

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Friday, 20 January 2023

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.

SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing hosts dinner for Chief of Defence Forces of Royal Thai Armed Forces, currently in Myanmar to attend 8th High-Level Committee Meeting

STATE Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla hosted a dinner for Chief of Defence Forces of the Royal Thai Armed Forces General Chalermphon Srisawasdi and wife together with delegation members who arrived here to attend the 8th High-Level Committee Meeting between Myanmar and Thai armed forces hosted by Myanmar at Pristine Mermaid Resort in Ngapali Beach in Thandwe of Rakhine State yesterday evening.

Also present at the dinner were Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Moe Aung and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung and wife, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and their wives, senior military officers from the Royal Thai Armed Forces and their wives, military attachés of both countries and their wives and officials.

The Senior General and wife warmly welcomed the Thai General, wife and party. The



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing greets Chief of Defence Forces of the Royal Thai Armed Forces General Chalermphon Srisawasdi at the dinner at Pristine Mermaid Resort in Ngapali Beach in Rakhine State yesterday.

Senior General and the Thai Chief of Defence Forces extended greetings and had dinner together with those attendees. Before and during the din-

ner, artistes from the Myawady Entertainment Troupe under the Directorate of Public Relations and Psychological Warfare and artistes from the

Myanma Radio and Television under the Ministry of Information presented songs and dances. After the dinner, the Sen-

ior General and wife, the Thai General and wife presented cash awards to the artistes and cordially greeted them. — MNA/TTA

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SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing ...

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SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla warmly welcome Chief of Defence Forces of the Royal Thai Armed Forces General Chalermphon Srisawasdi and his wife at the dinner.



Chief of Defence Forces of the Royal Thai Armed Forces and party arrive in Myanmar to attend 8th High-Level Committee Meeting

AN advanced delegation led by Chief of Defence Forces of the Royal Thai Armed Forces General Chalermphon Srisawasdi arrived at the Thandwe Airport of Rakhine State by special flight yesterday morning to attend the 8th High-Level Committee Meeting between Myanmar and Thai armed forces to be hosted by Myanmar.

The Chief of Defence Forces of the Royal Thai Armed Forces and party were warmly welcomed at the airport by Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye and wife, senior military officers from

the Office of the Commander-in-Chief and their wives, the commander of Western Command, the military attaché of the Royal Thai Armed Forces to Myanmar and officials.

While in Myanmar, the advanced delegation led by the Chief of Defence Forces of the Royal Thai Armed Forces will attend the 8th High-Level Committee Meeting, hold the meeting to further enhance friendly relations and cooperation between the two armed forces, pay homage to eminent pagodas and visit significant places. — MNA/TTA



8 cases of COVID-19 reported on 19 January, total figure reaches at 633,785

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases reach at **633,785** after **eight** new cases were reported on 19 January 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,230**, including **one** new recovery.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged to **19,490** on 19-1-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic.—Ministry of Health

Public Notice for elimination of violence

1. SO called "CRPH", "NUG" and "PDF" terrorist groups are unlawfully committing killings of monks, teachers, civil servants and general people and looting under the pretext of saying "for the people".
2. Not rendering of encouragement, support and assistance to the "CRPH", "NUG" and "PDF" terrorists that are committing intimidations, killings and destructive activities could be construed as protecting lives and property of general public.
3. Giving information secretly relating to bearing of their arms, ammunition and terrorists to authorities could be tantamount to protecting lives and property of innocent people.

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Face-to-face meeting needed for peace issues without external interference

ONLY when all ethnic national brethren hold a face-to-face meeting to solve the peace issues of our country without any interference from the external will it achieve success. Whenever those at home and abroad do not wish to benefit from Myanmar's peace process, our peace talks will not reach the goal we aspire to. Hence, all ethnic national brethren need to notice that they should never follow criticisms leading to destruction for peace.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Chairman of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Central Committee Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the 7th Anniversary of Signing the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) on 15 October 2022)

SAC Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects training session of local Naval Central Diving and Salvage Depot near Thandwe of Rakhine State



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing watches the training session of the Naval Central Diving and Salvage Depot in Rakhine State yesterday.

STATE Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, together with his wife Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Moe Aung and wife, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung and wife and officials, inspected training session of local Naval Central Diving and Salvage Depot near Thandwe of Rakhine State and progress of military building measures yesterday morning.

The Senior General viewed skill demonstration on cast and recovery by eight members of the Navy Seals at the training beach of the depot. After taking the salute of members of the Navy Seals who participated in the skill demonstration, the Senior General instructed them to further pour out industry in the training for having the greater capability.

The commander of the depot reported to the Senior General on the brief history

of the depot, progress of military building measures, implementation of the missions and visions, taking training, sending those members to foreign training, exchange of visits with foreign countries, participation in the public welfare tasks and prevention of natural disasters, forging the military unity and welfare tasks for families as well as operating of military-owned agriculture and livestock farms.

After giving the necessary instructions, the Senior General attended to the needs.

In the training pool of the depot, the Senior General and party viewed the training session of members of the Tatmadaw (Navy) in the 10-metre tower jumping, the 50-metre-long swimming in tying hands and legs after jumping from five metres high position, freestyle swimming underwater, and off and on the training of oxygen cylinder. They then viewed round various items of equipment and arms used in training, salvage and security measures of the Tatmadaw (Navy), life security on



The Senior General views the 10-Man Hyperbaric Medical Treatment Chamber.

the water surface, mine clearance, and water surface rescue works as well as documentary photos on training sessions and duty assignments.

The Senior General and party watched an underwater disturbance exercise, dual air-sharing exercise,

and swimming underwater with the use of the underwater compass. They also viewed round the 10 Men Hyperbaric Medical Treatment Chamber, the Diving Tower and the escape training of members of the Tatmadaw (Navy).

The Senior General viewed

skill demonstrations of eight trainers from the Navy Seals at the climbing wall of the Training Tower with the use of fast rope and rappelling rope and passing the barriers, presented cash awards and instructed them to skillfully give training to the trainees. — MNA/TTA

Traditional Dance Festival of Mekong-Lancang held in Nay Pyi Taw

THE Traditional Dance Festival of Mekong-Lancang under the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation (MLC) Special Fund was held with the participation of MLC countries with a hybrid system at MICC-2 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

It was attended by Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Ko Ko, Deputy Ministers U Aye Tun and Dr Moe Zaw Tun, departmental officials, MLC countries' ambassadors to Myanmar and officials of embassies, the MLC secretary-general office and Mekong-Lancang coordination team, and artistes and invitees from Mekong regions joined online.

First, Union Minister U Ko Ko said the main objectives of MLC are promoting social and economic development in the Mekong sub-region, narrowing the development gap, supporting ASEAN Community building, implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of UN and promoting South-South Cooperation among the developing



Union Minister U Ko Ko and dignitaries view the performance at the event in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.



countries.

As per the aim of the festival-Unity is Diversity, it can be seen the similarities in culture basically despite the different Mekong-Lancang countries. Moreover, it can grab the chance to exchange traditions and culture of each MLC country, study the differences in culture, and conserve intangible cultures while the MLC countries face the same challenges for the influence of

other countries cultures and development of materials and improve friendship among the young artistes of MLC countries.

Then, the Union minister called on the participants to preserve the respective traditional dances of their countries, exchange traditional dances and pass them down over the new generations.

Afterwards, Chinese Embassy Deputy Head Ms Cao Jin and

the vice-chair of the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation National Coordination Unit Myanmar made greeting speeches.

Then, Myanmar artistes performed with Theme Song of MLC and the Union Minister took commemorative photos with the attendees to the event.

Then, Chinese experts Ms Feng Mi and Mr Shen Chen and Sayama Gyi Daw Sanda Khin of Myanmar discussed the learning

of Myanmar culture, Chinese culture and the improvement of tradition and culture with literature and arts and the conservation of Myanmar culture.

Artistes from MLC countries – Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam – performed their traditional dances. Then, Myanmar artistes entertained the guests with MLC honorary song "We are Family One". —MNA/KTZH

MIFER Union Minister receives UNDCO Asia-Pacific Regional Director



UNDCO Asia-Pacific Regional Director Mr David McLachlan-Karr calls on Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

UNION Minister Dr Kan Zaw of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations received the delegation led by Mr David McLachlan-Karr, Regional Director for Asia-Pacific from the United Nations Develop-

ment Coordination Office (UNDCO) at the ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

They shared views on matters relating to the existing cooperation between the Government of Myanmar and the UN and

discussed the continuous implementation of current Country Programmes of UN Agencies.

Officials of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations were also present at the meeting.—MNA

MoC Union Minister receives Thai ambassador and delegation



Union Minister U Aung Naing Oo receives the Thai ambassador-led delegation in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

UNION Minister for Commerce U Aung Naing Oo received Thai Ambassador Mr Mongkol Visitstump and the delegation at the ministry yesterday.

The Union minister and Thai ambassador-led delegation discussed matters in connection with prompt resumption of the Myanmar-Thailand joint

trade commission meeting, promoting trade between the two countries, and smoothing the process for border trade and bilateral economic cooperation in a friendly and frank manner. The director-general of the Department of Trade and officials attended the meeting.—MNA/TS

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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.

MoTC Union Minister inspects upgrading work of Yangon-Mandalay railway

STATE Administration Council Member Union Minister for Transport and Communications Admiral Tin Aung San inspected the upgrading project Phase I of the Yangon-Mandalay railway yesterday afternoon.

First, the Union minister arrived at the briefing hall of the Bago-Nyaunglebin section (CP-102) in Pyuntaza. The general manager (engineer-admin) and officials from Myanmar Railways explained Phase I of the Yangon-Mandalay Railway upgrading project with the Japanese ODA loan and the progress of work on

the Yangon-Toungoo railway section.

The Union minister and party also inspected the construction of the platform at Pyuntaza station. Then, they inspected the completion of construction of the railway within 30 miles long section between Pyuntaza and Phayagyi and the construction site of bridge No 116-B. — MNA/KZW

Union Minister Admiral Tin Aung San inspects the railway upgrading work yesterday.



Sinopharm vaccines, syringes donated by China handed over to Myanmar



Union Minister Dr Thet Khaing Win receives the China -donated vaccines and syringes from Chinese Ambassador Mr Chen Hai yesterday.

THREE million Sinopharm vaccines and three million syringes donated by the People's Republic of China to Myanmar were handed over at the VIP lounge hall of Yangon International Airport yesterday. Union Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein and Chinese Ambassador Mr Chen Hai attended the ceremony.

The Chinese ambassador said that the donated Covid-19 vaccines are for Myanmar's additional vaccination activities. China is continuously assisting Myanmar in its anti-epidemic operations and also in the construction of Myanmar's infectious disease prevention and control centre and training centres for health workers.

Union Health Minister Dr Thet Khaing Win expressed his thank to China for the assistance provided by China to the Myanmar Infectious Disease Control Centre and the Health Staff Training Centre to be opened by the end of 2023. He added that the donated three million vaccines will be used as an additional preventive injection for elderly people with chronic diseases and school-age children.

Afterwards, the two countries mutually signed the record of the transfer of vaccines and the Union minister returned the letter of appreciation. Then, the Union minister, the ambassador and the guests had documentary photos taken before closing the ceremony.—MNA/KZW

MoEA Union Minister attends Ethnic Policy and Culture Exchange Workshop in Thailand

THE opening ceremony of the on ethnic policy and culture exchange workshop under the Mekong-Lancang Cooperation Special Fund (2020) was organized in Bangkok, Thailand yesterday.

Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs U Saw Tun Aung Myint, Kayin State Ethnic Affairs Minister U San Ko, Taninthayi Region Ethnic Affairs Minister U Saw Martin Luther, and the ministry's delegates attended the event together with the relevant officials.

During the workshop, Social Development and Human Security Ministry of Thailand head Mr Anan Dontree delivered the greeting speech and Deputy Permanent Secretary of Foreign Affairs Ms Phan-



Union Minister U Saw Tun Aung Myint poses for the documentary group photo at the event in Bangkok yesterday.

tipha Iamsudha Ekarohit remarked.

Then, Union Minister U Saw Tun Aung Myint talked about the programmes under

the MLC (2020) aiming to exchange ethnic culture and policies of the two countries and urged them to exchange views on cooperation for the devel-

opment of the socioeconomic status of people in the future.

After the discussion with the deputy director-general of the Department of Ethnic

Rights Protection of Myanmar, delegates and guests took commemorative photos.

During the workshop, officials of relevant departments of the two countries discussed the activities of the ministry, subjects under the topic of the Concept of Highland People Development, ethnic affairs policy and rights, operations of the Ministry of Home Affairs of Thailand, ethnic culture festivals of Myanmar, promoting access to justice towards ethnic groups in Thailand, cultures of ethnic people in Myanmar, protection and promotion of occupations of ethnic people. Then, the Union Minister expressed thanks for their participation in the meeting.—MNA/KTZH

CURRENT AFFAIRS



The historical Shwe Myintzu Pagoda (Indawgyi)

Shwe Myintzu Pagoda (Indawgyi) to hold its 154th alms donation ceremony

THE 154th alms donation ceremony and rice offering ceremony will be held at the Shwe Myintzu Pagoda (Indawgyi) in Mohnyin township, Kachin State, on 26 February (8th waxing of Taboung).

At the ceremony, 180 monks and 90 nuns will be offered alms

and rice by respective departmental staff, members of the board of trustees, ethnic traditional cultural troupes, residents and pilgrims from around the region.

The Shwe Myintzu Pagoda (Indawgyi) festival takes place for eight days from the 8th waxing

to the full moon day of Taboung annually and free accommodation has been arranged for pilgrims. The traditional alms donation ceremony and the rice offering ceremony will be celebrated in one day due to Covid-19 prevention and control measures in the region. — TWA/CT

Sugar and garlic persist in price hikes

THE price of garlic from the Aungban area, Shan State, which is nearing harvest time, has returned to the highest price in 2017.

Likewise, it has been around a month since the sugar mills started operating again, but it is difficult to buy sugar in the Yangon market due to its rising prices, said a dealer. Sugar prices hit the highest record again.

New Shan garlic usually enters the market after the Chinese New Year. There is only a small stock of garlic left in the country and they are mostly low in quality. The weight of garlic decreased as well.

Since the release of new Shan garlic in 2022, the price per viss has been the highest at K2,900-K4,200 until mid-December 2022. However, the price reached K4,000-K5,100 per viss on 24 December 2022 and K4,900-K6,200 per viss on 12 January. It is reported that the garlic price fetched K4,800-K5,900 per viss in the Aungban area on 15 January.

Kyukok garlic grasps the market share in the domestic market, because of the difficulty in peeling Shan garlic even

though the quality of Shan garlic is better than Kyukok garlic, said a garlic seller. Kyukok garlic is widely used when the prices of new Shan garlic go up.

Similarly, sugar fetched the wholesale price of K2,550 per viss in October 2022, and was appreciated at K2,650 per viss on 30 December 2022 and K2,700 per viss on 13 January 2023, when the sugar mills are back in operation. As the sugar prices increased, the availability of sugar decreased in the Yangon market. If the price of sugar is higher than that of imported sugar, the imported sugar tends to enter the country.

It is known that the price of jaggery was stable while the sugar price is rising. The price of

white jaggery of NyaungU (treated with chemicals), which rose to K3,700 per viss in early October 2022, stood at K3,100 per viss currently. Brown slab sugar made from sugarcane is still priced at K2,650 per viss. To increase the sale of brown slab sugar, it has been seen that peanut brown slab sugar was made and sold in the market.

The domestic sugar market relies on a small number of sugar mills and the storage of new sugar has increased among hoarders. The reason for the increasing sugar price at the time of the mill running is the low number of sugar mills and the exportation of sugar to external markets. — TWA/CT



Pictures show Kyukok garlic, brown sugar and white sugar on sale in the market.

Over 200 apartments of Aung Myint Mo, Thilawa affordable housing to be sold



Apartment units of Aung Myint Mo housing in Dagon Myothit (South) Township.

MORE than 200 apartment units of Aung Myint Mo and Thilawa low-cost housing complexes developed in the Yangon Region will be sold, according to the Ministry of Construction.

Prospective buyers who have a deposit of K3 million and above with the Construction, Housing and Infrastructure Development Bank (CHID) until end-December 2022 are entitled to purchase the apartment units.

They will be scrutinized to purchase 204 units of the low-cost and affordable housing of Thilawa and Aung Myint Mo housing projects from February 2023.

Those who have not deposited K3 million with the CHID will not be considered in the scrutiny process that will take place on 27 January, the ministry stated.

Aung Myint Mo housing is developed in Dagon Myothit (South) Township, including 12-unit apartments (four units each on three floors), 32-unit ones with four floors and 24-unit ones with four floors.

Meanwhile, the Thilawa low-cost housing project is located near Thanlyin Technological University, having 20 units (5 floors), 30 units (5 floors) and 40 units (5 floors). — TWA/EMM

Three people from Ruili returnees found infected with Covid-19

THREE of 150 people who returned from Ruili to Muse on 18 January were found infected with Covid-19, according to social welfare organizations in Muse.

The border checkpoints on the Chinese side were opened on 8 January and the first batch of over 140 people

returned to Myanmar on 14 January.

Three women infected with Covid-19 were sent to the 1,000-bed Covid centre at the 105th-Mile post.

Although Myanmar people who returned from China are being accepted, those who are going to China from Myanmar are not allowed to enter it at present. — TWA/MKKS

Myanmar returnees are pictured on the Sino-Myanmar border.



LOCAL BUSINESS

Mandalay market sees bustling trade activity of oil seeds in pre-Chinese New Year festival



THE prices of oil seeds (sesame seeds and peanuts) edge up in the Mandalay market when the Chinese New Year festival is approaching, traders from Mandalay city said.

There is a brisk sale of oil seeds in the pre-Chinese New Year period. This year, the prices doubled to K6,800 per viss of peanut from K3,300 from the year-ago period and K300,000 per three-basket bag of black sesame seeds (Samone variety) from K185,000 from last year's price.

"Some Sino-Myanmar borders resumed in the pre-Chinese New Year period after a three-year hiatus triggered by the COVID-19 consequences. The exporters made advance purchases before the long holidays of the new year. The oil seed market did a

roaring trade this year compared to last year's trade activities.

The price also increased two

folds. During the year of the rabbit in the Chinese zodiac, it is predicted to be a year of hope with active



trading. There is a robust demand for the Niger seed, sunflower, mustard seed and soybean," said a trader.

The prices of pulses to be exported to China stood at K61,000 per three-basket bag of corn, K140,000 per bag of green gram, K200,000 per bag of cowpeas red, K128,000 per bag of cowpeas white and K137,000 per bag of kidney beans. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)/EMM

Traders are seen keen on evaluating beans and pulses in the Mandalay market.

DICA says nominal directors and shareholders won't be allowed



The Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

NOMINAL directors and shareholders will not be allowed, according to the notification released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA) dated 17 January 2023.

By exercising the power conferred by Sub-Section 462 (A) (II) of the Myanmar Companies Law, the DICA hereby notified that nominal directors and shareholders shall not be permitted.

According to Chapter 18 stipulated in Myanmar Companies Law, regarding the rights of the directors and officials, those who direct corporate affairs are considered directors even if the position of the director is not appointed. Additionally, the appointment of

alternate directors is allowed under the existing law. Electing nominee directors is not officially approved.

Furthermore, any person who holds the shares has to submit reports to a registrar and make entries in a list of the participants of the companies archived at the company, stipulated in the Myanmar Companies Law.

At present, nominal shareholders are legally registered in some countries on behalf of the actual beneficial owner.

However, company registration with nominee shareholders is not allowed in Myanmar. Those registered persons and legal entities kept in the company file and registered with the registrar are consid-

ered actual beneficial proprietors.

Furthermore, the information of beneficial owners can be observed at a fixed fee under Section 421 of the Myanmar Companies Law.

This notification has come into effect from 17 February 2023.

Following that notification, the owners of foreign companies have to stay in the country instead of the nominal director. Yet, it could pose problems and challenges to some foreign firms during the pandemic and in the state of political turmoil, Myanmar Enterprise Solutions indicated.

Under the Myanmar Companies Law, each company must have at least one director who must reside for more than 183 days in the State. Thus, foreign firms usually appoint Myanmar citizens or foreigners who stay more than 183 days in the country as nominal directors. Nominal directors are officially permitted in other foreign countries as well.

Myanmar Enterprise Solutions elaborated that it would be more appropriate if nominal directors are allowed and only nominal shareholders are unconstitutional. — NN/EMM

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 19 January 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| Octane 92 | K2,230 |
| Octane 95 | K2,310 |
| Diesel | K2,420 |
| Premium Diesel | K2,500 |

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA | K2,252,500 per tical |
| High-purity gold in the gold market | K2,815,000 per tical |

Dollar Price

| | |
|--|------------------|
| A US dollar set by the Central Bank of Myanmar | K2,100 |
| A US dollar in the forex market | K2,835 to K2,855 |

The above prices may change from time to time.

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09 454 237 515

OPINION

Raise the number of readers to widen the scope of knowledge

AS A Myanmar saying goes: all books are friends, the persons with the hobby of reading love books and publications. They assume books as their friends similar to actual human friends because they can accumulate knowledge on a wider range from reading.

In society, genuine friends urge their partners to do deserved things as well as give a helping hand to them for doing something. On the other hand, those genuine friends are responsible for reminding their partners not to do and prevent inappropriate measures. Likewise, knowledge obtained from reading can help the readers mature to consider dos and don'ts in society.

Once, Myanmar launched a literacy campaign in the entire nation to raise the literacy rate as well as decline the illiteracy rate. Currently, Myanmar strives for raising the number of readers through reading books and publications among the people to be able to widen their scope of knowledge for analyzing right and wrong.

and figures.

As such, readers need to take care in analyzing the information on social media. They all need to spend their important time and cost when reading inappropriate information on social media. Moreover, reflection from the monitor of computers and mobile screens can affect impacts on eyes of readers. Even if they wish to read something on social media, they should uphold consideration to read them.

In practice, book reading is the best for readers. From a material view, the hard copy cannot bring any side effects to the reader's eyes. In addition, the officially published books grant the readers for avoiding inappropriate measures from the books. But, readers need to have the rationality and skill of analysis over everything such as that of social media and books whether is right or wrong.

Once, Myanmar launched a literacy campaign in the entire nation to raise the literacy rate as well as decline the illiteracy rate. Currently, Myanmar strives for raising the number of readers through reading books and publications among the people to be able to widen their scope of knowledge for analyzing right and wrong.

EXERCISE or physical activity is not only good for your well-being but prevents chronic diseases. On the other hand, a sedentary lifestyle is a totally separate variable and seriously bad. Sitting too much – all by itself – can raise the risk of disease and premature death. Even if you dutifully do exercise, it can't compensate for the bad effects of a long time sitting.

Today, many well-educated health enthusiasts do exercise, but they are also more likely to have desk jobs. It is not strange that most of our parents or grandparents pushed us in our childhood to get well our education for good office positions. We were brainwashed that desk job shows the high status of work life. That is why we got chronic diseases even under the umbrella of good exercise.

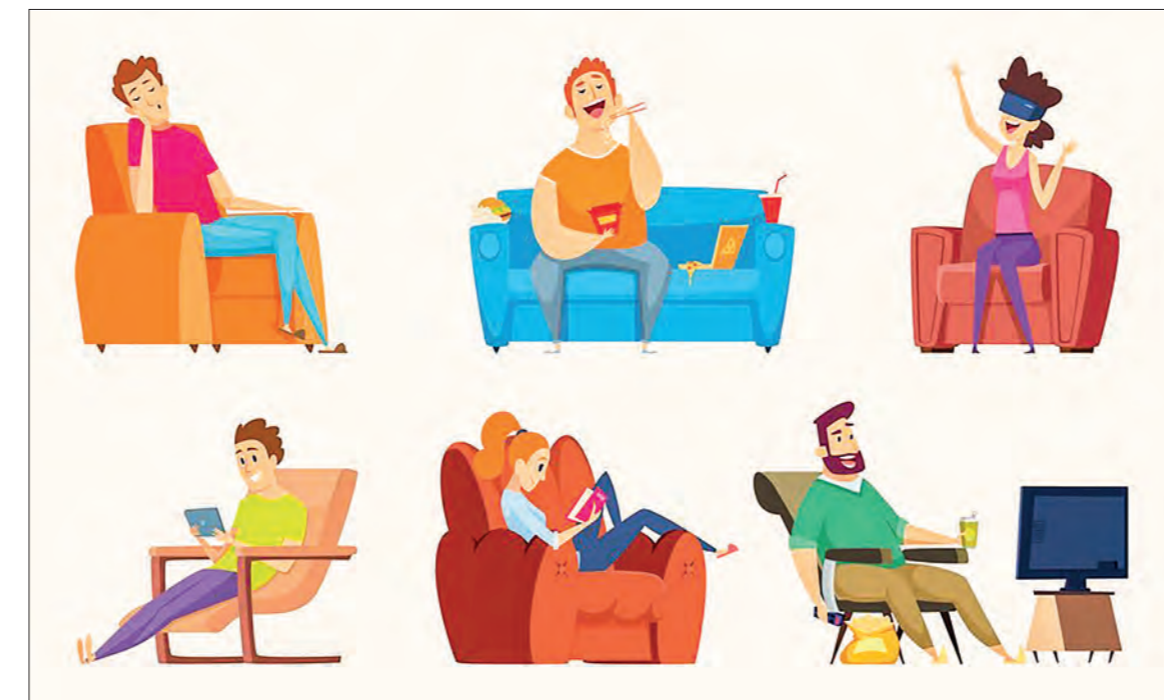
There are so many studies to prove the harmfulness of long sitting. One of them is a large American study on over 200,000 healthy adults in 2012. This study showed that more time spent sitting was linked to premature death from heart disease and cancer. Even among people who exercised

more than seven hours a week, watching

TV for more than seven hours a day was linked to a fifty per cent greater risk of all-cause mortality and a two-fold greater risk of cardiovascular mortality.

People who sat for eight hours a day and got almost no exercise had higher mortality rates than people who sat less and were very active. But the good news was that sitting for eight hours a day was not associated with higher death rates if they did 60-75 minutes of hard exercises every day. Sedentary behaviour is not just the absence of physical activity, but a distinct behaviour with its own health risks. Anyhow, sitting kills.

In science, sedentary behaviour is defined as any waking behaviour characterized by energy expenditure less than or equal to 1.5 times the resting metabolic rate while sitting or reclining position. That is different from physical inactivity, which is de-



A sedentary lifestyle is linked to high cholesterol, metabolic syndrome, gallstones, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cognitive dysfunction, dementia, osteoarthritis, low back pain, constipation, muscle weakness and so many others. **ILLUSTRATION: FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY/FREEPIK**

financed as not reaching the recommended 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity exercise. In

fact, physical inactivity is believed to be the biggest public health problem of the 21st century. It

also causes as many deaths a year globally as smoking. A sedentary lifestyle not only raises the risk of

Let's get out of a sedentary lifestyle

By Saya Norm

getting many chronic diseases but increases the severity of these diseases and the risk of dying from them as well.

Sitting triggers a cascade of unhealthy metabolic events. It tends to increase visceral fat. Such fat is not an inert blob of tissue, as one thought, but an active organ. It pumps out chemicals that lead to chronic systemic inflammation and Insulin resistance, in another word, type 2 diabetes is a result of chronic inflammation. And also atherosclerosis (hardening of the artery), cancer, heart problems and neurological degeneration follows.

A sedentary lifestyle is also linked to high cholesterol, metabolic syndrome, gallstones, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cognitive dysfunction, dementia, osteoarthritis, low back pain, constipation, muscle weakness and so many

others. Perhaps the most important one is heart disease. Sitting too much raises the risk of cardiovascular disease. The more prolonged the sitting, the bigger the risk.

As a matter of fact, sitting more than ten hours a day increases levels of a protein called troponin, a marker for damage to cardiac cells that are normally seen in a heart attack. Sitting too much also raises the risk of blood clots. In consequence, the clots may cause stroke or cardiac arrest by a coronary blockage. Physical inactivity, including sitting, is so lethal. It now accounts for an estimated 5.3 million deaths worldwide, according to a Landmark 2012 study. That's nine per cent of premature death, six per cent of coronary heart disease, seven per cent of type 2 diabetes, ten per cent of breast cancer and ten per cent of colon cancer.

If inactivity were decreased just a bit, by ten or 25 per cent, more than 1.3 million deaths could be averted all over the world. The cost of an inadequate activity is also very expensive. Even in a developed country like the United States, 11.1 per cent of healthcare expenditures were associated with inadequate exercise.

Worldwide, an analysis of 142 countries showed that physical inactivity costs a whopping \$53 billion in 2013.

Now, you have some knowledge of a sedentary lifestyle. Don't be afraid. You may be able to offset those bad consequences with somewhat activity. Even just standing – not exercising, but simply not sitting – would reduce premature deaths from all causes. And for those who are very busy exercising, replacing just minutes of sitting every hour with a bit of moving like going to the bathroom or drinking water helps mitigate the risk of sitting. Or else, don't sit for more than thirty minutes continuously.

Do you want a long healthy life or a short sickly life? It depends on your own decision.

International tourist arrivals doubled in 2022: UN

INTERNATIONAL tourist arrivals doubled in 2022 over the previous year, and should reach near pre-pandemic levels in 2023 thanks to the lifting of travel restrictions, especially in China, the UN's tourism body said Tuesday.

There were 917 million global tourist arrivals last year, up from 455 million in 2021, the Madrid-based World Tourism Organization said in a report, calling it "stronger than expected results".

While the number of international arrivals last year was still

just 63 per cent of the level posted in 2019 before the Covid-19 pandemic hit, the UN body predicts it could reach 80 per cent to 95 per cent in 2023.

"A new year brings more reason for optimism for global tourism," the body's secretary-gen-

eral, Zurab Pololikashvili, said in a statement.

The report said international tourism is set to consolidate its recovery in 2023, backed by pent-up demand, particularly from Asia and the Pacific as destinations and markets open up.

"In the short term, the resumption of travel from China is likely to benefit Asian destinations in particular," it added.

"At the same time, robust demand from the United States, backed by a strong US dollar, will continue to benefit destinations in the region and beyond. Europe, in particular, will benefit."

Travel in and out of China dropped dramatically from 2019 levels under Beijing's strict Covid curbs which all-but shut China's borders for three years before they were reopened earlier this month.

The restrictions had left a gaping hole in the Asian travel market, where countries from Thailand to Japan had depended on China as their largest source

of foreign visitors.

Analysts expect Chinese airlines are likely to make significant increases to capacity from the end of March, with the start of the summer scheduling season.

China was the world's largest outbound tourist market in 2019 and the removal of its virus travel restrictions "is a significant and much welcomed step to the recovery of the tourism sector", the report said.

But the UN body warned that high inflation and interest rates, fears of a global recession and the "uncertainty derived from the Russian aggression against Ukraine" could hamper the recovery of the sector in 2023.

"Tourists are expected to increasingly seek value for money and travel close to home in response to the challenging economic environment," it added.

Strong spending

Europe, the world's most popular destination region, recorded 585 million arrivals last

year, nearly 80 per cent of its pre-pandemic level, due in part to a "particularly strong" summer season.

But Africa and the Americas only recovered to about 65 per cent of pre-pandemic visitors, while Asia and the Pacific region reached only 23 per cent due to stronger pandemic-related restrictions.

Most destinations also recorded "notable increases" in international tourism receipts, buoyed by people going on vacation for longer periods, a willingness to spend more on travel and rising costs due to inflation.

Traditional markets, like France and Germany, and emerging markets like India and Saudi Arabia, posted "strong" spending numbers last year.

Several destinations, including Mexico, Portugal and Romania, even reported tourism receipts above their pre-pandemic levels last year.

SOURCE: AFP



Tourists pose at the Taj Mahal. The Taj Mahal is an Islamic ivory-white marble mausoleum on the right bank of the river Yamuna in the Indian city of Agra. The Taj Mahal attracts from seven to eight million visitors annually, with more than 0.8 million from overseas. **PHOTO: TAUSEEF MUSTAFA /AFP**

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Thursday 19 January 2023)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and South Bay of Bengal and a few cloud elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 20 January, 2023: Weather will be partly cloudy in Mandalay, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Shan, ayin, Mon States and generally fair in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4 - 7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of slight decrease of night temperatures in Sagaing Region and Kachin, Shan States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20 January 2023: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20 January 2023: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 20 January 2023: Generally fair weather.

Ads Call 09251022355, 09974424848

Malaria GFATM Country Dialogue (Myanmar) workshop held



The Malaria GFATM Country Dialogue (Myanmar) workshop is in progress in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

THE Malaria GFATM Country Dialogue (Myanmar) Workshop for RAI4E funding proposal for malaria prevention and control

activities to be carried out from 2024 to 2026 with the support of global funds was held at the conference hall of the Ministry

of Health office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

The workshop specifically aims to achieve the goal of elim-

inating malaria by the year 2030.

Deputy Minister for Health Prof Dr Aye Tun said that the death rate due to malaria in Myanmar decreased significantly between 2012 and 2020 but the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 had an impact on the prevention of malaria.

As the incidence of the disease increased in border areas that are difficult to reach, more efforts must be made to be free from malaria, he added.

Myanmar is working towards the elimination of falciparum malaria by 2025 and the total elimination of malaria by 2030.

The Public Health Department submitted a proposal for continued funding from the World Fund, and officials from the World Health Organization and the Malaria Control Project are in joint discussions and will soon be able to send it to the Global Fund.

National Malaria Control Project Manager Deputy Director Dr Nay Yi Yi Lin also discussed the strategy and priority processes to be implemented for the control of malaria in Myanmar.

Officials from the Global Fund also discussed the steps and procedures involved in applying for funding.

A representative from malaria partner organizations explained the points that need to be prioritized to control malaria.

Directors-general of the Ministry of Health, the deputy permanent secretary, deputy directors-general and officers of Tatmadaw Medical Corps, Anti-Malaria Project officials from regional and state Public Health Departments, and officials from World Health Organization (Myanmar), the Global Fund and partner organizations attended the workshop. — MNA/KZL

Illegal timber, fuel oil, foodstuffs, consumer goods, electronics, motorbike parts, ship and vehicles confiscated

AN on-duty team under the supervision of the Customs Department conducted inspections at the Myanmar Industrial Port container checkpoint on 17 January.

Officials captured K9.8 million worth of electrical goods that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from a container. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

In addition, a combined team under the management of the Taninthayi Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force searched a small ship (approximately K80 million), which carried fuel oil and docked at a small port near the Shwewetwun Bridge in Kawthoung township and seized 17,777 gallons of fuel oil without official documents. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

Similarly, a combined team captured an unregistered Mitsubishi Pajero car and an unregistered Toyota Vellfire car worth K12.5 million and the action was

taken under the Export and Import Law.

An on-duty team at the 16th-Mile Kyaukchaw combined checkpoint nabbed K17,270,000 worth of electrical goods, consumer goods, foodstuffs and motorbike parts without official documents from a Mitsubishi Fuso car (approximately K13 million) heading from Muse to Mandalay. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

A total of 52.3200 tonnes of illegal timber worth K3,662,400 was seized in Patheingyi township and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

On 18 January, a combined team led by the Myanmar Police Force captured an unregistered TE six-wheel car (approximately K8.5 million) in Letpadan township. The action was taken under the Export and Import Law. Therefore, 11 arrests (estimated value of K254,239,195) were made on 17 and 18 January, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

Illegal trade seizures worth over K65 billion logged in 2022

OVER 4,200 illegal trade seizures with an estimated value of more than K65 billion were made within a year, from January to December 2022.

State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Vice-Senior General Soe Win said at the work coordination meeting of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee on 18 January that illegal trade seizures in 2022 were valued at over K56 billion more

than in 2021. In 2021, there were 2,240 cases of seizure with an estimated value of over K8 billion.

In carrying out the task of preventing illegal trade, it is more important for all those concerned to do their duty effectively under the law rather than just pretending to work to be able to present the report of seizures and for the staff on duty to collect taxes due to the state and not to be involved in bribery cases, the

SAC Vice-Chairman added.

All kinds of timber, food products, mobile phone handsets, marine industry equipment, crude oil, chemicals, motorcars, motorcycles, fabric rolls, fish farm equipment, heavy machinery spare parts, household electrical appliances, gaming heavy machinery, marble slabs, fuel oil and consumer goods are being arrested almost every day. — TWA/CT



The picture shows the seizure of 4,150 illegal of mangrove logs (approximated value of K830,000) in Pyapon Township, Ayeyawady Region.

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HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

Nurses in England stage new walk-out over pay



Thousands of nurses in Britain walked out Wednesday in a new protest over pay, with no end in sight to a wave of strikes that has piled pressure on the UK's overburdened public health system. People take part in a protest march organized by Doctors Association UK. **PHOTO: AFP**

NURSES across England began two days of strikes over pay on Wednesday, threatening fresh disruption for patients in the creaking state-run health service, as new figures showed inflation still surging.

The walkout comes after nurses held their union's first stoppage in more than a century last month, joining a wave of industrial action by UK public sector workers hit by a cost-of-living crisis driven by spiralling prices.

The latest annual inflation statistics, released early Wednesday, showed they remained close

to historically record levels, with rates easing slightly in December to 10.5 per cent, compared with 10.7 per cent the previous month.

The main nursing union accuses the government of failing to negotiate seriously on improving their pay deal for the current year, which they say is crucial given the economic situation.

"We take strike action with a heavy heavy heart but a clear mind about what we want to achieve," said nurse Anna Swift before joining a picket line in central London.

"It's time to take some ac-

tion to say we need better pay, we need better conditions," she told Sky News.

The latest walkout piles further pressure on the National Health Service (NHS) at a time of peak demand due to winter illnesses and lengthening waiting lists for treatment caused by Covid cancellations and under-staffing.

Further strikes are planned for 6 and 7 February by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) union, which has said they will "be at the highest intensity" in its history.

'Unaffordable'

Conservative Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has insisted recession-hit Britain cannot afford to reopen public sector pay already set for this fiscal year, which ends on 31 March.

He has hinted at the possibility of more flexibility in agreeing upcoming salary deals, handled by pay review bodies whose independence from government has been questioned.

"Unaffordable pay hikes will mean cutting patient care and stoking the inflation that would make us all poorer," health minister Steve Barclay wrote in an op-ed Wednesday in *The Independent*.—AFP

Foreign visitors to Japan in 2022 up 15-fold to 3.83 mln.



Foreign visitors wearing face masks visit Nagoya Castle in central Japan. **PHOTO: KYODO**

THE number of foreign visitors to Japan in 2022 sharply recovered and grew 15-fold from the previous year to 3.83 million after the easing of border controls imposed to counter the coronavirus pandemic, government data showed Wednesday.

The number was still 88 percent lower than the record high of 31.88 million in the pre-pandemic year of 2019, the Japan Tourism Agency said.

A further recovery in the number of foreign arrivals will likely depend on the return of visitors from mainland China, which until earlier this month largely restricted overseas

travel under its strict "zero-COVID" policy.

Japan has also strengthened its border controls for those traveling from China to prevent the spread of COVID-19 after cases have exploded in the East Asian neighbour following the easing of its restrictions.

By origin, the largest number of travellers in 2022 came from South Korea at 1.01 million, followed by 331,100 from Taiwan, 323,500 from the United States and 284,100 from Viet Nam. Japan scrapped coronavirus testing requirements in October last year.—Kyodo

Spain tourist income surpasses pre-pandemic levels

SPAIN'S income from tourism activity surged in 2022, surpassing levels last seen before the pandemic, the Exceltur tourism association said Tuesday.

Last year's tourism earnings reached an estimated 159 billion euros (\$172 billion), an increase of 1.4 per cent on 2019, beating expectations notably in the second half, marking "the full recovery of tourism activity in Spain", it said.

Although the figures showed the tourism sector accounted for 12.2 per cent of the Spanish economy last year, it remained slightly lower than the 12.6 per cent registered in 2019. "In contrast to the many predictions to the contrary, which were proved



People enjoy a morning out at La Barceloneta Beach in Barcelona on 24 May, as the country slowly loosens a strict coronavirus lockdown. This is by far the most popular beach in Barcelona, and with it being the city's main stretch of coastline. **PHOTO: JOSEP LAGO /AFP/FILE**

wrong during the second half, 2022 marked the full recovery of

tourism activity in Spain," it said in a statement.—AFP

UK to include trans people in conversion therapy ban

THE UK government on Tuesday promised to include transgender people in draft legislation banning so-called "conversion therapy" aimed at changing sexual orientation or identity.

The move, welcomed by gay lawmakers and LGBTQ groups, comes after the government has long stalled on passing such legislation and sought to exclude transgender people.

Culture minister Michelle Donelan said a draft bill on banning conversion therapy in England and Wales will be published soon, without specifying a date.

It "will protect everyone, including those targeted on the basis of their sexuality, or being transgender", she added.

But she added the proviso that legislation should not prevent "parents or clinicians" having "legitimate conversations" about "gender-related distress" among children or young adults.

The announcement came as the UK government is using its powers to block a bill passed in the Scottish parliament to make it easier for people to self-identify as transgender.

Some commentators suggested the announcement was an attempt to deflect attention.

Conversion therapy is an umbrella term for interventions to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity, based on a belief this is possible.—AFP

ECONOMY WORLD

Japan eyes 4.5 trl yen rise in debt costs in FY 2026 on high yields

THE Finance Ministry expects higher long-term interest rates to push up Japan's debt-servicing costs in fiscal 2026 by around 4.5 trillion yen (\$35 billion) from the next fiscal year, government sources said Wednesday, factoring in an uptrend in bond yields.

The estimate is based on the assumption that the yield on 10-year Japanese government bonds will be 1.6 per cent for fiscal 2026, higher than the 1.1 per cent for fiscal 2023 starting in April.

The Bank of Japan is guiding the benchmark yield to around



People shop on the Ameyoko street in Tokyo's Ueno area on 30 December 2022 ahead of New Year's Day. **PHOTO: KYODO**

zero per cent, only allowing it to trade within a range of minus 0.5 per cent and 0.5 per cent but financial markets expect the band to widen or eventually be abolished.

Total debt servicing costs, used for debt redemption and interest payments, are expected to rise to 29.8 trillion yen in fiscal 2026, according to the estimate.

Financial markets are rife with speculation that the BOJ will be forced to change its ultra-low rate policy even as Haruhiko Kuroda, the current governor whose term ends in April, has

rejected the idea of raising interest rates. The US Federal Reserve and other major central banks have been scrambling to curb inflation with aggressive rate hikes. Debt-servicing costs already account for a quarter of Japan's budget. Fiscal reconstruction has taken a backseat in recent years despite the debt being more than twice the size of the economy after the government stepped up spending amid the COVID-19 pandemic and as the result of inflation partly caused by Russia's war in Ukraine.—Kyodo

At Davos, Saudi Arabia says curbing oil dependency a priority

SAUDI Arabia is working to reduce its reliance on oil exports, Economy Minister Faisal Al-Ibrahim said Wednesday, as the Middle East powerhouse sent one of the largest delegations to the Davos summit to make its case.

Despite its goal of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2060, the country remains hugely dependent on crude oil exports that have powered

its growth for decades, raising doubts about its potential for an economic makeover any time soon.

"We want to lessen our dependence on oil... We want to diversify our economy, it is important, it is essential," Al-Ibrahim told AFP at the World Economic Forum.

Riyadh has dispatched eight top-ranking officials to the gathering of business elite as it

seeks more foreign investment and partners outside the all-important oil sector.

Soaring crude prices following Russia's invasion of Ukraine allowed the kingdom to post in 2022 its first budget surplus in nine years, giving it the financial firepower for economic development.

"It's never too late for sectors that are starting from scratch in Saudi Arabia. Tourism, culture, sports and entertainment — they are going to bring a wealth of diversification," Al-Ibrahim said.

"But we also care about other sectors like mining and industry for it to be even more competitive."

Saudi Arabia is hoping to build on momentum from the high-profile visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping to Riyadh last month, where deals worth billions of dollars were signed in areas including energy and infrastructure.—AFP



Saudi Arabia's economy remains hugely dependent on oil exports, despite attempts at diversification. **PHOTO: AFP**

China's FDI inflow up 6.3% in 2022

FOREIGN direct investment (FDI) in the Chinese mainland, in actual use, expanded 6.3 per cent year on year to 1.23 trillion yuan in 2022, the Ministry of Commerce said Wednesday.

In US dollar terms, the FDI inflow went up eight per cent year on year to 189.13 billion US dollars.

The manufacturing industry saw FDI inflow increase by 46.1 per cent year on year to 323.7 billion yuan in 2022, while that of hi-tech industries jumped by 28.3 per cent compared with 2021, data from the ministry showed.

During this period, investment from the Republic of Korea, Germany, and Britain, climbed

by 64.2 per cent, 52.9 per cent, and 40.7 per cent, respectively — while that from the European Union registered a sharp rise of 92.2 per cent year on year.

FDI flowing into the country's central region reported a year-on-year expansion of 21.9 per cent, followed by 14.1 per cent in the western region.—Xinhua

UK inflation slows in December but remains sky-high

ANNUAL inflation in Britain slowed to 10.5 per cent in December, official data showed Wednesday, but remained close to historically high levels that are causing a cost-of-living crisis and mass strikes.

The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rate compared with 10.7 per cent in November, the Office for National Statistics said in statement.

"Inflation eased slightly in December, although still at a very high level, with overall prices rising strongly during the last year as a whole," said ONS chief economist Grant Fitzner.

He noted that petrol prices "fell notably in December, with the cost of clothing also dropping back slightly".

"However, this was offset by increases for coach and air fares as well as overnight hotel accommodation," Fitzner

added.

UK inflation began soaring last year amid sharp price rises worldwide due to supply constraints caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the lifting of Covid pandemic lockdowns.

Britain was also hit by fallout from Brexit, which has increased the cost of doing business across a range of sectors.

Consumer inflation reached 11.1 per cent in October, the highest level since 1980.

Official data Tuesday revealed that average British wages sank 2.6 per cent at the end of last year as pay rises failed to keep pace with inflation, triggering major strike action.

While some striking workers have managed to agree new pay deals, tens of thousands of workers across the private and public sectors continue to stage walkouts.—AFP



Consumer inflation reached 11.1 per cent in October, the highest level since 1980. Shoppers walking along Oxford Street in London on 21 December 2021. **PHOTO: TOLGA AKMEN /AFP**

European auto sales hit three-decade low in 2022: report

NEW vehicle registrations in Europe dropped to their lowest level since 1993 last year as component shortages continued to hinder automakers, an industry group reported Wednesday. Despite an uptick in sales since August, the

overall number of EU registrations fell 4.6 per cent to 9.3 million, a level last seen three decades ago, the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association said. It marks a third difficult year for the industry since the factory and

showroom closures during the Covid-19 outbreak in 2021 and the resulting supply bottlenecks — not least for key semiconductors — that persisted even as the pandemic eased. Germany was the only major European market that saw growth last year, at 1.1 per cent, while Italy registrations plunged 9.7 per cent, France 7.8 per cent and Spain 5.4 per cent.

But the auto association, known by its French abbreviation ACEA, said sales had picked up in most countries during the final months of the year, with December registrations up 12.8 per cent overall from the year earlier.—AFP



An employee resuming work at the SEVEL (European Light Vehicle Company) car factory in Atessa, south of Pescara, Italy. PHOTO: AFP

Let's-a-go (to Hollywood)! First US 'Super Mario' theme park to open

NINTENDO'S first theme park outside of its native Japan will open in California next month, just weeks before Mario gets the big-screen treatment in a major new Hollywood film.

Super Nintendo World will be part of Universal Studios Hollywood — an amusement park that is traditionally home to rides based on film and TV franchises from "Waterworld" to "Harry Potter".

But with the video game industry now eclipsing movies in size, and theme parks using increasingly interactive technology to immerse guests, bosses of the two companies have joined



Guests explore Super Nintendo World at Universal Studios in Los Angeles during a preview on 13 January 2023. PHOTO: AFP

forces to capitalize on the platform-hopping plumber's global popularity.

The new Nintendo attraction will largely mirror the design of its recently opened, slightly larger sister park in Osaka, including a "Mario Kart: Bowser's Challenge" ride

that uses augmented reality goggles.

Visitors race along a real-life track surrounded by actual set pieces, but can aim and shoot virtual shells at computerized villains they see displayed on their head-mounted, individual visors.—AFP

United Airlines sees 2023 profit jump amid tight capacity

EYEING another year of strong travel demand and limited airline industry capacity, United Airlines projected a big jump in 2023 profits Tuesday after releasing fourth-quarter earnings that topped expectations.

The big US carrier forecast 2023 profits of between \$10 and \$12 per share, which is more than four times the level from last year.

United reported profits of \$843 million for the fourth quarter, compared with a loss of \$646 million in the year-ago period.

Revenues rose 51 per cent from a year ago to \$12.4 billion.

United called the post-pandemic airline environment an "unprecedented opportunity", according to a company PowerPoint presentation.

The airline's fore-

cast includes a sceptical appraisal of the industry's ability to increase capacity in 2023, calling the targets "unachievable, similar to 2022", the presentation added.

Limited air industry capacity has boosted airplane ticket prices and airline profits, as consumers seek out travel after the pandemic grounded many people.—AFP

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR MINISTRY OF ENERGY MYANMA OIL AND GAS ENTERPRISE (INVITATION FOR OPEN TENDER) (38/2022-2023)

- Open tenders are invited for supply of the following item in Myanmar Kyats.

| Sr No. | Tender No. | Description | Remarks |
|--------|------------------|------------------------|---------|
| (1) | DMP/L-183(22-23) | Mud Chemical (3) Items | Ks |
- The Open Tender forms including Description of Materials / Qty with details specifications and Tender Terms & Conditions can be available during office hours commencing from **20 January, 2023** at the Finance Department, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise, No. (44) Complex, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.
- The interested Bidders should submit the **Technical Specifications and Commercial Quotation with Original Bid Bond in each separate sealed envelopes** on which to be addressed to the Managing Director, Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise and should reach in Tender Box of the Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise not later than **12:00 pm on 3, February 2023**.
- Tender Closing Date & Time – **3-2-2023, 12:00 pm**

Myanma Oil and Gas Enterprise
Ph No. + 95 67 – 411206

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ALS SUMIRE VOY.NO. (050N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ALS SUMIRE VOY.NO. (050N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **20-1-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **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 SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB302A)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB302A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **20-1-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY S.A

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SITC HAIPHONG VOY.NO. (2302S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SITC HAIPHONG VOY.NO. (2302S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **20-1-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Sakhalin exception: the Russian energy Japan can't quit

THIS year's Group of Seven president Japan has joined the bloc's condemnation of Russia's Ukraine invasion, imposing sanctions and agreeing on an oil price cap, with one exception: Moscow's Sakhalin energy projects. Sakhalin-1 and 2 in Russia's far east are an anomaly in Tokyo's otherwise lockstep efforts with allies to reduce reliance on Moscow's hydrocarbons.

It's a contradiction that Japanese officials, and some experts, feel is unavoidable for a country that is by far the least energy self-sufficient in the G7.

But others warn the decision is a "vulnerability" for Tokyo, that "undermines" its diplomacy.

Last year, Japan pledged to

phase out Russian coal imports and gradually decrease its energy dependence on Moscow.

Government data released on Thursday showed that oil imports from Russia fell around 56 per cent last year, while coal imports were reduced by 41 per cent.

But imports of Russian liquefied natural gas (LNG) were up more than four per cent in 2022. Sakhalin-1 produces oil, while Sakhalin-2 produces both crude and LNG, and experts say access to Russian gas is what Japan is most concerned about protecting. Last year, 9.5 per cent of Japan's total LNG imports came from Russia, up from 8.8 per cent in 2021 — most of it from Sakhalin-2.—AFP



The Sakhalin-1 oil and gas development project is located off the coast of Sakhalin Island in the Russian Far East. It comprises three offshore fields namely Chayvo, Odoptu, and Arkutun-Dagi. **PHOTO: KYODO**

Putin says has 'no doubt' Russia will win in Ukraine



T-90M tanks are seen during the Victory Day military parade to mark the 77th anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War on Red Square in Moscow, Russia, 9 May 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA/BAI XUEQI**

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday he had "no doubt" Moscow would emerge victorious in Ukraine, despite military setbacks in the nearly year-long offensive.

Putin sent troops to Ukraine in February last year, and in September announced a military mobilization to prop up Moscow's forces in the pro-Western country. Despite a number of military defeats, victory was "guaranteed, I have no doubt about it", Putin told workers at a factory in Russia's second city Saint Petersburg.

"The unity and solidarity of

the Russian people, the courage and heroism of our fighters and, of course, the work of the military-industrial sector" will secure victory, he added. Putin also praised the Russian defence industry as he spoke at the plant, which is part of Russian missile manufacturer Almaz-Antey.

"We have something to rely upon and this cannot but inspire that victory will be ours," he said.

Putin was visiting his native Saint Petersburg to mark the 80th anniversary of Soviet forces breaking the siege of Leningrad as the city was known at the time.—AFP

Russia expands entry ban list of EU citizens, officials in response to 9th sanctions package

RUSSIA has expanded its entry ban list of European Union (EU) citizens and officials in response to the EU's ninth package of sanctions against Moscow, the Russian Foreign Ministry said Tuesday. "In response to the hostile actions of the EU, Russia expanded the list of representatives from European institutions and EU member states who are prohibited from entering Russian territory," the ministry said in a statement.—Xinhua

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Seoul spy agency raids labour group over suspected N Korea ties

SOUTH Korea's spy agency on Wednesday raided the country's main labour union group, saying it was part of a years-long investigation into whether some members had illegal links to North Korea.

Seoul remains officially at war with its nuclear-armed neighbour, and under its controversial National Security Act, possession of publications or other materials produced in the North can be a criminal offence.

Officials from the National Intelligence Service and the police raided the office of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions in central Seoul, saying some of its members were suspected of having "ties with North Korea", the spy agency said.—AFP



Labour group members hold placards reading "We condemn the Yoon Suk-yeol government" in front of the headquarters of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) in Seoul on 18 January 2023, as South Korea's spy agency and police raid the country's main labour union group over alleged pro-Pyongyang activities. **PHOTO: AFP**

Türkiye's president hints 14 May for elections

TURKISH President Recep Tayyip Erdogan hinted on Wednesday that the next general and presidential elections could be held on 14 May, nearly one month earlier than the scheduled date. Addressing his party members at the parliament, Erdogan cited the polls on 14 May 1950 when Democrat Party beat Republican People's Party, which had been in power for 27 years.—Xinhua

Israel top court orders Netanyahu to remove key minister



Benjamin Netanyahu returned to power as prime minister last month at the head of a coalition with extreme-right and ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties following Israel's 1 November election. **PHOTO: AFP**

ISRAEL'S top court ruled Wednesday that a senior member of premier Benjamin Netanyahu's newly formed government cannot serve as minister due to a recent tax evasion conviction.

The decision was slammed by Prime Minister Netanyahu's coalition, which vowed to push ahead with controversial measures that would weaken the Supreme Court and its power to strike down legislation.

Netanyahu returned to power last month at the head of a coalition with extreme-right and ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties following Israel's 1 November

election. His appointment of Aryeh Deri as health and interior minister "could not stand" since it was "extremely unreasonable", according to a summary of the court's decision. In a 10-1 decision, the judges said Netanyahu "must remove Deri from his position".

Deri, head of the ultra-Orthodox party Shas, admitted last year to tax evasion, was fined 180,000 shekels (\$50,000) and relinquished his parliamentary seat.

The judges said Deri made it appear as if he had intended to resign from politics to get a lighter sentence. He ran for office

again in the November polls. In Israel, which does not have a constitution, the Supreme Court currently has the authority to repeal laws or government decisions it considers discriminatory or unreasonable. Lawmakers last month passed legislation that allows anyone convicted of offences but not given a custodial sentence to serve as a minister.

'Absurd'

Deri's Shas party called the court's decision "political", "extremely unreasonable" and "unprecedented", but refrained from announcing any concrete measures.—AFP

Nazi gold sparks Dutch village treasure hunt

MUDDY holes dot the ground in a Dutch village where a map allegedly showing the location of Nazi loot buried in World War II has triggered an invasion of treasure hunters. "It really fires up the imagination," smiles Klaas Tammes, president of the foundation that owns the land in Ommeren in eastern Gelderland province at the centre of the search. The Dutch National Archive unveiled the hand-drawn map in early January, featuring a tell-tale red 'X' believed to mark the spot where German soldiers stashed their hoard.

Documents held along with the map include testimony that the Nazis buried four ammunition boxes filled with jewellery, precious stones and gold coins, believed to be worth 11 million euros (\$11.9 million) at current value.

"That means that all kinds of people have come to Om-

meren to search for it," says Tammes, 74, the former local mayor, inside his home built on the remains of a former Nazi headquarters.

"But it hasn't been found."

Detectorists descend

The Nazis allegedly looted the treasure after the bombing of a bank in Arnhem in 1944, but are then believed to have buried it after the Allied "Market Garden" offensive near the town.

A few steps from his home there are muddy holes from the excavations, along a tree-lined path and a shallow ditch consistent with the drawings on the map. So many people armed with metal detectors have flocked to the quiet village in recent days that the local municipality brought in a ban, and police began to move on treasure hunters as soon as they arrived.—AFP



A road sign at the entrance of Ommeren, Netherlands on 14 January 2022. An old map, believed to mark the spot where German soldiers hid the treasure worth millions of euros during World War II has been made public by the Dutch National archives. **PHOTO: SIMON WOHLFAHRT / AFP**

France gears up for 'hellish' day of pension protests

FRANCE'S government was facing a day of strikes and protests Thursday set to disrupt transport and schooling across the country as workers oppose a deeply unpopular pensions overhaul.

The changes presented by President Emmanuel Macron's government last week would raise the retirement age for most people to 64 from 62 and increase the years of contributions required for a full pension.

France's trade unions immediately called for a mass mobilization, which is to be the first time they have united since 12 years ago, when the retirement age was hiked to 62 from 60. The strikes are expected to bring much of the capital's public transport to a standstill and halt a large proportion of trains throughout France.

Many parents will have to look after their children as 70 per cent of primary school teachers



Workers board up the windows of an insurance branch located on the route of a demonstration, on the eve of nationwide strikes and protests against a pension reform plan. **PHOTO: AFP**

are expected to strike and many schools will close entirely for the day, according to the main teachers' union.

Philippe Martinez, head of the hard-left CGT union, said he hoped for "lots of people in the street and lots of people on strike". He told broadcaster

France 2 that he expected many in the private sector to join with public-sector workers, with "in certain big companies, striker rates that should hover around 60, 70 per cent". The unions are hoping for over a million demonstrators in more than 200 cities across France.—AFP

New Zealand PM Ardern announces shock resignation

NEW ZEALAND PM Jacinda Ardern, a global figurehead of progressive politics, shocked the country by announcing she would resign from office in a matter of weeks. "The 42-year-old — who steered the country through natural disasters, the Covid pandemic, and its worst-ever terror attack — said she no longer had "enough in the tank". "I am human. We give as much as we can for as

long as we can and then it's time. And for me, it's time," she said at a meeting of members of her Labour Party.

Ardern said she would step down no later than 7 February, less than three years after winning a landslide election to secure her second term in office.

Since that 2020 peak of "Jacindamania", Ardern's government has struggled — its popular-

ity hampered by soaring inflation, a looming recession and a resurgent conservative opposition.

"I believe that leading a country is the most privileged job anyone could ever have, but also one of the more challenging," Ardern said. "You cannot and should not do it unless you have a full tank, plus a bit in reserve for those unexpected challenges."—AFP

Israel top court orders Netanyahu to remove key minister

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SPORT

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 footballers transfer to foreign clubs

DURING the mid-season transfer period of the Thai League, there were transfers of Myanmar footballers until the close of the transfer window.

Myanmar national team striker Aung Kaung Marn, who cancelled his contract with Thai League-2 club Udon Thani, has signed a one-and-a-half-season contract with Thai League-1 club Chon Buri.

However, Aung Kung Marn will not be allowed to play in the Chon Buri team this half of the season but will go on loan to the Thai League-2 club Customs United. Shan United Winger Si Thu Aung will go to the Thai League-2 club Ayutthaya United on a half-season contract while midfielder Nyein Chan Aung, who cancelled his contract with Thai League-2 club Nakhon Si, will also play for Thai League-3 club Myong Tran United.

Before these players, striker Aung Thu did not renew his contract with the Thai League-1 club



The picture shows Aung Kaung Marn who will play on loan at Customs United, Thai League-2 club. PHOTO: CUSTOMS UNITED

Buriram United and moved to Lamphun, where Maung Maung Lwin is playing.

Similarly, veteran defend-

er Zaw Min Tun, who cancelled his contract with the Chon Buri team, moved to the Malaysian club Penang. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Man City top Premier League dominated Football Money League

MANCHESTER City topped Deloitte's Football Money League for a second consecutive year as the Premier League accounted for more than half of the top 20 clubs for the first time.

Total revenue from the top 20 revenue generating clubs rose to near pre-pandemic levels of 9.2 billion euros (\$9.9 billion, £8.1 billion) for the 2021/22 season, according to a report published on Thursday. That increase was largely due to a 1.3 billion euro rise in matchday revenue after two seasons impacted by coronavirus restrictions. The Premier League's rise in international television rights sales and strong commercial growth saw 11 clubs from the English top-flight make the top 20 for the first time.

Leeds and Newcastle replaced Wolves and Zenit St Petersburg in the only changes to the top 20 from last season.

A 13 per cent rise in City's revenue to 731 million euros saw



Manchester City topped Deloitte's Football Money League for revenue in the 2021/22 season. PHOTO: AFP

them retain top spot from European champions Real Madrid on 714 million euros.

Liverpool rose to third, their highest position in Money League history and above Manchester United for the first time, thanks to a run to the Champions League final, on 702 million euros.

United (689 million eu-

ros) were fourth ahead of Paris Saint-Germain and Bayern Munich (both 654 million euros).

Barcelona, who topped the Money League two years ago, dropped to seventh (638 million euros) after crashing out of the Champions League at the group stage and suffering slower commercial growth than their competitors.—AFP

Erratic Bencic blusters through to third round at Australian Open

IN-FORM Belinda Bencic's bid to become only the second Swiss woman to win the Australian Open stayed on track Thursday, but only after an erratic 7-6 (7/3), 6-3 win over American Claire Liu in the second round. The 25-year-old came to Melbourne Park on the back of lifting her seventh career title in Adelaide, a win that propelled her back into the world's top 10. But the 12th seed initially cut a grumpy

figure, finding herself 5-2 and two set points down to the world number 62 in blustery conditions on Margaret Court Arena.

Bencic saved both, the second courtesy of a nervy Liu double fault.

Then after being urged to stay patient by her coach Dimitry Tursunov from the players' box, Bencic clawed her way back and took the set on a tie-break after 72 minutes.—AFP



Belinda Bencic hits a return against Claire Liu. PHOTO: AFP