

# THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. IX, No. 247, 12<sup>th</sup> Waning of Nattaw 1384 ME

www.gnlm.com.mm

Monday, 19 December 2022

## Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

## Myanmar soon to meet initial export target of 30,000 tonnes of rice to Bangladesh through Patheingyi Port

**M**YANMAR will achieve its export target of 30,000 tonnes of rice under an initial plan from Patheingyi Port to Bangladesh.

All the private and public stakeholders involved in a supply chain including the Ayeyawady Region Government, the ministry concerned and exporters are exerting the concerted efforts to facilitate rice exports in a set period and meet quality standard and export target directly from the region. Myanmar has conveyed rice directly through Patheingyi Port in Ayeyawady Region to Bangladesh since 2 November. A total of 2,650 tonnes of rice were loaded onto the 8<sup>th</sup> vessel on 18 December and it is scheduled to leave for Bangladesh on 19 December.

According to the government to government pact between Myanmar and Bangladesh, Bangladesh is to purchase 200,000 tonnes of rice. Myanmar sends rice to Bangladesh through Yangon Port and Thilawa terminals. Additionally, the country made a milestone to ship the goods via the Ayeyarwaddy International Industrial Port and sent 18,475 tonnes of rice with seven ships so far. When 2,650 tonnes of rice is exported by MCL-7 ship, the overall export



Bags of rice being loaded on vessel at Patheingyi Port for exportation to Bangladesh. PHOTO: KANU

volume is 21,125 tonnes so far. As a result, the region's export target set as 30,000 tonnes will soon be accomplished.

"The remaining 197 tonnes of rice were being loaded onto the 8<sup>th</sup> ship on 18 December. The ship is slated to depart on 19 December depending on some circumstances. The ships will

carry 2,650 tonnes of rice. So, the export volume totalled 21,125 tonnes. The country is soon to meet its target. If the contract is going well, further exports will be undertaken via the Patheingyi Port. The direct shipment from Patheingyi saves cost so it brings about the benefits to the State and the traders. This route es-

pecially helps reduce the fuel cost and create economic opportunities for exporters and job opportunities for local residents," said an official of the Ayeyawady Region Consumers Affair Department.

Myanmar's agriculture sector is driven by export-led growth. It contributes to the

GDP and socio-economic development of the rural communities. The State is maintaining growth momentum in agriculture and livestock sectors and the Ayeyawady region government is fulfilling the needs to facilitate the smooth and swift flow of exports. —Nyein Thu (MNA)/EMM

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## Five National Objectives of Diamond Jubilee Independence Day

1. To ensure cementing the discipline-flourishing genuine multiparty democratic system and build the Union based on democracy and federalism;
2. To utmost strive for ensuring prosperity of the nation and food sufficiency as national work processes;
3. To build a better State and socio-economic life in accord with the theme “Keep Moving Forward to Achieve Our Goal” focusing on interests of the State and ethnic national people;
4. To initiate national solidarity and peace of the Union with a firm vow;
5. To successfully hold the free and fair multiparty democratic general elections and emerge an electoral system in which all ethnic nationals would participate proportionately.

**The people are urged to receive vaccination of Covid-19 without fail as full-time vaccination of Covid-19 and receiving booster shots can effectively mitigate infection of the virus, severe suffering from the disease and increasing of death rate based on the disease.**

## 4 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 18 December, total figure rises to 633,555

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **633,555** after **4** new cases were reported on 18 December 2022 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **608,137**, including **25** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged to **19,488** on 18-12-2022 with no new death reported from the pandemic.

The country has vaccinated **30,819,676** people aged 18 and above for COVID-19 vaccines and **6,790,734** people aged under 18 till 17 December 2022.

### Status of COVID-19 vaccination (as of 17 December 2022)

People aged 18 and above who received vaccines	<b>30,819,676</b>
People under 18 years old who received vaccines	<b>6,790,734</b>

According to the research, it is found that people who have been vaccinated do not suffer 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](http://moh.gov.mm) of the Ministry of Health.—MNA

## Myanmar goods trade deficit with Singapore estimated at \$2.4 bln in seven months

MYANMAR'S trade deficit in goods with Singapore was estimated at US\$2.44 billion in the past seven months (Apr-Oct) of the current financial year 2022-2023, the statistics of the Ministry of Commerce indicated.

Singapore is Myanmar's second largest trading partner in the region, after Thailand. In the current FY, the value of Myanmar's bilateral trade with Singapore in normal trade and border trade topped \$2.64

billion.

The Ministry of Commerce reported that imports surpassed exports in trade with Singapore, with exports reaching over \$98.9 million and imports valued at over \$2.54 billion.

Myanmar exports agricultural produce, footwear, textiles and clothing, minerals, and animal products to Singapore, while it imports plastic, fuel oil, capital goods, intermedi-

ate goods, consumer products, metals, and chemicals.

Myanmar's bilateral trade with Singapore was registered at \$1.72 billion in the 2021-2022 mini-budget period, \$2.8 billion in the 2020-2021 FY, \$3.8 billion in the 2019-202 FY, \$3.5 billion in the FY 2018-2019, \$1.99 billion in the 2018 mini-budget period, \$3.83 billion in the 2017-2018FY, \$2.96 billion in the 2016-2017FY, and \$3.69 billion in the 2015-2016FY.—KK



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## 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)*

## Ayeyawady team beat Kachin 5-0 in third-placed match of SAC Chairman's Trophy U-18 women's football tournament

AYEYAWADY Region team beat Kachin State team 5-0 in the third-place of the SAC Chairman's Trophy U-18 women's football tournament yesterday.

As a gesture of hailing the Diamond Jubilee Independence Day 2023, the third-placed match was held at Wunna Theikdi Stadium in Nay Pyi Taw at 3 pm yesterday.

Among the spectators were SAC members General Mya Tun Oo, Jeng Phang Naw Taung and Dr Banyar Aung Moe, officials of Ministry of Defence, Deputy Minister Dr Myo Thant and wife and Dep-



SAC members General Mya Tun Oo, Jeng Phang Naw Taung and Dr Banyar Aung Moe enjoy third-placed match of SAC Chairman's Trophy U-18 women's football tournament at Wunna Theikdi Stadium in Nay Pyi Taw on 18 December.



uty Minister U Myo Hlaing, the Director-General of the Sports and Physical Education De-

partment.

The Mandalay Region team will take on the Shan

State team in the final match of the tournament at Wunna Theikdi Stadium at 3 pm on

19 December. Spectators can enjoy the match and admission is free.—MNA/KZL

## MoNREC Union Minister attends 17<sup>th</sup> Eco Expo Asia 2022

AT the invitation of Minister of Environment and Ecology Mr TSE Chin-wan of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, the 17<sup>th</sup> Eco Expo Asia took place at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre from 14 to 17 December 2022, attended by Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi and party.

On 14 December, the Union

Minister in his speech said that Myanmar has many opportunities for ecosystem-based development like other countries in the Asian region, adding that Myanmar is joining hands with regional countries in solving the climate change; and controlling environmental pollution.

In order to achieve sustainable development of Myanmar, strong policy and strategic plans on climate change mitigation

and carbon balance are being implemented.

According to the Paris Agreement, "National Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Action Plans (NDCs)" were presented in 2021, and Nature Based Solutions such as establishment of permanent forest areas to achieve the 2030 carbon emission reduction goals, forest plantations, and establishment of nature conservation areas.

Green development campaigns involving the public are being carried out, he said.

A green economic policy framework has been developed and the development of the renewable energy sector for the development of the clean energy sector. Energy production from waste and the development of green transport and communication sector are being carried out.

Next the Union Minister along with guests and representatives looked around the green-based project galleries, the exhibitions on eco-friendly products, air quality improvement booths, waste recycling and energy production, agro-waste-based energy production, galleries on green building development, green transportation such as electric car, galleries of electric and gas hybrid cars and hydrogen fuel cars.

On 15 December, the Union Minister met with HK SAR Government, Minister of Environment and Ecology Mr TSE Chin-wan.

They discussed a carbon-free electricity generation sector to achieve Hong Kong's 2050 goal of carbon neutrality, development of green buildings and energy saving sector, actions in four priority areas such as green transportation sector and waste reduction sector.

The Union Minister discussed the conditions for bilateral technical cooperation and capacity building on green development.

Likewise, he met with the officials of the Hong Kong-Myanmar Chamber of Commerce on 14 December and discussed the issues of increasing green investments.

He also attended discussions on the carbon balance and circular economic development, development of green buildings and energy saving, development of the carbon market and the development of the hydrogen energy-based transportation sector from 15 to 17 December.

The Union Minister and party returned to Yangon by air yesterday afternoon.—MNA



Union Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi views electric cars at 17<sup>th</sup> Eco Expo in Hong Kong on 14 December.



# Palm oil price hovers around K5,300 per viss in December

THE palm oil price stays around K5,300 per viss in December.

The delivery order price for palm oil was approximately K5,350 per viss on 6 and 16 December, which shows an increase of K785 per viss compared to the reference price. The wholesale market prices of palm oil were around K5,300-5,350 per viss in Yangon and K5,450 in Mandalay on 18 December.

The Malaysian palm oil price dipped from 3,926 Ringgit to 3,918 Ringgit on 16 December. The relevant authorities issue the wholesale reference price of palm oil on a weekly basis. The wholesale reference price



Edible oil is pouring into a bottle for a consumer at a shop.

for Yangon was set at K4,020 per viss on 3 October and slid to K3,880 on 10 October. Thereafter, the wholesale reference price

gradually went up to K4,630 on 5 December.

In November, the authorities hiked the reference price

every week. The figures indicated an increase of K200 compared to the previous month. The reference prices were set at K4,425 per viss for a week ending 4 December, K4,630 for a week ending 11 December and K4,515 for a week ending 18 December respectively. The reference price is released on Mondays.

The reference prices moved up and down slightly in December. However, the market price of palm oil remained unchanged, said Ko Phyo, a trader who sends edible oil to the regions outside Yangon.

The wholesale price of palm oil has dropped below K5,000 from 18 November. The delivery

order price was around K5,950 per viss on 16 November, while the market price was around K6,000-K6,100 per viss. On 18 November, the palm oil was priced at K5,700-K5,750 per viss in the wholesale market.

The edible oil traders can evaluate the profit by closely observing the international markets.

The wholesale market price of palm oil in December 2022 was down by K4,000 compared to the highest record at K9,500 this year. Despite the decline in prevailing market price, the price of the food products with palm oil is still high, the consumers stressed.—TWA/EMM

## Illegal teaks, foodstuffs, engine oil, electronic, vehicles seized

UNDER the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, in order to effectively prevent illegal trade in accordance with the law, inspections were carried out under the arrangements of the Customs Department.

Elevator accessories (estimated value of K4,515,000) in the airport warehouse without licence were seized at the Yangon International Airport on 16 December.

On 17 December, a container containing more electrical accessories (estimated value of K25.62 million) more than the declared import declaration form (ID) was found at the Myanmar Industrial Port Container Inspection Station. A total of (estimated value of K30,135,000) was seized and action is taken in accordance with customs procedures.

Similarly, on 17 December, a combined inspection team conducted inspections at the Tadakyo combined checkpoint under the management of the Kayin State Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force.

Edible oil and fuel which did not pay custom duty on one vehicle (estimated value of K5 million) and one Toyota Noah vehicle carrying these goods (estimated value of K25 million) and net value of (approximately K30 million) was seized and action is taken in accordance with customs procedures.

Also, combined inspection teams led by the Regional Forest Department conducted inspections under the management of the Bago Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force.

A total of 1.8816 tonnes (estimated value of K652,110) of various types of illegal timber were seized in Toungoo District, and action is taken in accordance with the Forest Law.

Therefore, nine arrests on 16 and 17 December were seized (with estimated value of K60,787,110) according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee.—MNA

## Qatar Embassy organizes ceremony to mark FIFA World Cup 2022 closing

THE Qatar Embassy yesterday organized an event at Wydham Grand Hotel, Yangon to mark the closing of the FIFA World Cup 2022 which was successfully held in Qatar for a month of period.

The closing ceremony was attended by officials from Qatar Embassy and invited guests.

“During this period, visitors to Qatar learn about the bright aspects of our history and culture, and test our belief in civilized interaction with other cultures, and our respect and pride in our Arab and Islamic values.

“The 2022 FIFA World Cup showed the world, Qatar’s cultural identity, economic, security and administrative abilities, and its tangible and obvious achievements in all fields.

“We are grateful for the support and praise for our success in organizing this major



Qatar Embassy diplomats seen at the ceremony to mark the conclusion of the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 at Wydham Grand Hotel, Yangon on 18 December 2022. PHOTO: QATAR EMBASSY

global humanitarian event. We affirm that this unique and inspiring experience is for all humanity.

“In this context, the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar brought the people together and unified the feelings, and affirmed that the world can be united to face the major challenges that threaten all humanity.

“As a trusted international partner, the State of Qatar be-

lieves in supporting the collective initiatives and the multilateral action.

“Qatar is always proactive in responding to global crises such as food security, energy security, the COVID-19 pandemic and others,” said Charge d’Affaires of the Embassy of the State of Qatar to Myanmar Dr Rashid Abdulla Al-Kuwarl to mark the event.—GNLM/KZL

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Printed and published at the Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the Global New Light of Myanmar Daily under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

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# LOCAL BUSINESS

## Mang Wein border point expected to be reopened after Chinese New Year

TRADE activity at Muse-Mang Wein crossing point, which performed the majority of trade between Myanmar and China, is expected to resume after the upcoming Chinese New Year in 2023, said U Min Thein, vice chair of Muse Rice Wholesale Centre.

China has restricted border access through Mang Wein border point amid the COVID-19 cases since 30 March 2021. This being so, it was about one year and nine months that the trade at Mang Wein was suspended. The border checkpoint is yet to be reopened.

Since April 2022, China has shut down the Ruili-Kyalgaung crossing point and it was eased on 10 December 2022.

Following the reopening of Kyalgaung border, the checkpoints linking to Kyalgaung crossing point in Muse trade

post (Nantaw, Sinphyu and Mang Wein) are likely to be reopened soon, traders engaged in Muse border forecast.

“On 10 December, Kyalgaung crossing point was reopened. Both people from Shweli (Ruili) and Kyalgaung are free to pass the point. It raised expectations of traders for the reopening of Mang Wein, Nantaw and Sinphyu checkpoints. Speculation about resumption of cross border trade at those points is going around,” U Min Thein said.

On 18 October, Myanmar’s officials and counterparts from Tathong, Yunnan Province negotiated the promotion of bilateral cross-border trade and reopening of Mang Wein checkpoint through a video conferencing.

Prior to the pandemic, Kyalgaung was the busiest and biggest trade post and it per-



Cargo trucks rolling into China through Muse 105<sup>th</sup>-Mile border point.

formed 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, pulses, rubber, watermelon, fishery products, chilli pepper and other food commodities to China through Kyinsankyawt with about 100 trucks and building materials, electrical appliances, pharmaceuticals, fertilizer, household goods and industrial raw materials are imported into the country with 40 trucks.

Myanmar has opened five border trade posts with China; Muse, Lweje, Kanpaiti, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung. Majority of the trade is carried out through Muse post, Ministry of Commerce’s data indicated. —NN/EMM

## Hass avocado sales brisk in domestic market



Quality Hass avocado fruits prepared to be distributed to domestic market.

HASS avocado is primarily distributed in the domestic market and the sellers are doing a roaring trade, said U Myo Nyunt, vice chair of Myanmar Avocado Producers and Exporters Association.

Those avocados were harvested in November and they are abundantly seen in the domestic markets. The prices of avocados range between K3,000 and K7,000 per kilo depending on grades. The commercially valued Hass avocado is highly traded in the domestic market. It is marketable in the export market as well.

“At present, they are sold in the domestic market. The

wholesale prices were from K3,000-K7,000 per kilo depending on sizes and grades. The harvest time is earlier than usual this year. Although the income of the people is falling, they purchase avocados. The avocado market is bustling,” he continued.

They are mainly sent to Yangon and Mandalay big cities and the remaining is delivered to Muse, Lashio and Monywa markets. The traders are aiming to expand the scope of the market depending on the market demand. They explore markets through digital platforms as well.—Min Htet Aung (Mandalay sub-printing house)/EMM

## New black-eyed pea enters Mandalay market

THE newly harvested black-eyed peas entered Mandalay at high prices, traders said.

Those peas were harvested earlier this year as usual. The peas from Madaya, Singu, Monywa and Kyaukse areas flowed into markets. The price was K100,000 per three-basket bag during the harvest time last year. The price increased to K115,000 per bag. The price is pretty high, said Soe Win Myint, an owner of Soe Win Myint depot from Mandalay.

“This pea is also known as Nadaw pea as they are usually harvested in early Nadaw (ninth month of traditional Myanmar calendar). Some

regard this as a gem as this lucrative pea brings prosperity for the growers every year so they are also figuratively called as Weint Sein pea (the popular gold shop name) in Kyaukse area. The pea is primarily shipped to India, China, Japan and European countries as the domestic consumption is extremely low. Traders from Yangon are buying them to export them to India. So, black eyed peas from Hinthada will be harvested. It is grown once a year. The quality and yield of the pea are good amid the favourable weather condition,” he elaborated.

It is primarily produced

in Kyaukse, Madaya, Singu, Wundwin, Thetaw, Monywa, Pakokku, Salin, Sinbyugyun, Hinthada, Zalun, Kayan and Thongwa townships.

Myanmar has shipped more than 29,269 tonnes of black-eyed peas to the international trade partners till 9 December in the current financial year 2022-2023 since April 2022, generating revenue of US\$19.9 million, the Customs Department’s statistics showed.

The foreign trade partners prefer Myanmar’s black-eyed peas due to the low content of chemical residues.—Min Htet Aung (Mandalay sub-printing house)/KK



Sample beans including black-eyed pea seen in the market.



## CURRENT AFFAIRS

### Yangon General Hospital's specialty outpatient department to admit online booking from 1 January



An entrance to Yangon General Hospital.

FROM 1 January 2023, patients wishing to receive medical treatment at the specialty outpatient department of Yangon General Hospital will be allowed only online booking, according to a statement from Yangon General Hospital.

Those patients have to come to the department in the early morning and wait in line to register. Due to the long waiting time for making diagnosis, plans are being made to test the use of the online booking system.

"This online booking system

is smart. It is systematic one. But there may be a problem for patients who don't have knowledge on techniques to tackle cell phones. Moreover, brokers who arrange places may appear in online booking. Even the passport issuance office suspends the only booking system. So, it needs to wait and see. If it's convenient, that's fine," patient U Than Zaw from Sangyoun Township told to the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

The patients who come to the specialty outpatient department must make a booking through Yangon General Hospital's Viber or Messenger or caremobot application, and the booking method is described on Yangon General Hospital's social network page.—TWA/KZL

### Seikkyi-Khanaungto Bridge across Twantay Canal 19 per cent complete

ACCORDING to the Ministry of Construction, 19 per cent of the construction of Seikkyi-Khanaungto Bridge, which connects Seikkyi-Khanaungto Township with Dala Township of Yangon Region, has been completed.

The Seikkyi-Khanaungto Bridge is built across the Twantay Canal, and the construction of the bridge is currently only 19 per cent complete.

The bridge construction would totally cost K34 billion from the Union Budget. The bridge will have 740 meters long, and a two-lane steel arch bridge.

The bridge will have a 28 feet wide motorway. The sidewalk will be 1.5 feet wide on each side, and the water clearance will be 49 feet high and 459 feet wide, and it can withstand 75 tonnes of loads.

The main bridge span will have a 160 meters long span and two 45-m steel box girder spans. Eight 30-meter bridge spans and one 20-meter span will be built on the bank of Seikkyi-Khanaungto Township.

The foundation of the



The construction site of Seikkyi-Khanaungto Bridge.

bridge will be built with reinforced concrete beams, the upper main bridge will be made of steel arch bridge and Steel Box Girder, and the approach bridges will be built of PC Girders.

The construction of the Seikkyi-Khanaungto Bridge was funded by the Union Budget, and construction task force (1) spent K2 billion on the approach bridge and K32 billion on the bridge construction work, totalling amounting to K34 billion.

The 2022-2023 financial

year, K2,000 million will be spent on bored piles on the side of Seikkyi-Khanaungto Township and piling works on the side of Dala Township.

In order to provide drinking water to the people of Seikkyi-Khanaungto Township, water from Gyobu Reservoir will be supplied through pipelines on the bridge. Upon completion, it will be connected to the Myanmar-Korea Friendship Dala Bridge, and it will be possible to travel to Yangon in a short time.—TWA/KZL

### Veteran song composer Myoma Shun Myaing (aka) Sayagyi U Shun Myaing passes away

VETERAN song composer Myoma Shun Myaing (aka) Sayagyi U Shun Myaing, son of Alinkar Kyaw Swa Myoma Nyein (U Nyein), from Chanayethazan Township of Mandalay, passed away on the morning of 18 December.

The Myoma Band of Mandalay was established by U Taw Lon in 1928, with participation of Myoma Nyein, father of U Shun Myaing. In his career, U Shun Myaing composed a lot of songs including the songs depicting the Myanmar's traditional Maha Thingyan festival, for the band. He published Book No 1 on Myanmar songs composed by Myoma Nyein and another book on Myanmar's classical songs, piano and orchestra. The book published in commemoration of the 105<sup>th</sup> birthday of Myoma Nyein expressed that it was compiled on the songs composed by Myoma Nyein. Another book on Myanmar's classical songs, piano and orchestra mentioned cords of piano in playing the classical songs.

Composer U Shun Myaing was a renowned artiste concerning the Myoma Band and Myoma songs. "Songs of Myoma Nyein, U Ba Thein, U Shun Myaing and U Paw are public friendly artistic works till today. Some five new songs came out on a yearly basis. So, songs were composed in decades. As such, thousands of masterpiece songs including Taychithu, Tatnuyin, Taythazin, especially Nagar Mei were produced one after another. These are national heritages. The Myoma Band produced the



Veteran song composer Myoma Shun Myaing (aka) Sayagyi U Shun Myaing.

song albums but many famous songs have not been put into the albums yet," said writer Hsu Hngat of Mandalay.

Song composer U Shun Myaing, who had served as the chair and patron of the Myoma band, preserved the tradition of Myoma band and national characters and Myanmar music. Once, the family of Myoma Nyein and members of the Myoma band led by Myoma U Shun Myaing held a press conference to object the act of a beer company which distributed Tuborg brand beer across the nation with an attempt to tarnish the image of 'Toopoh' Thingyan song.

The veteran song composer who passed away at aged 79 left wife Daw Mya Mya Moe, four children and 12 grandchildren. The Myoma Band released a statement on its sadness similar to the bereaved family. The remains of the veteran composer will be cremated at Aye Yein Nyein cemetery at 11 am on 20 December.—TWA/GNLM



Saya U Shun Myaing seen with a musician of Myoma Band.



# ARTICLE

## Research on medicinal botanical plant explores botanical rich of Myanmar's icy region

By Nyein Thu (MNA)

THE Hkakaborazi National Park of Nagmon Township of PutaO is located in PutaO Valley, the northernmost part of Myanmar and a major place for botany and bio species. Exploring the effectiveness of medicinal botanical plant, which still has not achieved scientific name, grow in Alpine forest can uncover the rich in botanical resources of Myanmar's icy region.

The Hkakaborazi National Park is 942,080 acres wide and the local residents search the medicinal orchid specie called Langba in Rawang and Tibet language and Pechi in Chinese



Snow-capped Hkakaborazi Mountain. PHOTOS: KANU



Langba medicinal plant.

language, which grows in Alpine forest, on the hills to sell at K1.2 million per viss to the merchants. The merchants resell the product to the neighbouring countries for years. Therefore, the local botanists are worried that the unnamed medicinal botanical plant species would disappear from the country.

The Hkakaborazi National Park is making efforts to con-

duct research on unidentified ice mountain plant in orchid species and rare species and the park is now being preserved by 12 staff members. Moreover, the natural environment of the park is conserved by deploying the local educated persons. Such doings will support the biological and botanical development and biodiversity growth in conducting researches for the interests of

country.

"There are over 200 orchid species at Hkakaborazi National Park and the country is proud for being a country that boasts of icy mountain in ASEAN and it should be conserved for ASEAN. The medicinal specie that they sell cannot be found its scien-

tific name and on Google. So, if we make research, it will bring benefits to the country. Although it is used in preparation of cosmetics, it is also useful for pharmaceutical industries and other sectors. The purchasers (foreign countries) offer high prices as they might produce the species



Langba plant seen with its yams.

in their regions. The main point is that we should conserve this new specie of our country and conduct researches continuously. Our possessions shall not be lost. Although it is one of the orchid species, it does not have its name. I am sure it is a previous botanical plant. Therefore, we should conserve it in time," said botanist U L Zeng Wah of Kachin State.

The Langba botanical plant grows on hilly region lasting for one year and it produces onion-shaped bulb between September and November, and the people sell these products. The Hkakaborazi National Park possesses 220 orchid species in addition to rare wild animals but it loses rare red panda, orchid, medicinal plants and yams every year. The people dig out the marketable Shipadee rhizome between March and May and the Langba yams in winter between September and November. In order to prevent the disappearance of Myanmar's medicinal species, the continuous research on Langba plant, a medicinal plant species that has not yet been scientifically named, will reveal the botanical richness of the Hkakaborazi National Park to the world.

Translated.



Dried Langba yams valved at K1.2 million per viss.

### 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*



# OPINION

## Modernize the country through good outcomes of technologies

TODAY is existent "Wisdom is a matter" for the development of a nation according to the knowledge age. Only if Myanmar can perform basically in nation-building endeavours struggling to develop will all the people be able to keep quickly abreast of other countries. Science, technology, engineering and mathematics were taught including engineering education and engineering concept in basic education internationally.

The results of innovation will be applied, and the benefit of human society follows morals and ethics. All youths will have to try to secure the practical ability with the idea to create everything so that they can modernize society.

The engineering education system depends on the development of socioeconomic to fulfil the requirements. It can be considered that engineering education is changing and developing from the previous academic systems in combination with scientific theories to the current engineering education system which is based on the facts such as innovation, thinking, proficiency and priority. In the period of Industries 4.0, there are many challenges in the technical and educational arenas because of the industries based on Artificial Intelligence-AI. Therefore, it can be seen that the implementation of Education 4.0 is needed to support Industries 4.0.

Basically, Mathematics and Science are essential for engineering education. Alma Mater had given training to all, not only to apply practical skills with this knowledge, Complex Problem-Solving skills in engineering education, and design innovation skills but also to fulfil social skills.

Each country across the world is facing and solving other challenges and threats for survival because the information is easily flowing with the rapid development of technology in each sector and field.

It can be viewed that developing countries are competing and attempting to build a Standard Army based on technology because the developed nations bullied and dominated the underdeveloped nations.

Nowadays, it can be regarded that some superpower countries of the world are performing with proxy to dominate other countries by using various ways as multi-dimensional warfare such as politics, economy, social affairs, ideology, propaganda, military affairs, and diplomacy that is not a conventional method and they no longer invade and attack by reaching personally with the only military method as a conventional way.

Therefore, youths will have to perform relevant processes such as identifying lessons, upgrading, fulfilling requirements, and production for substitution in respective sectors based on the results after continuously conducting the research projects according to the technical requirements.

The results of innovation will be applied, and the benefit of human society follows morals and ethics. All youths will have to try to secure the practical ability with the idea to create everything so that they can modernize society.

## Three years into Covid, are we ready for the next pandemic?

THREE years after the first Covid case was identified in China, preparations to stave off the next pandemic are starting to ramp up but far more needs to be done to avoid repeating past mistakes, experts told AFP.

Last week the 194 member states of the World Health Organization agreed to start negotiations in February over a draft of a pandemic treaty aiming to better respond to future threats.

Meanwhile the Pandemic Fund, which is hosted by the World Bank and was launched last month by G20 nations, said on Wednesday it is preparing for its first round of funding with a total of \$1.6 billion pledged so far.

Another effort is being led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), which has a five-year, \$3.5 billion plan that includes a "100 Days Mission".

CEPI aims to develop a new vaccine against a potential "disease X" within 100 days of the WHO identifying a pandemic threat.

CEPI CEO Richard Hatchett told AFP that the foundation was still around \$800 million short of its funding goal, urging global decision makers not to lose sight of pandemic preparedness while "focusing on the many crises in front of them". The plan includes connecting different institutes focusing on pandemic preparedness such as the United States' BARDA, European Union's HERA, Japan's SCARDA and more.

"I think with some light co-ordination, we could collectively advance global preparedness very rapidly, particularly on the countermeasures side," Hatchett said.

### Treatments and testing

One of those countermeasures

would be swiftly developing new drugs to treat an emerging "disease X".

In late August Canadian-born businessman Geoffrey Cumming donated AUS\$250 million (\$170 million) to set up a centre in the Australian city of Melbourne to work towards that goal.

Infectious diseases expert Sharon Lewin, who will lead the Cumming Global Centre for Pandemic Therapeutics, said it would aim to develop platform technologies that can be rapidly updated to target new pathogens, similar to what was done with mRNA vaccines for Covid.

While the centre is still recruiting, Lewin told AFP it would be "up and running on the science" within six months.

Another key will be making tests available across the world as soon as possible.

The non-profit FIND, the

global alliance for diagnostics, has worked with WHO to get Covid tests to low- and middle- income countries.

However because CEPI did not reach its replenishment goal earlier this year, "the entire diagnostics component of the 100 Days Mission is currently unfunded," FIND CEO William Rodriguez told AFP.

"I don't think we're doing enough yet to be prepared for the next pandemic from a resource perspective," he said.

### Potential virus threats

The WHO is currently working on updating its list of priority pathogens, which will list the top contenders for the virus that could pose the next pandemic threat.

Coronaviruses and influenza viruses will be among the main suspects because of their proven pandemic potential.



Scientists are aiming to develop a vaccine targeting a new "disease X" within 100 days. PHOTO: ADITYA AJI / AFP/FILE

Other possibilities include known threats such as Ebola and Zika.

"Each of these viruses may be just a few mutations away" from being able to spread beyond their current limits, said Jennifer Nuzzo, the founding director of the Pandemic Centre at Brown University in the US.

Other potential threats include Marburg and the arenavirus and paramyxovirus families — as well as the risk of new unknown diseases jumping from animals over to humans.

But when it comes to deploying future vaccines, Nuzzo said "it's not the science that worries me as much: it's the production."

### Inequality remains

"The tragedy of Covid, in my mind, was the unequal distribution of vaccines when they became available," CEPI's Hatchett said,

adding that this inequity "prolonged the pandemic and probably led to the propagation of variants".

All the experts who spoke to AFP emphasised that for the next pandemic, regions such as Africa, South America, South Asia and the Middle East must be able to access and manufacture future vaccines and treatments.

Mohga Kamal-Yanni of the NGO coalition People's Vaccine Alliance said early statements from rich countries about the pandemic treaty were "incredibly worrying".

"Any pandemic treaty should commit to an automatic waiver of intellectual property rules for products needed to combat the health threat," she said.

"And it should mandate the sharing of technology and know-how needed for developing countries to manufacture medical technologies."

SOURCE: AFP

## Lives protected to utmost in China's three-year battle against COVID-19

CHINA has shifted the focus of its COVID-19 response strategy from infection control to case treatment with the objective of preventing severe cases.

The shift was made in accordance with the weakened pathogenicity of the virus. It does not run counter to the hard truth that China is one of the world's best achievers in terms of saving lives from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the past three years, China has withstood waves of the pandemic and successfully dealt with over 100 cluster outbreaks. In a country with over 1.4 billion people, the COVID-19 death toll was some 5,000, according to health authorities.

Globally, the pandemic has caused 6.6 million deaths. In 2021, millions of lives were lost as governments of many countries swayed between lockdowns and reopenings.

### Putting the people and their lives above all else

One thing has become crys-



A medical worker injects a booster shot of the COVID-19 vaccine for a resident at Aoyuncun Subdistrict in Chaoyang District, Beijing, capital of China, 13 July 2022. PHOTO: XINHUA/JU HUANZONG

tal clear now: China has honored what it has always said it would do — putting the people and their lives above all else.

Back in early 2020, faced with the sudden COVID-19 outbreak, China mobilized resources across the country, launching an unprec-

edented operation to save lives in the hardest-hit city of Wuhan, Hubei Province.

From newborns to centenar-

ians, no COVID-19 patients had ever been given up on. More than 3,600 patients aged above 80 were treated and recovered.

The initial success to rein in the virus helped China gain the initiative in the following stage of routine COVID-19 prevention and control, in which the country raced against time to vaccinate its people and develop rapid test kits and medication.

Over the past three years, China has developed effective COVID-19 diagnosis and treatment expertise and medicines, and kept improving its capacities in terms of medical treatment, pathogen detection and epidemiological investigation.

To date, more than 90 percent of its population have been vaccinated. This has helped China ride out waves of epidemic outbreaks brought about by coronavirus variants from Alpha to Delta.

The routine COVID-19 response emphasized the role of science and the importance of precision. China closely followed the development of the pandemic outside its border, assessed the

efficacy of its response measures, and made continuous adjustments aimed at optimizing them.

### Anti-virus approach to allow home quarantine

With the virus becoming less lethal, and considering the ever-growing domestic vaccination rate, and the accumulation of experience in fighting COVID-19, China has recently further optimized its anti-virus approach to allow home quarantine for asymptomatic and mild cases and cut mass nucleic acid testing, among others.

But the government has stressed even more efforts on health monitoring and services for the elderly. It has accelerated efforts to set up more fever clinics and emphasized administering the second dose of booster shots to the vulnerable. These policy steps, no doubt, have been based on in-depth research and specifically targeted the features of virus mutations.

But more importantly, they have all been centred on the people, with an eye to better safeguard the normal order of work and life for the people and better protect the elderly, the children and other key groups of the population.

SOURCE: Xinhua

## Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 18 December 2022)

**BAY INFERENCE:** According to the observations at (17:30 hrs MST) today, the low pressure area over South Bay of Bengal and adjoining East Equatorial Indian Ocean still persists. Weather is cloudy over the South Andaman Sea and South Bay of Bengal and a few cloud to partly cloudy over the North Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

**FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 19 December, 2022:** Light rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Mandalay, Ayeyawady, and Taninthayi regions and Kachin and Shan states. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states.

**STATE OF THE SEA:** Strong easterly winds with rough seas are likely at time in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in strong easterly winds may reach (35-40) mph. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (8-10) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and about (4-7) feet off and along Rakhine Coast.

**OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS:** Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Eastern Myanmar Areas.

**FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 19 December 2022:** Partly cloudy.

**FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 19 December 2022:** Partly cloudy.

**FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 19 December 2022:** Partly cloudy.



# ENVIRON WORLD

## EU reaches deal on major carbon market reform

EU member states and parliamentarians on Sunday announced an agreement for a major reform to the bloc's carbon market, the central plank of its ambitions to reduce emissions and invest in climate-friendly technologies.

The deal aims to accelerate emissions cuts, phase out free allowances to industries and targets fuel emissions from the building and road transport sectors, according to a European Parliament statement.

The EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) allows electricity producers and industries with high energy demands such as steel and cement to purchase "free allowances" to cover

their carbon emissions under a "polluter pays" principle.

The quotas are designed to decrease over time to encourage them to emit less and invest in greener technologies as part of the European Union's ultimate aim of achieving carbon neutrality.

Negotiators representing member states and the parliament had spent more than 24 hours in intense talks before reaching an agreement on Saturday night that widens the scope of the carbon market.

The deal means emissions in the ETS sectors are to be cut by 62 per cent by 2030 based on 2005 levels, up from a previous goal of 43 per cent. Concerned



In a nutshell, carbon markets are trading systems in which carbon credits are sold and bought. The carbon market will be progressively extended to the maritime sector and intra-European flights. A container ship sits moored to a terminal in the port of Gothenburg, a busy shipping centre on the west coast of Sweden. **PHOTO: JONATHAN NACKSTRAND /AFP**

industries must cut their emissions by that amount.

The agreement also seeks

to accelerate the timetable for phasing out the free allowances, with 48.5 per cent phased

out by 2030 and a complete removal by 2034, a schedule at the centre of fierce debates between MEPs and member states.

The carbon market will be progressively extended to the maritime sector and intra-European flights. Waste incineration sites will be included from 2028, depending on a favourable report by the commission.

Climate Action Network, a coalition of NGOs, criticised the agreement, saying it would allow major polluters to continue to receive billions of euros in free quotas for another decade while households would receive little. —AFP

## Hope stirs for deal to save nature at UN talks



A female polar bear and her cub look for something to eat on the shoreline of the Hudson Bay, Canada. **PHOTO: AFP**

TOP officials at high-stakes UN biodiversity negotiations said Saturday they were confident of

securing a major deal to save the natural world from destruction. Observers had warned the

COP15 talks aimed at sealing a "peace pact for nature" risked collapse due to disagreement over how much the rich world should pay to protect ecosystems in developing countries.

The talks that started on 7 December had appeared to be on the verge of breakdown when developing countries walked out days ago over the question of funding. But the mood among leaders turned upbeat on Saturday. "I am greatly confident that we can ... keep our ambitions as well as achieve consensus," China's Environment Minister Huang Runqiu told reporters in Montreal, where the COP15 meeting is being held.—AFP

## China set to offer compromise to save summit nature accord

CHINA, which chairs a high-stakes UN biodiversity summit in Montreal, is due to present a long-awaited compromise text on Sunday in an attempt to seal the "peace pact with nature" that the planet sorely needs.

More than 10 days of fraught biodiversity negotiations look to be coming to a head as delegates prepare to wrangle over the compromise draft agreement.

"It is not a perfect document, not a document that will

make everyone happy, however it is a document that is based on the efforts of all of us over the last four years," said China's Environment Minister Huang Rinqu.

"It is a document that must be adopted at this meeting that is highly expected by the international community."

Observers had warned the COP15 conference risked collapse as countries squabbled over how much the rich world should pay to fund the efforts,

with developing countries walking out of talks at one point.

But conference leaders turned upbeat Saturday on their chances of securing a deal.

Huang said he was "greatly confident" of a consensus and his Canadian counterpart Steven Guilbeault said "tremendous progress" had been made.

Huang said he would publish a draft agreement at 8:00 am EST (1300 GMT) on Sunday and hear lead delegates' feedback later in the day.—AFP

## From battlefield to glampsite: the story of Saudi's Khaybar

A Saudi town best known for a fierce battle between the Prophet Mohammed and Jewish tribes is remodelling itself as an upscale tourist draw in line with the kingdom's rebranding efforts.

Situated in an oasis amid a volcanic field north of Medina, the settlement of Khaybar was once home to thousands of Jews, who were defeated in a decisive seventh-century battle with the Prophet's army as Islam expanded across the Arabian Peninsula.

The chant "Khaybar, Khaybar, o Jews, the army of Mohammed will return" can still sometimes be heard at present-day anti-Israel demonstrations, drawing objections from groups such as

the Anti-Defamation League, which says it "can be perceived as a threat of armed violence".

Last month, Saudi Arabia inaugurated a new visitors' centre in Khaybar, which takes a longer view of the area's history by highlighting references in ancient texts to its conquest by Babylonian-era King Nabonidus.

At the centre, displays avoid mentioning the seventh-century battle and tourists can arrange hikes to nearby volcanoes, strolls through lush palm springs or helicopter tours over ancient tombs and desert kites, which are dry stone walls that served as animal traps. —AFP



Situated in an oasis amid a volcanic field, the Saudi town of Khaybar was once home to thousands of Jews defeated by Prophet Mohammed's army. **PHOTO: AFP**



# HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD



A medical worker at a nursing institution talks with a visitor in Qingdao, Shandong Province in east China, on 22 July. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

## China nursing homes struggle to keep residents safe from Covid wave

CHINA'S nursing homes are fighting an uphill battle to keep their elderly residents safe as a wave of Covid-19 infections sweeps the country following a relaxation of the government's zero-tolerance virus policy.

Facilities are locking themselves off from the outside world with staff sleeping on site, while struggling to get their hands on drugs.

Authorities have warned of rapidly growing caseloads, and industry ministry official Zhou Jian said on Wednesday that the country was "making all-out efforts to ramp up the production of key medicines".

Experts fear the country is ill-equipped to manage the "exit wave" of infections as it presses ahead with reopening, with millions of vulnerable elderly people

still not fully vaccinated.

And eldercare facilities have now been left to fend for themselves as society reopens, the manager of one privately run Beijing home said.

"We are fully sealed off," the manager, who asked to remain anonymous, told AFP.

Only food and supplies are allowed in — no one is allowed to enter or leave.—AFP

## China, New Zealand collaborate on dairy cattle disease prevention, control

CHINESE and New Zealand experts discussed on Saturday prevention and control of major diseases of dairy cattle and establishment of a long-term effective mechanism for dairy technology exchange and cooperation between the two countries.

Addressing an online and offline conference, Chinese Consul General in Christchurch He Ying said China's per capita demand for dairy products has gradually increased, injecting new momentum to the development of the livestock industry and the dairy products market.

The agriculture and animal husbandry, especially the dairy industry, is a key area of economic and trade cooperation between China and New Zealand, she said, adding New Zealand has successfully

controlled and cleared dairy cattle diseases including brucellosis.

The Chinese diplomat called for strengthening cooperation between China and New Zealand in the field of dairy cattle diseases prevention and control, which will help China achieve prevention and control of the dairy cattle diseases at an early date and eliminate the threat of the diseases to dairy farming and people's health, and contribute to China's rural revitalization.

The cooperation in this field will further enrich and expand the pragmatic cooperation between both countries and contribute to the stable and healthy development of the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two sides, she added.—Xinhua



The agriculture and animal husbandry, especially the dairy industry, is a key area of economic and trade cooperation between China and New Zealand. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ETHICALCONSUMER.ORG**

## Philippines logs 1,196 new COVID-19 cases, death toll breaches 65,000

THE Philippines reported 1,196 new COVID-19 infections on Saturday, pushing the number of confirmed cases in the Southeast Asian country to 4,055,396.

The Department of Health said the number of active cases dipped to 18,262, while 39 more patients died from COVID-19 complications, taking the country's death toll to 65,034.

Metro Manila, the capital region with over 13 million people, tallied 471 new cases.

The Philippines reported its highest COVID-19 single-day tally of 39,004 new cases on 15 January. The country, with a population of around 110 million, has fully vaccinated over



This file photo shows residents wearing government-imposed face masks and face shields to protect them from COVID-19 coronavirus disease in Manila. **PHOTO: AFP**

73.8 million people. The Philippines has tested over 33.88 million people since the viral disease emerged in the country in early 2020. The number

of tested people includes only those using RT-PCR tests. Many opt to use the more affordable antigen tests or forego tests altogether.—Xinhua

## Haiti launching cholera vaccination effort hampered by crime gangs

HAITI on Sunday is launching a campaign to vaccinate more than 10 per cent of its population against cholera, but gang control of large swaths of territory will complicate the effort.

The Caribbean country has 1.17 million doses of oral vaccine on hand, with nearly 500,000 more coming.

The campaign will focus on Haitians aged one to five, with nearly half of confirmed cases affecting that age category.

Cholera has spread rapidly across the country since October. The national Department of Epidemiology, Laboratories and Research has registered more than 14,700 suspected

cases, nearly 1,270 confirmed cases and over 290 deaths.

Vaccine supplies are an issue, said Jean Bosco Hulute, a health specialist with the UN children's agency UNICEF.

"Many countries are currently experiencing cholera epidemics, causing a scarcity of vaccine," he told AFP.

Hulute noted that a single dose offers six months' protection, while a second dose can extend that to a full two years.

The vaccination campaign, scheduled to run from December 18 to 22 and then from 27 to 28, will focus on the hardest-hit neighborhoods and communes, including Cite Soleil, Delmas,

Carrefour, Port-au-Prince and Mirabelais.

But with gang violence ravaging the impoverished country, the effort will not be easy.

"In unsafe areas, particularly where there have been abductions and gunfire, the vaccination and communications teams will not be totally protected," according to Hulute.

He said UNICEF was appealing "where the gangs are in control for them to offer unlimited access to the teams, for that is what will permit the population to receive these protective drops of oral vaccine."—AFP



# ECONOMY WORLD

## Cambodia's economy recovers well in 2022, with better growth forecast for next year



Garment factory workers are seen at the Kin Tai garment factory in the Chak Angre commune of Phnom Penh in May 2015. **PHOTO: KIMBERLY MCCOSKER/AFP/FILE**

CAMBODIA'S economy has recovered well from the impact of COVID-19 in 2022, with better

performance being expected for 2023, said a government official recently.

Thanks to rising global demand, foreign investors' confidence, and a full reopening of borders, Cambodia is expected to see 5.4 per cent economic growth this year and 6.6 per cent next year, said Economy and Finance Minister Aun Pornmoniroth during a 2023 budget law debate in late November.

The GDP per capita was expected to rise to 1,785 US dollars in 2022 and would be further up to 1,924 dollars in 2023, Pornmoniroth, who is also a deputy prime minister of the country, told the parliament. The economy of the Southeast Asian country has mainly been driven by garment exports, construction and real estate, tourism and agriculture.—Xinhua

## Russia to invest 69 mln USD in quantum communication network

THE Russian government will allocate 4.5 billion rubles (69.4 million US dollars) to the state-owned Russian Railways in 2023 and 2024 to expand its quantum communication network, Russia's RIA Novosti news agency reported on Saturday.

As part of its digital economy framework, the government plans to invest a total of 9.4 billion rubles (144.9 million dollars) in the Russian Railways to develop the quantum communication network from 2021 to 2024, including 2.7 billion rubles (41.6 million dollars) in 2023 and 1.8 billion rubles (27.7 million dollars) in

2024 respectively, according to Russia's quantum communication roadmap approved in late 2021.

The roadmap includes more than 120 projects, such as tools to promote quantum communications for potential users, development of sales markets, commercialization of services and products of quantum communications.

The first pilot quantum communication line, built between Moscow and St. Petersburg in 2021 based on its existing optic network, is 700 km long and is expected to increase to 7,000 km by 2024.—Xinhua

## WTO members substantially conclude text negotiations on IFD

MEMBERS of the World Trade Organization (WTO) substantially concluded on Friday in Geneva the text negotiations on Investment Facilitation for Development (IFD).

The IFD agreement is the first negotiation topic set up and actively led by China in WTO. It aims to establish international rules, improve the transparency of investment measures, speed up and streamline investment-related administrative procedures, and enhance international cooperation. More than 110 WTO

members signed and participated in the negotiation of the IFD.

"We are only steps away from concluding the first investment negotiation in the WTO and at a global level," China's Ambassador to the WTO Li Chenggang said. This result demonstrates that WTO can deliver concrete negotiation results on topics that matter to the business world, he added.

In April 2017, China and a group of developing and least-developed WTO members

launched an informal dialogue on investment facilitation for development. Currently, the initiative is co-coordinated by Sofia Boza, permanent representative of Chile to the WTO, and Jung Sung Park, deputy permanent representative of the Republic of Korea to the WTO.

After the text negotiations meeting on IFD, Boza told Xinhua that China has been an extremely productive member during these negotiations, and its contribution has been key to this process.—Xinhua



The World Trade Organization (WTO) headquarters are seen in Geneva on 12 April 2018. **PHOTO: FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP**

## S African army deploys to guard power plants amid energy crisis

SOUTH Africa has begun deploying the military to protect the country's electricity plants as the long-running power crisis worsens, state-owned energy utility and the presidency said Saturday.

Scheduled blackouts have burdened the continent's most industrialised country for several years, but got more frequent this year as power utility Eskom imposed many hours of electricity cuts daily.

"Eskom can confirm that the SANDF (South African National Defence Force) is



South Africa has endured power shortages for the past 15 years, but the cuts reached new extremes this year. **PHOTO: AFP**

being deployed," the energy firm said in confirmation. It "has received deployments at 4 sites this afternoon", the message added.

President Cyril Ramaphosa's spokesman Vincent Magwenya told AFP a minimum of 10 soldiers would be deployed in the initial phase at each station. Further deployments are in the pipeline.

The move was "in response to the growing threat of sabotage, theft, vandalism and corruption" at coal and diesel powered at power generating

plants, he said.

South Africa has endured power shortages for the past 15 years, but the cuts reached new extremes this year.

They have cost the country hundreds of millions of dollars in lost output as well as disrupting commerce and industry.

Anger is growing among South Africans, who are now having to do deal with power cuts several times a day, sometimes totalling up to 11-and-half hours a day.—AFP



## UK retail sales drop on weaker online shopping: data

BRITISH retail sales dropped in November, hit by weaker online shopping despite Black Friday and the run up to Christmas, official data showed Friday.

Sales by volume fell 0.4 per cent last month after rising in October, the Office for National Statistics said in a statement.

“Retail sales fell overall in November, driven by a notable drop for online retailers, with Black Fri-

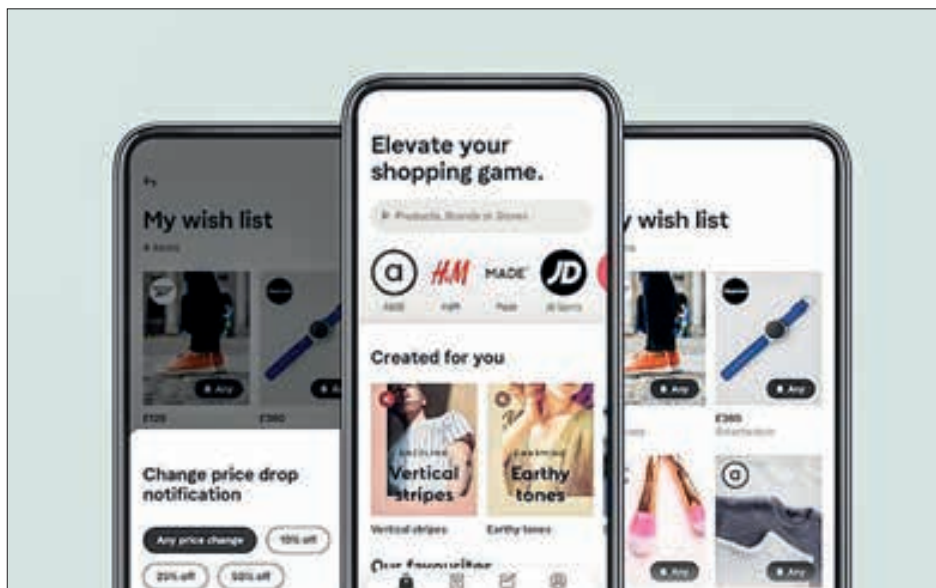
day offers failing to provide their usual lift in this sector,” said Darren Morgan, ONS director of economic statistics.

“However, department stores and household goods shops did report increased sales with these retailers telling us a longer period of Black Friday discounting helped boost sales.”

Total retail sales had jumped 0.9 per cent in October, a figure skewed by a

drop in September which saw a public holiday for the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II.

“The drop in retail sales in November suggests that consumers are buckling under the pressure of surging... inflation, despite additional government support for their energy bills,” noted Gabriella Dickens, senior UK economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics. —AFP



British retail sales dropped in November, hit by weaker online shopping despite Black Friday and the run up to Christmas, official data showed Friday. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/FINTECH.GLOBAL**

## At COP15, businesses urged to act for nature

WIDELY blamed for ravaging Earth's ecosystems, big businesses are nevertheless being turned to as key players in a deal to save nature at the COP15 biodiversity conference.

With hundreds of billions of dollars needed

for the task, public funds can only fill part of the gap. Campaigners and experts at the talks are demanding companies act to reduce their impact — and firms in turn are asking for clear rules of engagement.

Ministers at the

meeting in Montreal are thrashing out a global agreement for the next decade to curb damage to Earth's forests, oceans and species — with conservation and finance top of the agenda.

“One of the other things at stake in this

COP is getting businesses involved,” said Pierre Cattet of the Worldwide Fund for Nature, on the sidelines of the talks. “Whatever the outcome of the summit, they will have to ask themselves how they can curb the fall in biodiversity.”—AFP

## Japan New Year domestic trips forecast at 72% of pre-pandemic levels



File photo shows tourists in the area around Kiyomizu-dera temple in Kyoto on 8 January 2022. **PHOTO: KYODO**

THE number of holiday-makers in Japan making domestic trips during the New Year vacation period is expected to rise by 3 million from a year earlier but remain at 71.8 per cent of

pre-pandemic levels, or 21 million people, according to travel agency projections released this month.

Major Japanese travel agency JTB Corp. partially attributed the expected in-

crease from the 2021/2022 holiday period to people having a lower psychological barrier to travel during the coronavirus pandemic.

The less than full-fledged recovery in travel

was likely the result of rising prices of goods and services as well as efforts to limit outdoor activities during the ongoing “eighth wave” of virus infections, according to the company.

In the 2019/2020 New Year period, the last before the pandemic began in spring 2020, an estimated 29.27 million people made domestic trips.

JTB projected the number of people who would make at least one overnight stay at travel destinations between 23 December and 3 January, 2023, based on an online questionnaire conducted in November and available reservation data.—Kyodo

## Musk restores some suspended Twitter accounts of journalists

THE Twitter accounts of several journalists suspended after Elon Musk accused them of endangering his family were reinstated Saturday, but some said the billionaire owner offered full use of the platform only if they deleted posts about tracking his location.

Musk had drawn anger and warnings from the European Union and United Nations after suspending the accounts of more than a half-dozen prominent journalists from The New York Times, CNN, The Washington Post and other outlets.

“The people have spoken. Accounts who doxxed my location will have their suspension lifted now,” the Twitter owner tweeted late Friday.

Doxxing generally means publishing private information on the Internet to harass or embarrass someone.

Musk carried out a Twitter poll asking whether he should restore the suspended accounts now or in a week's time. Nearly 59 per cent of the 3.69 million who took part said he should restore the accounts now.—AFP

### CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SEOUL GLOW VOY.NO. (247W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SEOUL GLOW VOY.NO. (247W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **19-12-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

**Shipping Agency Department  
Myanma Port Authority**

Agent For:

**M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD.**



# GLOBAL AFFAIRS

## Syria fuel crisis slows down life in Damascus



With its economy battered by more than a decade of war, Syria has announced four fuel price hikes this year. **PHOTO: LOUAI BESHARA / AFP**

SYRIAN student Ziad al-Ezz can no longer get to university as severe fuel shortages cripple the capital Damascus, pushing residents to seek alternatives for heating and shuttering businesses.

With the country's economy battered by more than a decade of war, authorities have announced four fuel price hikes since the start of the year as well as rationing of petrol and fuel oil supplies.

"Our struggle for fuel

starts at home and doesn't end" in the classroom, said Ezz, 20, who studies literature at the University of Damascus.

"At home it's extremely cold without heating, and on the street it's not easy to find transport."

In a city where winter can be bitterly cold, the price of heating fuel has gone through the roof, so his mother has told him to make do with piling on layers of covers for warmth.

Syria blames the fuel short-

ages on Western sanctions that severely restrict imports, and the country's major oil fields lie in areas outside government control.

Ezz works part time doing food deliveries by bicycle, but the trip to university is too far to pedal, while rare public buses are packed and taxis are too expensive, he said.

Universities have dropped classes to three days a week due to the fuel crisis.

—AFP

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### Tense Fiji election tied with all votes counted

FINAL results showed Fiji's tumultuous general election deadlocked Sunday, with two rival ex-coup leaders failing to win a clear majority of seats in parliament.

Incumbent Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama's Fiji First party and a coalition led by Sitiveni Rabuka were both projected to secure 26 seats in the 55-seat legislature, according to a Fijian Election Office tally posted online.

The prime minister and the next government will now likely be determined through party horse trading and what could be a drawn-out negotiation process.—AFP

#### Iran urged to free top actor who backed protests

IRAN on Sunday faced calls from celebrities and rights groups to free the actor Taraneh Alidoosti, one of the most prominent figures yet arrested in its crackdown on the three-month protest movement.

Alidoosti, 38, was arrested on Saturday, official media said, after a string of social media posts supporting the protest movement including removing her headscarf and condemning the execution of protesters.

The crackdown was sparked by the death in custody of Mahsa Amini, 22, which the morality police accused of violating the Islamic republic's strict dress code for women.

Iran blames the United States and other "enemies" for trying to destabilise the country by fuelling the protests.—AFP

## Canada police report record opium seizure at Vancouver port

CANADIAN police have announced a record seizure of nearly 2.5 metric tons of opium hidden in containers transiting through the western port of Vancouver, British Columbia.

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), which announced the seizure late Friday, did not say where the drug came from, nor did it say whether the find had led to any arrests.

CBSA intelligence agents along with a Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) organized crime unit had opened an investigation in September into a potentially significant smuggling operation involving marine containers, the border agency said.

It said an examination in late October of the contents of 19 containers revealed "irregularities in the shipping pallets as part of a deep concealment method."

The seized drug had an esti-



In this photograph taken on 13 April 2019, Afghan farmers harvest opium sap from a poppy field in the Gereshek district of Helmand province. Afghanistan is the world's top grower of opium, and the crop accounts for hundreds of thousands of jobs. **PHOTO: AFP**

mated street value of \$50 million, the police said.

The CBSA did not say why the seizure was only being announced at this time, but said the investigation was continuing.

Vancouver is the busiest port in Canada, and the princi-

pal port of entry for products coming from Asia. For years, an influx of opioids into North America — much of it smuggled from Asia — has grown to the point of presenting a major public health challenge for Canada and the United States. —AFP



Coastguards brought 45 more people onshore in Calais after they issued a distress call, while a lifeboat went to the aid of a further 40 people nearby. **PHOTO: AFP**

## French services rescue 166 migrants from freezing Channel

MORE than 160 migrants who tried to reach England on flimsy boats were rescued from freezing waters in the Channel overnight Friday, just days after a fatal shipwreck, French officials said Saturday.

Around 50 people on board a boat "in difficulty" off the northern French coast were rescued by a Navy vessel and taken to the port of Calais, regional maritime officials said.

Another Navy vessel rescued 31 other shipwrecked migrants in the same area and took them to the port of Boulogne.

Coastguards brought 45 more people onshore in Calais after they issued a distress call, while a lifeboat went to the aid of a further 40 people nearby.

All were attended to by rescue services.

More than 40,000 migrants — a record — have reached England by boat from northern France this year, risking their lives to cross one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world, often under dangerous weather conditions.

On Wednesday, at least four people died in a shipwreck off the southern English port of Dover. —AFP



## N Korea fires 2 ballistic missiles toward Sea of Japan

NORTH Korea launched two ballistic missiles toward the Sea of Japan on Sunday, Japanese and South Korean authorities said, days after Tokyo said it will acquire the capability to strike enemy bases, marking a dramatic shift in its postwar security policy.

The two missiles were fired between 11:13 am and 12:05 pm, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said. The projectiles flew 500 kilometres, reaching a maximum altitude of 550 km before both falling outside Japan's exclusive eco-

nomie zone, Japan's Defense Ministry said, adding there were no reports of damage to aircraft or vessels.

Japan had lodged a protest with Pyongyang via its embassy in Beijing, Senior Vice Defense Minister Toshiro Ino told reporters.

The latest launches came after Japan said Friday it will obtain "counterstrike capabilities" in three revised defense documents. In one of the three, the updated National Security Strategy, Pyongyang's military activities were described as an



North Korea fired two ballistic missiles, Seoul's military said, days after Pyongyang announced a successful test of a solid-fuel motor for a new weapons system. PHOTO: KCNA VIA KNS/AFP

"imminent threat."

North Korea said Friday it had successfully test-fired a "high-thrust solid-fuel motor" with 140 tons of thrust, according to state media, as the country seeks to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of being launched with a shorter preparation time.

Last month, Pyongyang test-fired an ICBM-class projectile, prompting Japan, the United States and South Korea to tighten their sanctions on the North to curb its weapons programmes.—Kyodo

## Iraqi conservators strive to preserve ancient manuscripts



In a country that bears the scars of decades of conflict and has seen antiquities plundered, the House of Manuscripts' collection has managed to survive. PHOTO: AFP

IN an annex of Iraq's national museum, a conservator pores over a 17<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript, carrying out delicate restoration

work as part of efforts to preserve and digitise 47,000 precious texts.

"Some manuscripts date back almost 1,000 years," said

Ahmed al-Alyawi, who heads the House of Manuscripts body.

"There are writings in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Hebrew and Kurdish," he added, noting the texts' "immense cultural diversity". In a country that bears the scars of decades of conflict and has seen antiquities and cultural heritage regularly plundered, the House of Manuscripts' collection has managed to survive.

It was safely stashed away in the Baghdad suburbs, while the national museum was ransacked in the turmoil following the 2003 US-led invasion. Employees and residents prevented subsequent looting attempts at the "underground shelter" where it was stored, Alyawi said.—AFP

## Germany finds most items from 2019 jewellery heist: police

GERMAN authorities said Saturday they had found a "considerable portion" of items stolen in a spectacular 2019 robbery of priceless 18<sup>th</sup>-century jewels from a state museum.

The authorities retrieved a total of 31 individual items in the night of Friday to Saturday in the capital Berlin, the police and prosecutors said.

The discovery comes in the middle of the trial of six suspects over the brazen night-time raid on the Green Vault museum in the eastern city of Dresden's Royal Palace in November 2019.

The thieves grabbed 21 pieces of jewellery and other

valuables from the collection of the Saxon ruler Augustus the Strong, encrusted with more than 4,300 individual diamonds.

The jewels included a sword with a diamond-encrusted hilt and a shoulder piece which contains the famous 49-carat Dresden white diamond.

There had been no trace of the jewels.

But "exploratory talks" between the defence and the prosecution towards a possible settlement and the return of the stolen items led to a breakthrough, police and prosecutors said, without providing further details.—AFP

### WORLD: TOP STORIES

## Paris trial postponed for suspected World Cup hooligans

A Paris court on Saturday postponed the trial of seven men linked to the far-right who are suspected of having planned to attack Morocco fans after their World Cup semi-final with France.

Police arrested the men along with dozens of others at a bar in the capital's 17<sup>th</sup> arrondissement on Wednesday evening after the match, which France won 2-0.

While the others arrested were released without charge, a police source said they suspected the seven — all in their early- to

mid-20s — had been heading to the Champs Elysees to confront Morocco fans there.

They include Marc de Caqueray-Valmenier, 24, suspected of having been the leader of the extreme-right Zouaves Paris group, which was banned in January.

The prosecution said they suspected him of having organized the gathering at the bar with a call for people to meet there "to defend the flag against the Moroccans".—AFP

## Greek parliament approves 2023 state budget

GREEK parliament ratified on Saturday the 2023 state budget, which foresees 1.8 per cent gross domestic product (GDP) growth and a 5 per cent inflation rate for the year.

Initial estimates of 2.1 per cent and 3 per cent respectively given in October, were revised amidst continuing great uncertainty globally due to the energy crisis, the Finance ministry said in a press release. The year 2022 would close with 5.6

per cent of GDP growth and 9.7 per cent of inflation, according to the budget which was passed with the votes of 156 lawmakers in the 300-member strong plenary.

"Economic growth and social welfare, bold reforms and prudence. These are the principles permeating our budget," Greek Prime Minister (PM) Kyriakos Mitsotakis said in a speech shortly before the voting.

The state has supported society to cope with increased living costs with more than 15.1 billion euros (16 billion US dollars) to date, while more support measures will be introduced in 2023, Greek public broadcaster ERT reported, quoting the PM. He also said that the year 2023 will register a primary surplus of 0.7 per cent of GDP. In 2022, the country reported a deficit of 1.6 per cent of GDP.—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.



# Messi and Argentina beat France on penalties to win World Cup

**L**IONEL MESSI crowned his glittering career with victory in the World Cup on Sunday as Argentina beat France on penalties in a final for the ages, triumphing 4-2 after Kylian Mbappe's hat-trick ensured the game ended level following extra time.

Gonzalo Montiel rolled in the deciding penalty to give Argentina their third World Cup and prevent France becoming the first team in 60 years to retain the trophy.

But a truly remarkable game saw Messi and Mbappe both live up to their billing, with Messi scoring twice and Mbappe becoming the first player since England's Geoff Hurst in 1966 to net a World Cup final hat-trick in a game that ended 3-3 after extra time.

Messi had opened the scoring from the penalty spot midway through the first half before Angel Di Maria doubled Argentina's lead at the end of a brilliant counter-attack in the 36<sup>th</sup> minute.

But the astonishing

Mbappe breathed life into the holders as he pulled one back from the penalty spot with 10 minutes to go before equalising in stunning fashion just 60 seconds later to force extra time.

Messi then seemed to have decided the contest in Argentina's favour once and for all when he converted a rebound in the 109<sup>th</sup> minute, only for Mbappe to net from another spot-kick, bringing the game level at 3-3 and forcing a shoot-out. The third World Cup final penalty shoot-out started with Messi and Mbappe both scoring, but Kingsley Coman's next kick for France was saved and Aurelien Tchouameni then crucially missed the target.

It is the second time in five World Cups that France have lost the final on penalties after they were beaten by Italy in 2006, and it is Argentina who are champions for the first time since 1986. The win allows Messi, at 35, to complete his glorious career by emulating Diego Maradona, and this will be remembered as his tournament despite the best efforts of Mbappe, who finished as the tournament's top scorer on eight goals, one more than his Paris Saint-Germain teammate Messi.

### Mbappe hat-trick

France's quest for history had been threatened by a virus in the days leading up to the final and they appeared sluggish before Argenti-

na went ahead. France conceded a penalty for the fourth time this tournament when Di Maria was clipped by Ousmane Dembele, and Messi stepped up to score from the spot for the fourth time in Qatar, his 12th World Cup goal allowing him to equal Pele's tally.

The expected response from the defending champions was not forthcoming and Argentina increased their lead in the 36<sup>th</sup> minute. Messi and Julian Alvarez combined to release Alexis Mac Allister bursting through the middle, and he played a first-time ball to the back post for Di Maria to finish. Having hardly featured in the knockout rounds due to injury, Di Maria had returned here and appeared tearful as he celebrated his goal, which was a World Cup final classic. France had not even mustered a shot and Deschamps moved before the interval to replace Olivier Giroud and the struggling Dembele. On came Randal Kolo Muani and Marcus Thuram, as Mbappe moved into the middle of the attack.

### Argentina blow two-goal lead

Argentina had famously blown a two-goal lead before eventually emerging victorious in their last World Cup final triumph 36 years ago, but there appeared little prospect of a repeat of that scenario. However, the French were suddenly given hope when they won a penalty 10 minutes from time as Kolo Muani was brought down by Nicolas Otamendi.—AFP



PHOTO: AFP