in domestic palm oil market

THE wholesale reference price for Yangon Region from 14 to 20 November 2022 was set at K4,350 per viss, while the market price stood at around K5,700 per viss. The price gap between them has narrowed to K1,350 per viss after many months. This is good news for the consumers.

The prices of palm oil from containers were K5,700-K5,750 per viss in the wholesale markets on 19 November 2022, according to Bayintnaung Commodity Centre.

The delivery order for palm oil was priced at K5,700 per viss before 19 November. The market prices of palm oil were K5,800 at Nyaungpinlay market, Yangon Region and K5,900 in Meiktila, the sellers from those regions said.

These days, the mobile market trucks with the subsidized scheme offer the palm oil at K4,450 per viss in the retail markets, which is K1,250 per viss compared to the reference price.

The reference price of palm oil for a week ending 27 November is to be issued on 21 November. The market price fell on 19 November following the price stability in the forex market and less possibility of price increase in international palm oil prices. Those traders who buy them these days are facing losses.

Malaysian palm oil prices decreased from 4,150 Malaysian Ringgit on 15 November to 3,850 Ringgit on 19 November 2022. A Malaysian Ringgit is exchanged at K461.18. The international price of palm oil was approximately K1.8 million per tonne and K3,000 per viss on 19 November. As a result of this, the price of delivery order for palm oil in Yangon markets has dropped.

Between 2017 and 2020, the price of Malaysian palm oil was around K3,000 per viss. Yet, the Kyat-Malaysian Ringgit foreign exchange rate was pretty low then. Consequently, the price of palm oil significantly decreased compared to the current market price. The Malaysian palm oil price was under 3,850 Ringgit in the years of 2012-2021. The FOB price of palm oil was K1,549 per viss on 17 March 2020.

The consumers cannot get a chance to buy the palm oil at the wholesale reference price set on a weekly basis tracking the international prices.

There is a wide gap of K4,000 per viss between the wholesale reference price and the market price in August. The gap significantly narrowed to K1,350 in recent days. The retailers are closely observing the market conditions depending on the price of delivery order and the price set by the wholesalers at Bayintnaung market.—TWA/GNLM

92 per cent of worksite-3 completed at Thanlyin Bridge No 3



A new Thanlyin Bridge is under construction.

ACCORDING to the Bridge Department of the Ministry of Construction, 92 per cent of the worksite-3 of the Thanlyin Bridge No 3 project has been completed.

The department said that remaining part-1 and part-2 of the project of Thanlyin No 3 Bridge, which is being built across the Bago River, are underway under the name of Project Worksite Parts (1), (2), and (3).

Part-3 of the project, which is now 92 per cent complete, is being constructed with an arched design from near the toll gate on the Thakayta side of old Thanlyin Bridge to Thakayta Roundabout near the 108-elbow Pagoda.

Since that part is the part that has to be carried out on land, the work has been completed successfully and it has appeared as a sky bridge.

At present, paving the floor and handrails are being done.

It has a height of 18 feet and a length of 825 meters. At present, more than 92 per cent of the work has been completed.

Part-1 of the bridge project will start from the side of the bridge and will include the PC Box Girder Bridge and the Steel Box Girder Bridge, and it will continue to the beginning of the Steel Cable Stayed Bridge in the middle of the water.

In this section, the foundation sections on the upper side of Thanlyin bank have been completed, and the columns have already started to go up to the ground.

Furthermore, the ramp section is still being worked on, and the section-1 is 1312 meters long.

The project part-2 is the main bridge part and includes Steel Cable Stayed Bridge parts, Steel Box Girder Bridge and PC

Box Girder Bridge.

It is reported that the section of the Embankment Toll Gate is included in the concrete paved bridge in front of the project office on the Thakayta side.

The construction of the Thanlyin Bridge project began in May 2019, but the work was temporarily suspended due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 disease, and the project resumed in February 2021.

Thanlyin Bridge No. 3 is being overseen by Japan's Joint Venture of Nippon Koei, a consultant, in cooperation with the Bridge Department and JICA, and is cooperating with seven related companies.

The bridge has a total length of 3,500 meters, including the main road and ramp. It was built 125 meters away from the currently used Thanlyin Bridge.

The bridge has four traffic lanes including two-way roads and with 75 tonnes of withstanding. The project is being carried out with a Japanese loan from Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) at a cost of 31 billion Japanese yen.

After the completion of all the construction works of Thanlyin Bridge No 3 over the Bago River, the traffic congestion will be reduced and the flow of goods will be improved for the Yangon-Thanyin-Thilawa Special Economic Zone, as well as the socio-economic life of the region.—TWA/GNLM

Special efforts made to install CCTV cameras on YBS vehicles operating in Yangon

MANY cases of robberies occurred on the YBS bus in Yangon that have not yet been installed with CCTV.

According to the YRTC, in order to reduce the incidents and re-examine the perpetrators of the crime, CCTVs are being installed on YBS vehicles at present.

In the second week of November, YRTC Joint Secretary U Lyan Cint Mang said that Yangon Region Private Transportation Supervision Committee (YRTC) and the nearest police stations

should be contacted as soon as possible in order for the cooperation of the police and to investigate and take action against pickpocketing and robbery on passenger YBS vehicles.

The officials of YRTC are working together with the relevant township officials and the traffic control and supervision committee to ensure traffic safety.

In doing so, free distribution of traffic law awareness pamphlets, extensive awareness of traffic laws and regulations is

being carried out by relevant officials.

The YBS 28 bus line under the management of YUPT Public Co, Ltd, which previously ran from Dagon University to Sule, has a convenient view as it has installed Streamax Technology CCTVs with Video Decoding and Online View System.

There are at least 800,000 to 1 million passengers travelling by bus in Yangon every day. There are 166 bus lines and more than 3,000 vehicles in operation.—TWA/GNLM



The CCTV camera installed in YBS 28 bus line.

OPINION

Choose the best option for shaping the peaceful society

NOBLE persons always prioritize serving the interests of others but never take any interest in them. Generally, trees and animals serve society but do not have to take or never take advantage of their services. Humans with physical and mental capacities should have to know, respond to and serve the interests of society.

Trees give fruits, buds, leaves, bark, wood and tuber as well as shade and greening activities to humans but never consume their products. Trees do not have conscience and knowledge as souls. But they never leave anything for them automatically. It is a universal truth.

Everybody should take exercises of those noble persons in mindsets. They should do acts similar to the moves of noble persons. If so, society as well as the world combined with various sorts of societies would enjoy the fruits of peace. Even if the society is not full of noble persons, if the majority of persons from the society are noble, it is sure that the society as well as the world will be peaceful and tranquil.

Others regardless of religion, racism, skin colour, regionalism, personal cult and attachment. Only when the persons serve society without attachment to having any advantages can they be identified as noble persons.

Noble persons never focus on their interests while serving others. They are ready to sacrifice their interests so as to serve the interests of society and society participants. They never separate any categories for their services based on their white souls. They never discriminate against the persons accepting their services such as female or male, the rich or the poor, the ability or the disabilities, the clever or the naughty and so on. Their mindsets are always clear without any devilish acts such as grudges, hate, envy, jealousy and others.

Everybody should take exercises of those noble persons in mindsets. They should do acts similar to the moves of noble persons. If so, society as well as the world combined with various sorts of societies would enjoy the fruits of peace. Even if the society is not full of noble persons, if the majority of persons from the society are noble, it is sure that the society as well as the world will be peaceful and tranquil.

Livestock animals give meat and meals from the whole body and labour for working to serve the interests of humans. But they never taste their products and benefit from their labour. These animals have a conscience of seeing, hearing and flavouring everything. Especially, cows give milk, beef and animal products to humans but they do not have to use or never use them. Although they are animals, they serve humans as well as a human society without focusing on any benefit for them.

Even if trees and animals can serve society without focusing on their interests, humans from the human society need to serve society's interests more. Actually, humans must serve the interests of

Save life of toddy-palm farmers and toddy-palm trees

Past picturesque scene of toddy-palm trees

Up to about two decades ago, the Anya region located in central Myanmar and toddy-palm plantations were inseparable. Hundreds of trees thrived in the Anya area, giving proper livelihoods to the local people. In reality, the Anya area was a dry zone of the nation but it did not become a desert due to the defiance of toddy-palm trees against the climatic conditions. Thanks to the trees, the Anya area was home to local people called Anyathians.

At that time, travellers could enjoy the scenic beauties of dark green toddy palm plantations. Although the hillocks of the Anya area were barren but tall toddy-palm plantations could conserve and adjust the climatic conditions to be able to drop some volume of rainfalls on a yearly basis. Whenever travellers made trips along the Yangon-Mandalay railway or Mandalay-Myitkyina railway, they could not turn a blind eye to fascinating picturesque views of toddy-palm trees along both sides of the railways. In successive eras, artists created their artistic works depicting the beauties of the plantations with the huts of toddy farmers in the background. Such kinds of photos and paintings on panoramic views of toddy-palm plantations showed off the nature of Myanmar's rural people in the past.

Inseparable scenes of Anya's area and toddy-palm trees

Once, the Anya area of central Myanmar was filled with tall toddy-palm plantations. Now, it is a modern story for new generations. It may be a story told to children before going to bed. Life of toddy farmers and jaggery production livelihoods were left in the past. Myanmar's forefathers grew toddy-palm trees in their croplands and farmlands. Each toddy tree needs to take many decades to be a young one. Such plants were grown hundreds of years ago. But these can give food and income to local people at present. The forefathers grew the trees and current generations enjoy the fruits of growing the trees. So, should the current generation grow further plantations? Should they need to be dutiful for posterity? They have been consuming



An undated photo shows a picturesque view with thriving toddy-palm trees. PHOTO: FREEPIK

the benefits from the plantations for many years. Should they also not leave similar benefits for new generations?

Since cultivation, the saplings of trees benefit the local people. The sprouts of toddy trees give toddy-palm nuts as food to the local people. At a time when the trees are in gradual growth, local people can get leaves of the trees to be used in roofing and some people in rural areas use them on the walls of houses. The base of the toddy-palm branches can be used as household utensils. Buds of the leaves can be used as toys for children and traditional boxes. Moreover, products from the tree can be used in making mats which are suitable for the climatic conditions in all areas. An adult tree gives toddy sap, toddy fruits to be used in Myanmar's traditional snacks and jute for making ropes. All parts of the tree are useful for the people.

Toddy sap as rural drink

Sweet and bitter toddy saps can be drunk as soft drinks. Rural lads joyfully drink toddy sap in Myanmar traditions. The adult tree can give food and utensils to people for many years. So, rural people dub the trees as offspring in their families. The collection of toddy sap is a primary livelihood for local people to produce jaggery. At a time when a boy became an adult, he could not choose options for livelihood. He had to do

the cultivation of crops and climb the trees for collecting toddy sap.

Toddy-palm trees solve kitchen problems

But, toddy sap and jaggery could not fetch good prices. Such least income was used in nurturing the generations of rural people in successive eras. They were needy but they could not starve. It was a real story. Those rural people spent their day time with exhaustion in working toddy-palm farms but they could not uplift their living standard. However, they did not discard their livelihoods for their families, their industries and their nation. They solved the family problems with incomes obtained from toddy-palm plantations. They created household utensils made of parts of trees. The whole hut could be built of toddy parts. Chairs, tables, cups, mats, toys and foods could be made of toddy-palm products. These products showed the nature of Myanmar and Anyathians.

Past time had gone with the wind. People from the Anya area leave abroad to seek jobs which may be better than the toddy-palm businesses they seemed. These plantations are left alone without plant climbers and jaggery makers. It is true that income from toddy-palm farms cannot be compared with that of other jobs abroad. Those working abroad may suffer from homesickness but they miss the chance to re-

turn home immediately. They also miss the chance to meet their friends. Really, the advantages of working at home are the great reward for workers.

Shortages of toddy-palm farmers

Practically, the thick toddy palm plantations in the Anya area do not have toddy farmers. These farms also face gradual degradation. There remain a few toddy farmers for collection of toddy sap and making jaggery. The current condition is not purposed for the production of jaggery on a commercial scale because of shortages of firewood. Hillocks become barren. The trees to be used as firewood cannot be found around the toddy-palm plantations. As the government prohibits the extraction of firewood from various kinds of forests, local people are difficult to produce jaggery. Now is the start of an era to regrow the trees so as to green the Anya region in cooperation with the government. So, the government cannot allow cutting trees to extract firewood for domestic use as well as for use of small-scale industries. On the other hand, local toddy farmers cannot afford to use electricity in making jaggery as power cables have not been installed in many parts of the Anya area yet.

Barren hills cannot conserve the environment. As such, toddy-palm plantation owners sold

their plants. Buyers logged the plants. The Anya area is gradually cleared by cutting the toddy trees. Consequently, the environmental impacts become a burden on local people. Barriers to shortages of labour for climbing toddy-palm trees to collect sap, jaggery makers, transport facilities, and shortages of water and electricity supply are root causes of fading out of the role of toddy-palm plantations and their businesses.

Events leading to desertification

The areas without toddy-palm trees gradually become desertification. Plant owners earned money by selling the toddy plants but later they missed sources of earning income, especially from toddy plantations. Businesspersons who bought toddy trees extended their business areas into the toddy-palm plantations. Local people face a lack of farms and plantations as well as lose livelihoods. Construction projects and business projects invade the past toddy plantation areas. Waste of materials discarded from the projects and the lack of plantations degrade the environment of Anya areas.

Good news: green light for toddy-palm business

An item of good news came out recently. A plan is underway to hold a workshop on toddy products in Mandalay in the second or third week of December for the first time, according to the Mandalay Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The workshop is slated to be held at the office of MRCCI. It is expected that officials from MRCCI, toddy product experts, toddy farmers, toddy product cooperative societies and businesspersons would take part in the discussions of the workshop.

A toddy-palm plantation namely Crown Prince's toddy-palm farm is located in Mandalay Region. Although manufacturing products from toddy-palm trees is a traditional livelihood in upper Myanmar, there are just a few numbers of toddy farmers. It is very important. The workshop will focus on such kinds of topics.

By Aung Kyaw Thant

It will seek the best solution for the improvement of the market for toddy-palm products, especially ensuring the firm market share of toddy sap and jaggery for the remaining livelihoods of toddy farmers and toddy trees alive.

The workshop will last for two days when participants would read research papers on how to manage toddy-palm plantations in the Anya area, how to grasp the market share for toddy products, how to arrange life of local people who lose their livelihoods and plantations and how to provide production techniques and exportation of toddy products. Whatever it may be, the workshop will contribute to the livelihoods of local toddy-palm farmers anyhow.

Save life of toddy-palm farmers and toddy-palm trees

As such, it is necessary to save toddy-palm trees and protect them for their long-term existence. As part of efforts for providing assistance, local authorities should arrange and seek the market for the toddy products. If not, it is necessary to create a market for these products. Efforts must be made for the revitalization of the toddy-palm product industries. If necessary, the trees must be grown on their original lands so as to green the regions and conserve the natural environment.

One of the root causes for

losing the toddy-palm trees is a shortage of modern techniques to operate the manufacturing process of toddy-palm trees. As such, relevant authorities and officials need to modernize the production process of toddy products. Modern techniques and machinery need to be used in the production of toddy sap. Climbing the toddy-palm trees is very dangerous. The climbers need to have wonderful skills to do so. Hence, using modern machinery will solve the problem of toddy sap being free from the danger of worksites and to overcome barriers to producing jaggery.

Great expectations of local people

Water supply and electrification will ease the difficulties in jaggery production. The government and donors sponsored sinking tube wells and water tanks and built earthen lakes to restore water to be supplied to local people. But, the majority of local people still face shortages of water every summer. The government is striving for the installation of power cables and facilitating the Anya region with household solar panels for the consumption of electricity. But, most of the local people are still consuming limited electrification. When the government strives for a supply of water and electricity to the Anya region, toddy palm plantations are gradually degraded. As such, it is necessary to solve the problems of how to stop such kind of degradation of the plantations and how to uplift the living standard of the people. Such a problem is not concerned with just a government. All parties such as the government, the businesspersons and the local people.

people are responsible for seeking the best solution for the problem.

If necessary, experts related to the agricultural research profession need to produce the fast-growth toddy palm species to be distributed to the local farmers. Industrialists should create machinery suitable for the collection of toddy saps without the need to climb the trees to be free from danger. So also, it is necessary to invent machinery to produce value-added toddy-palm products. Authorities concerned need to seek the market for toddy-palm products at home and abroad. Systematic packaging techniques for the products must be shared with local producers.

Using electricity in jaggery production will prevent deforestation due to minimizing the use of firewood. While greening the areas, authorities can solve the fuel requirements of jaggery production. Gradually, the Anya region will be filled with forests, and the regrown toddy plantations will thrive year after year. In consequence, local people including the toddy-palm farmers will have higher living standards with increased incomes from suitable agriculture and livestock farms based on the development of the socioeconomy. Authorities need to encourage local businesses to boom micro, small and medium-scale enterprises related to toddy-palm products. That is why arrangements should be made for the establishment of systematic toddy palm plantations in the Anya area and the improvement of modern jaggery production industries based on the expertise of experts and the efforts of local people.



A toddy-palm tree bears bunches of toddy fruits. PHOTO: FREEPIK

SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

COP27 summit strikes historic deal to fund climate damages



Participants gather at the Sharm El Sheikh International Convention Centre, on the first day of the COP27 climate summit, in Egypt's Red Sea resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh, on 6 November 2022. **PHOTO: LUDOVIC MARIN / AFP**

A fraught UN COP27 summit wrapped up Sunday with a landmark deal on funding to help vulnerable countries cope with devastating climate impacts —and deep disappointment over a failure to push further ambition on cutting emissions.

The two-week talks, which at times appeared to teeter on the brink of collapse, delivered a major breakthrough on a fund for climate “loss and damage”. Pakistani climate minister Sherry Rehman said COP27 “responded to the voices of the vulnerable, the damaged and the lost of the

whole world”.

“We have struggled for 30 years on this path, and today in Sharm el-Sheikh this journey has achieved its first positive milestone,” she said.

Tired delegates applauded when the loss and damage fund was adopted as the sun came up Sunday following days of marathon negotiations over the proposal.

But jubilation over that achievement was countered by stern warnings.

UN chief Antonio Guterres said the UN climate talks had “taken an important step towards justice” with the loss

and damage fund, but fallen short in pushing for the urgent carbon-cutting needed to tackle global warming.

“Our planet is still in the emergency room. We need to drastically reduce emissions now and this is an issue this COP did not address,” Guterres said.

A final COP27 statement covering the broad array of the world's efforts to grapple with a warming planet held the line on the aspirational goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels. —AFP

Global timekeepers vote to scrap leap second by 2035

SCIENTISTS and government representatives meeting at a conference in France voted on Friday to scrap leap seconds by 2035, the organisation responsible for global timekeeping said.

Similar to leap years, leap seconds have been periodically added to clocks over the last half century to make up for the difference between exact atomic time and the Earth's slower rotation.

While leap seconds pass by unnoticed for most people, they can cause problems for a range of systems that require an exact, uninterrupted flow of time,

such as satellite navigation, software, telecommunication, trade and even space travel.

It has caused a headache for the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM), which is responsible for Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) — the internationally agreed standard by which the world sets its clocks.

A resolution to stop adding leap seconds by 2035 was passed by the BIPM's 59 member states and other parties at the General Conference on Weights and Measures, which is held roughly every four years

at the Versailles Palace west of Paris.

The head of BIPM's time department, Patrizia Tavella, told AFP that the “historic decision” would allow “a continuous flow of seconds without the discontinuities currently caused by irregular leap seconds”.

“The change will be effective by or before 2035,” she said via email.

She said that Russia voted against the resolution, “not on principle”, but because Moscow wanted to push the date it comes into force until 2040. —AFP



In search of lost time: The leap second will soon become a thing of the past. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

US only functioning uranium mill draws increasing environmental concerns

THE White Mesa Uranium Mill in southeast Utah, the only operating conventional uranium mill in the United States, has drawn increasing concerns for its impacts on environment and public health.

For 40 years, the White Mesa Mill has processed uranium ore next to the Ute Mountain Ute Reservation in southeast Utah.

A report published by the Grand Canyon Trust earlier this year said radioactive waste from industrial and military facilities are sent there. Only a small amount of uranium is extracted from the waste, the

report said, and the leftovers remain at the mill.

“I am concerned about the continued operation of the mill. Even when permanently closed, the tailings impoundments will remain on White Mesa forever,” Sarah Fields, program director of Uranium Watch, an environmental group that opposes uranium mining and milling, told Xinhua in an interview.

Fields, who has been working for about 10 years on issues related to the environmental impacts associated with uranium milling in Utah, expressed concerns about the expansion

of the White Mesa Mill by the construction of one or two additional tailings impoundments.

“New tailings impoundment will mean the destruction of early cultural resources, which are numerous on the White Mesa Archaeological District. These include kivas, pit houses, food storage structures, burial sites, artifacts, and other evidence of the early inhabitants of Southeast Utah,” Fields told Xinhua.

The mill faces vehement opposition by the adjacent Ute Mountain Ute Tribe community of White Mesa living just few miles away.—Xinhua

India launches first privately made space rocket

INDIA'S first privately-developed Vikram-S rocket was successfully launched from the Indian Space Agency's launch site near Chennai, on Friday.

The 545-kg rocket, named “Prarambh” (“Start”), travelled in an arc and reached a peak altitude of 89.5 km. This was just shy of the Karman line at 100 km altitude, that separates Earth from outer space.

The midday launch was live telecast by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

It eventually splashed down in the Bay of Bengal about 5 minutes after launch, officials said.

“I'm happy to announce

the successful completion of Mission Prarambh, the beginning,” said Pawan Goenka, the head of the Indian government organization that oversees commercial space operations.

The single-stage, solid-fuel rocket was built with “carbon composite structures and 3D-printed components,” according to startup Skyroot Aerospace that developed the rocket.

Compared to current platforms, Skyroot seeks to reduce development costs for launching small satellites by up to 90%. Starting next year, it intends to carry out satellite-delivery launches.—AFP

HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

UN agencies work to confront growing antimicrobial resistance risks

AN UN agency on Friday unveiled a collaborative platform to help foster global collaboration in confronting the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

The announcement of the “Antimicrobial Resistance Multi-Stakeholder Partnership Platform” by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) kicked off Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week, which runs through 24 November.

In addition to the Rome-based FAO, the partnership also includes the UN Environmental Program, the World Health Or-

ganization (WHO), and the World Organization for Animal Health. This quadripartite group is joining forces to call attention to what FAO called “the threat antimicrobial resistance presents to humans, animals, plants, ecosystems, and livelihoods.”

AMR is a phenomenon in which bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites evolve to have resistance to therapies, such as antibiotics or antiviral treatments, according to the definition from the WHO. It can increase the risks of prolonged infection and mortality, increase medical costs, lengthen hospital stays



The announcement of the “Antimicrobial Resistance Multi-Stakeholder Partnership Platform” by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) kicked off Antimicrobial Resistance Awareness Week, which runs through 24 November. **PHOTO: FAO**

and create new ancillary impacts.

In a statement, the FAO said that AMR is the cause of around 1.3 million deaths per year globally, a number that could “soar dramatically, bringing higher public health costs and pushing more people into poverty.”

The creation of the quadripartite group was prompted by events at the 68th World Health Assembly in 2015, which called for a global action plan to take on the problem of AMR by improving communication and awareness on the topic, education and training.—Xinhua

China records first Covid death since May



China announces its first Covid-19 death after six months as it battles increasing outbreaks despite strict measures. **PHOTO: AFP**

CHINA reported its first death from Covid-19 in six months on Sunday as it contends with a rising outbreak despite stringent measures to eliminate infections.

The last major economy still welded to stamping out Covid flare-ups, China has enforced

lockdowns, mass testing and quarantines even as the rest of the world adjusts to living with the virus.

On Sunday, municipal officials announced an 87-year-old man had died in Beijing as the National Health Commission said

it had recorded more than 24,000 infections throughout the country in the previous 24 hours.

While the tally is relatively low compared with other countries, the recent surge is notable in China after months of few cases being announced.

On 11 November Beijing abruptly declared its most significant easing of coronavirus controls to date, including a reduction of quarantine times for international arrivals.

But the limited relaxation did not desert the “zero-Covid” approach, even as it has wrecked massive social and economic consequences.

According to state-run CCTV, Saturday’s Covid-19 death—the first announced since May—involves a mild case, but the elderly man’s condition worsened after a bacterial infection.—AFP

Tanzania sees 32% reduction in TB infections

TUBERCULOSIS (TB) infections in Tanzania have gone down from 306 patients out of 100,000 people in 2015 to 208 patients out of 100,000 people in 2021, a senior official said on Friday.

“The reduction of infections of TB is about 32 per cent,” said Catherine Joachim, Head of the Health Sector Resource Secretariat in the Ministry of Health.

Joachim told a meeting that brought together medical experts to discuss about the National Program to Control TB and Leprosy held in Mwanza city that deaths caused by TB declined from

55,000 annually to 25,800 annually during the period under review.

She urged health workers to use electronic systems in registering patients suffering from TB and leprosy to enable the government obtain credible data.

Balandya Elikana, the Mwanza regional administrative secretary, said the diagnosis of TB patients was facing a chain of challenges, including reluctance by private health centres to check the patients.

Elikana said out of 2,596 private health centres in Tanzania only 506 examined TB patients.—Xinhua

Pakistanis continue to suffer from aftermath of devastating floods: UN

MORE than three months since the devastating floods began in Pakistan, the catastrophe is far from over, said a UN spokesman on Friday.

Access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene remains challenging, with the flooding and standing water having led to a rise in water- and vector-borne diseases, said Farhan Haq, deputy spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

Millions of people face increased food insecurity as families are returning home to destroyed houses, ruined

crops, and dead livestock, he told a daily press briefing.

As winter begins to set in, with snow already affecting some areas, people affected by the floods are even more vulnerable and many need adequate shelter, food and winterization support, he said.

More than 5 million people remain displaced as the floods have affected 33 million people and caused destruction across the agricultural, health and education sectors, said Haq.

Food and livelihoods assistance has reached 4.1 million people, while 1.5 million peo-

ple have received emergency shelter kits, blankets, bedding and kitchen sets. UN humanitarian partners have provided health assistance to 1.5 million people, while more than 1.7 million people have received clean water, he said.

“We are calling for additional funding to maintain the life-saving response. The 816-million-US dollar humanitarian appeal launched by the United Nations and the government of Pakistan is currently just 21 per cent funded,” said the spokesman.—Xinhua



People ride motorbikes on a waterlogged road in northwest Pakistan's Charsadda on 27 August 2022. **PHOTO: QAYYUM/XINHUA**

ECONOMY WORLD

Nepal holds general election amid economic worries

NEPAL voters went to the polls in the Himalayan nation's general election on Sunday, with Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's ruling bloc strongly favored to win.

Over 17.9 million of the 30 million Nepalis are eligible to vote to elect 275 parliamentarians, of which 165 will be elected by first-past-the-post votes, while 110 will be elected under the proportional representation system.

The 76-year-old prime minister's ruling bloc is pitted against an electoral alliance led by his predecessor Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli. In



Tourists visit the Boudhanath Stupa World Heritage Site in Kathmandu, Nepal, 20 July 2019. PHOTO: XINHUA/SUNIL SHARMA

July last year, Deuba succeeded Oli, after the 70-year-old's left-leaning alliance fell apart after some infighting.

The Election Commission said it would take around two weeks to announce the full election results.

The election was Nepal's second general election held under the 2015 Constitution, which has turned the nation into a federation of seven provinces.

The next administration will have an uphill task of rescuing an economy battered by twin earthquakes in 2015, the

coronavirus pandemic, and a rise in fuel and food prices resulting from the war in Ukraine.

The tourism- and remittance-dependent nation's central bank says inflation stands at over 8 per cent, a six-year-high.

Dwindling foreign currency reserves have forced the government to curb spending. Since April, Nepal has restricted the import of non-essential goods including automobiles, electronics, gold and cosmetics.—Kyodo

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cambodia makes over 392 mln USD from rubber exports in first 10 months

CAMBODIA exported 264,918 tonnes of dry rubber in the first 10 months, a slight drop of 0.58 per cent from 266,470 tonnes over the same period last year, said a General Directorate of Rubber report on Friday.

The kingdom earned 392.6 million US dollars in revenue from exports of the commodity during the January-October period this year, down 11 per cent from 443 million dollars over the same period last year, the report said.—Xinhua

China to grant zero-tariff treatment to 98% of imports from Uganda

NINETY eight per cent of Ugandan goods will, starting 1 December access the Chinese market at zero tariff, officials said here Friday.

Speaking at the public unveiling of the Special Preferential Tariff Treatment of Ugandan Exports to China, Zhang Lizhong, Chinese Ambassador to Uganda, said the expansion follows commitments made by China at the Eighth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China Africa Cooperation held in Senegal last year.

China pledged to increase the scope of products enjoying zero tariff treatment for least developed countries that have diplomatic ties with it in a bid to reach 300 billion US dollars in total imports from Africa in the next three years.—Xinhua

Pakistani central bank's forex reserves rise by 3 mln USD

THE State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has announced that its foreign exchange reserves have increased by 3 million US dollars following a significant decrease of almost 956 million dollars last week.

In the week ending on 11 November the total foreign exchange reserves of the SBP increased to around 7.96 billion dollars, the central bank said in a statement on Thursday evening.

Last week, the SBP attributed the decrease in its foreign reserves to the external debt servicing, adding that the refinancing of these loans were in process, which would improve the foreign reserves in the coming weeks.

Currently, the net foreign reserves held by commercial banks comes at 5.83 billion dollars, it said.—Xinhua

US economy tips into mild recession next year: JPMorgan

THE Federal Reserve still has room to run its campaign to tighten the screws on the US economy, and its efforts will probably tip the country into a recession in 2023, business news website INSIDER reported earlier this week, citing JPMorgan.

Analysts led by Michael Feroli forecasted in a Wednesday note to clients that the Federal Open Market Committee meeting in December will result a half-point hike, and that investors should expect 25 basis-point hikes at both the February and March meetings next year.

Even that dialing down of rate hikes, however, is still likely to slow the economy enough to result in a recession, they noted.

"Aggressive moves from the Fed will continue because



People walk through Hudson Yards in Manhattan. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

inflation has proven stubborn," said the report. Even as last month's CPI reading showed signs of easing, and came in below expectations, it remains 7.7 per cent higher year over year.

As part of the bank's forecast, it expects that the US

economy could lose over a million jobs by the middle of 2024. That labor market weakness, then, will convince the Fed that it's generated enough "disinflationary impetus" to adjust policy to a more neutral stance, according to the report.—Xinhua

Mongolia's GDP expands 3.7% in first 3 quarters

MONGOLIA'S gross domestic product (GDP) expanded 3.7 per cent year on year in the first three quarters of this year, official data from the country's National Statistics Office (NSO) showed Friday.

The GDP totaled 35.2 trillion Mongolian Tugriks (over 10.3 billion US dollars) in the January-September period, Erdene-

Ochir Myagmarkhand, a senior expert of the NSO said in a statement.

The increase was mainly attributed to a significant growth of the agricultural and mining sectors, she said.

Mongolia is rich in natural resources, and the mining sector has been one of the main drivers of the country's economic growth

for years.

Meanwhile, agriculture is a traditional sector of the Asian country, producing approximately almost 30 per cent of the GDP and over 10 per cent of the total exports, according to the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry. The Asian country's economy grew 1.4 per cent in 2021.—Xinhua

Mitsukoshi opens 1st Philippine store to promote Japanese lifestyle

MAJOR Japanese department store operator Isetan Mitsukoshi Holdings Ltd. has opened its first store in the Philippines, tapping the Southeast Asian country's growth potential as it aims to promote lifestyle products from Japan.

The new Mitsukoshi BGC shopping mall, which opened Friday in the upscale Bonifacio Global City district of the capital Manila, offers a range of

Japanese products including pastries and cosmetics.

The grand opening of the 28,000-square-meter commercial facility is scheduled for the first quarter of next year, after all of the around 120 tenants, mainly from Japan and the Philippines, have moved in.

The mall also features a Kinokuniya Bookstore, offering Japanese books, manga and stationery, as



Photo shows the inside of Isetan Mitsukoshi Holdings Ltd.'s first outlet in the Philippines. **PHOTO: ISETAN MITSUKOSHI HOLDINGS LTD. / KYODO**

well as a Mitsukoshi Beauty cosmetics shop with a wide selection of natural and organic products.

Among the dining options are Putien, a Michelin-starred Chinese restaurant, Sen-ryo, a sushi restaurant, a branch of the Ramen Nagi chain and a CoCo Ichibanya curry shop.

Isetan Mitsukoshi also operates stores in China, Taiwan, Singapore, Malay-

sia and the United States.

The Manila mall is part of a joint residential and commercial development project with Nomura Real Estate Development Co. and local developer Federal Land Inc.

Mitsukoshi BGC occupies the first to third floors and the first basement level of the 54-story complex, with the rest of the facility chiefly reserved for 1,400 apartment units.—Kyodo

Elizabeth Holmes sentenced to 11 years in prison for Theranos fraud

FALLEN US biotech star Elizabeth Holmes was sentenced Friday to just over 11 years in prison for defrauding investors with her Silicon Valley start-up firm.

The Theranos founder had been convicted on four felony fraud counts in January for persuading investors that she had developed a revolutionary medical device before the company flamed out after an investigation by The Wall Street Journal.

The closely watched case became an indictment of Silicon Valley, and US federal prosecutors had sought a 15-year jail term for Holmes. She was sentenced to 135 months.

US attorney Steph-



Fallen US biotech star Elizabeth Holmes. **PHOTO: AFP**

anie Hinds said the sentence "reflects the audacity of her massive fraud and the staggering damage she caused."

"For almost a decade, Elizabeth Holmes fabricated and spread elaborate

falsehoods to draw in a legion of capital investors, both big and small, and her deceit caused the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars," the prosecutor said in a statement following the judge's decision.—AFP

US gets set for higher-priced holiday season: media

US small businesses that count on food-centric holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas are bracing for a difficult season, as higher prices are hitting everyone in the country with food vendors seeing some of the biggest increases, reported The Associated Press over the weekend.

At the wholesale level, egg prices are more than triple what they were a year ago, milk prices are up 34 per cent and butter is up 70 per cent, according to data from the US Department of Agriculture. Businesses are also paying more for everything from pack-

ages to labor.

"Many owners are raising prices to offset the higher costs. But raising prices too much risks driving away the crucial holiday shopper," said the report.

So, businesses are adapting: adjusting the way they make products,

changing gift basket components and adding free gifts instead of giving discounts, among other steps, it noted.

"Every year is a guess, and the economy makes it even more volatile," a food retailer was quoted as saying.—Xinhua



People walk across a street in Washington, D.C., the United States, 4 November 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA/LIU JIE**

Twitter turmoil, staff exodus aggravate security concerns

TWITTER'S owner Elon Musk has pledged the platform will not become a "hellscape," but experts fear a staff exodus following mass layoffs may have devastated its ability to combat misinformation, impersonation and data theft.

Twitter devolved into what campaigners described as a cesspit of falsehoods and hate speech after recent layoffs cut half the company's 7,500 staff

and fake accounts proliferated following its botched rollout of a paid verification system.

Further throwing the influential platform into disarray — and raising doubt about its very existence — reports said hundreds of employees chose to depart the company Thursday in defiance of an ultimatum from Musk.

"The huge number of layoffs and resignations

raises serious questions about content moderation and the security of user data," Cheyenne Hunt-Majer, from the nonprofit Public Citizen, told AFP.

"It is imperative that (US regulators) act with urgency as users could have their sensitive data exploited or even stolen given the lack of sufficient staff that remain to adequately protect it."

The hashtag RIPTwit-

ter gained huge traction on the site after resignations poured in from employees who chose "no" to Musk's demand that they either be "extremely hardcore" or exit the company.

Twitter has plunged into turmoil as Musk, a self-professed free speech absolutist, seeks to shake up the money-losing company after his blockbuster \$44 billion buyout late last month.—AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V GSS YANGON VOY.NO. (156N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V GSS YANGON VOY.NO. (156N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **21-11-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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China in action to guarantee energy supply for winter heating



Taiyuan Heating Group's Taigu branch dispatched staffers to check an energy station in Taigu county, Taiyuan city of North China's Shanxi province, on 4 November 2021. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

AS chilly weather started to grip a vast part of north China, sending temperatures plunging, natural gas production and supplies have been running in full swing in the Changqing oilfield to ensure residents a warm room temperature in winter.

The oilfield, located in northwest China's Erdos basin, is China's largest oil-and-gas field that supplies natural gas to more than 40 major cities, including Beijing and Tianjin. To ensure sufficient natural

gas for this year's winter heating, the oilfield planned seven months ahead to arrange the production.

Besides the Changqing oilfield, other key energy suppliers in northern regions, such as the Daqing oilfield and Tarim oilfield, have all kicked into high gear to meet the heating needs of households as winter comes.

As one of the most concerning public services for people in northern regions, winter heating always remains an important livelihood issue for

Chinese authorities.

Earlier this week, a fresh move came as the country's top economic planner pledged stronger support for upstream firms to beef up natural gas production and stock to help tide over heating peaks during the winter.

The National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) said it will urge localities to stay true to related price policies to maintain relatively stable natural gas prices for households.—Xinhua

Malaysia faces hung parliament after election, ex-PM Mahathir loses

MALAYSIA faced a hung parliament Sunday, after neither of the two major alliances of parties competing in the previous day's general election was able to win a majority, while former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad lost his parliamentary seat.

The shock defeat of elder statesman Mahathir, who was the chief architect of the country's transition into a modern economy and one of Asia's best-known politicians, will likely signal his exit from the political stage.

The 97-year-old ruled Malaysia from 1981 to 2003 and then again in 2018-2020 during two stints in power.

Mahathir, who got less than 10 per cent of the vote in the constituency he was contesting, was leading a grouping of Malay parties and his electoral loss was his first since 1969.

The election took place amid political instability in the country, which has seen three leadership changes in the past four years.—Kyodo

Türkiye strikes Kurdish groups in Iraq, Syria after Istanbul explosion

TÜRKIYE conducted an air operation early Sunday against the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) in northern Syria and the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in northern Iraq, the Turkish Defense Ministry said.

The "Claw-Sword" air operation was carried out in regions used as bases to attack Türkiye and in self-defense in line with the 51st article of the UN Charter, the ministry said in a written statement.

"Time for a reckoning! The scoundrels are being held accountable for the treacherous attacks," the ministry said in an earlier tweet.

The operation came af-



A file picture shows Syrian regime forces manning a position in the countryside of the city of Kobane, also known as Ain al-Arab, along the border with Türkiye. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

ter last Sunday's deadly attack in Istanbul that killed at least six and left 81 injured.—Xinhua

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT



Local residents hold a Ukrainian flag on the station platform next to the first train from Kyiv to Kherson since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which arrived at the Kherson train station on 19 November 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

First passenger train arrives in Kherson from Kyiv since the start of invasion

THE first train arrived in Kherson from Kyiv on the morning of 19 November, as Ukraine resumed railway traffic between the capital and the recently liberated southern city.

The overnight sleeper train departed from Kyiv on the evening of 18 November, with 200 passengers on board. Some of the train's cars were painted by Ukrainian artists for the occasion. A few top of-

officials took the train, including deputy prime minister Iryna Vereshchuk and culture minister Oleksandr Tkachenko.

Ukraine liberated Kherson after eight months of occupation on 11 November. The Russian troops had to withdraw from the west bank of the Dnipro River, where the city sits, after Ukrainian forces had spent months systematically destroying their logistics with

high-precision attacks.

Recently, the state railway operator Ukrzaliznytsia started selling the so-called "tickets to the victory" to the cities still under Russian occupation, including to Simferopol, the capital of Crimea. The tickets help fund the state railway company amid the war. They can be used after the cities are liberated and the railway connection is resumed with them.—AFP

APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting concludes with adoption of declaration, Bangkok Goals

LEADERS of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) economies issued a declaration and endorsed an outcome document on Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy on Saturday.

The declaration, adopted after the two-day 29th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, affirmed APEC leaders' long-standing commitment to promoting strong, balanced, secure, sustainable and inclusive growth, as well as their commitment to realizing the APEC Putrajaya Vision of an open, dynamic, resilient and peaceful

Asia-Pacific community by 2040.

In the declaration, the leaders said they are determined to uphold and further strengthen the rules-based multilateral trading system. They welcomed progress this year in advancing the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), and will continue to build on this momentum towards high-quality and comprehensive regional undertakings through the FTAAP Agenda Work Plan.

Member economies will continue to promote efforts to strengthen APEC's leadership,

standing as the premier economic forum of the Asia-Pacific, as well as a modern, efficient and effective incubator of ideas. APEC's cooperation will contribute to practical solutions for common challenges and complement global efforts including the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the declaration said.

The leaders reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing an open and interconnected Asia-Pacific region, including through the implementation of the APEC Connectivity Blueprint (2015-2025).—Xinhua



Photo taken on 19 November 2022 shows Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha at a press conference after the conclusion of the 29th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand. **PHOTO: XINHUA/GUO LEI**

Trump on playbill as top Republicans meet



Donald Trump will address a gathering of senior Republican Party figures this weekend, including potential rivals for the White House, in his first speech since announcing a plan to run in 2024. **PHOTO: AFP**

DONALD Trump will address a gathering of senior Republican Party figures this weekend, including potential rivals for the White House, in his first speech since announcing a plan to run in 2024.

The former US president

was a late addition to the guest list for the annual leadership meeting of the Republican Jewish Coalition in Las Vegas, which began Friday.

Trump, dialing in by video on Saturday, will join a slate of top GOP speakers, including some

who are thought to be mulling a bid for the party's presidential nomination, like Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, former vice president Mike Pence and ex-secretary of state Mike Pompeo.

It will be his first public address since the hour-long announcement at his Mar-a-Lago home that he wanted his old job back.

That speech came a week after the Republican Party's disappointing showing in the midterm elections, which senior party figures have blamed on the property tycoon and his grievance-laden denials of his own election defeat. The high-profile candidates he endorsed did worse than mainstream Republicans in the poll, including his pick for Pennsylvania senator, leaving the upper chamber in the hands of the Democratic Party. —AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Charles III welcomes S.Africa president as hosts first state visit of reign

KING Charles III next week hosts his first state visit as monarch, welcoming South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and his wife to Buckingham Palace.

The last state visit to the UK came in June 2019, when queen Elizabeth II hosted US president Donald Trump and his wife Melania.

Charles has yet to announce where he will go on his first overseas visit as king, and this was the first invitation he extended since succeeding his late mother in September. —AFP

Two firefighters killed in Peru as plane hits airport fire truck

TWO firefighters were killed Friday at Lima's airport when a passenger plane hit their fire truck during takeoff then crashed on the runway, officials said.

The airline LATAM, which operated the domestic flight, said 102 passengers were onboard the plane but added that "no passengers or crew members lost their lives." —AFP

Over 100 unmanned vessels to be deployed in Gulf waters: CENTCOM

A US-led task force will deploy over 100 unmanned vessels in the Gulf region's strategic waters by next year to stave off maritime threats, the US Central Command chief said Saturday.

The announcement by General Michael Kurilla at the annual Manama Dialogue conference in Bahrain came after Israel and the United States blamed Iran for a drone strike off the coast of Oman this week that hit a tanker operated by an Israeli-owned firm.

The attack, which coincided with heightened tensions between Tehran and Washington, was the latest in a string of disruptions in Gulf waters that are a key route for world energy supplies.

"By this time next year, Task Force 59 will bring together a fleet of over 100 unmanned surface and subsurface vessels operating together, communicating together and providing maritime domain awareness," the CENTCOM chief said.

Launched in September



In this file photo released by the US Navy, a SAILDRONE Explorer unmanned sea drone sails in the Gulf of Aqaba on 9 February 2022. **PHOTO: MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS DAWSON ROTH/US NAVY**

2021, Task Force 59 was created in Bahrain, home to the US navy's Fifth Fleet, to integrate unmanned systems and artificial intelligence into Middle East operations following a series of drone attacks blamed on Iran.

While airborne and subsea unmanned vessels are quite well developed, unmanned surface boats are a new technology that are essential for security in the future, according to the Fifth Fleet. —Xinhua



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.

Myanmar Rowing Team wins five silver medals in 14th Asian Dragon Boat Championship



Myanmar team competes against the Indonesian team during the doubles' 12-oar 1,000-m boat race.

THE finals of the 14th Asian Dragon Boat Championship were held in Pattaya of Thailand on 19 and 20 November, and the Myanmar rowing team won five silver medals.

In the men's 22-oar men's 1,000-m event, China team won gold, Myanmar team silver and Thailand team bronze medal respectively.

In the 22-oar doubles' 1,000-m event, Indonesia won gold medal, Myanmar team silver medal and Thailand team bronze medal respectively.

In the 12-oar women's 1,000-m event, China team secured gold medal, Myanmar team silver medal and Thailand team bronze medal respectively.

In the 12-oar doubles' 1,000-m event, Indonesia team won gold, Myanmar team silver and Thai team bronze medal respectively. In the doubles' 12-oar 500-m event, Indonesia team bagged gold medal, Myanmar team silver medal and Hong Kong team bronze medal respectively.

The Myanmar team competed in 15 different competitions

and won five medals.

The host Thailand team, Australian team, Cambodian team, Taipei team, Hong Kong team, Chinese team, Indian team, Indonesian team, Malaysian team, Myanmar team, the Nepalese team, and the Singaporean team competed against each other in the Championship.

The Myanmar team will continue to compete in the Thailand Traditional Boat and International Swan Boat Race 2022, which will be held from 22 to 26 November.—Bala Soe/GNLM

World Cup kicks off in Qatar after troubled buildup

THE World Cup kicked off in Qatar on Sunday as the month-long football showpiece finally got under way after a tortuous 12-year build-up dogged by off-field controversies.

Qatar's Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani was present in the impressive Al Bayt Stadium in Al Khor, 50 kilometres (31 miles) outside of Doha, to watch the host nation face Ecuador.

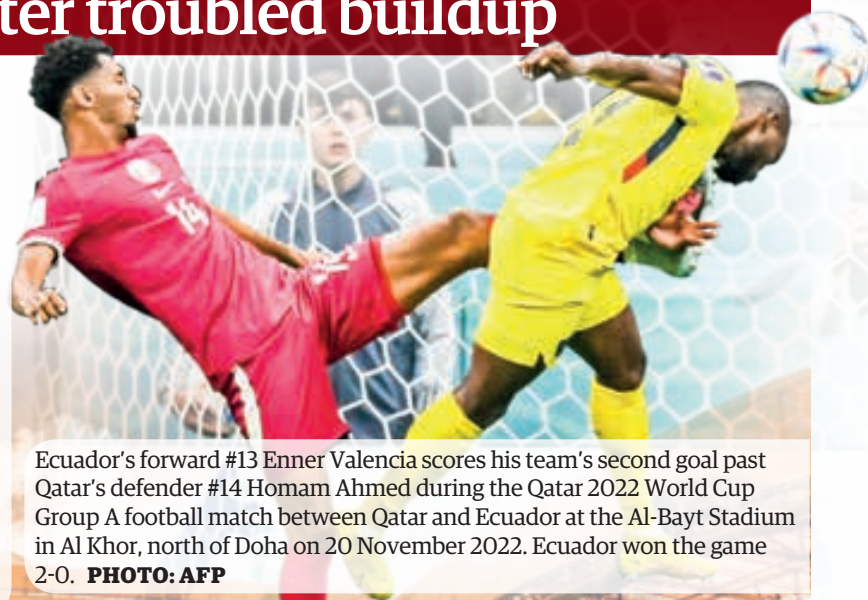
In a breathless start to the match in the stadium shaped like a Bedouin tent, Ecuador's Enner Valencia headed the ball into the net after three minutes but the goal was disallowed for offside.

Thirteen minutes later, Ecuador did take the lead after Valencia dribbled round Qatari

goalkeeper Saad Alsheeb who grabbed his shin and the referee pointed to the spot and Valencia coolly rolled home the penalty.

Valencia added a second goal to give Ecuador a 2-0 lead in the 31st minute.

The Al Bayt venue is one of an array of new stadiums built for the tournament, which has cost Qatar an estimated \$200 billion, the most expensive World Cup in history. South Korean K-pop star Jung Kook headlined the 30-minute opening ceremony. The list of foreign dignitaries included Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman who orchestrated a regional blockade of Qatar in 2017. FIFA president Gianni Infantino sat next to the Saudi leader.—AFP



Ecuador's forward #13 Enner Valencia scores his team's second goal past Qatar's defender #14 Homam Ahmed during the Qatar 2022 World Cup Group A football match between Qatar and Ecuador at the Al-Bayt Stadium in Al Khor, north of Doha on 20 November 2022. Ecuador won the game 2-0. PHOTO: AFP

Dancers perform during the opening ceremony ahead of the Qatar 2022 World Cup Group A football match between Qatar and Ecuador at the Al-Bayt Stadium in Al Khor, north of Doha on 20 November 2022. PHOTO: AFP

