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The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Five-Point Road Map

1. Priority will be given to fully realizing peace, stability and rule of law throughout the Union to safeguard the socioeconomic life of the people.
2. People-centred development work that enhances socioeconomic well-being will be undertaken to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.
3. Processes will further continue to consolidate a genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system and build a Union based on democracy and federalism.
4. Priority will be accorded to work aligned with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, in order to achieve enduring peace for the entire nation.
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.

All Tatmadaw members must observe discipline and dutifully serve assignments for uplifting the prestige of Tatmadaw: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets officers, other ranks and family members of Hainggyikyun station in the South-West Command on 8 February 2023.

LEADERS need to create good environs for Tatmadaw members and families under fair administration, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at a meeting with Tatmadaw members and families of Hainggyikyun station of South-West Command at the local naval region command headquarters yesterday morning.

Regularly serving daily duties means taking training

In his address, the Senior General said that all Tatmadaw members must have three capacities to dutifully serve their

assignments and they have to persistently take training. A regular serving of daily duties by all Tatmadaw members in individuals is taking the training. They all have to avoid indulgence and exercise practices of having health and fitness. If not, their acts will harm their interests as well as that of families and organizations.

Emphasizing improvement of individual life and disciplinary acts

They all need to read literature for general knowledge as well as for the development of their lives. They should share their knowledge with companions

to create military unity and good social environs. Leaders need to create good environments for Tatmadaw members and families under fair administration.

Operating military own and manageable-scale agriculture and livestock farming tasks

As the local economy was encouraged, the current State economy develops to some extent. Tatmadaw members and families are to carry out military own and manageable-scale agriculture and livestock farms to be able to contribute to their livelihoods. Military own agriculture and livestock farms can support

the welfare tasks of all Tatmadaw members, selling meat, fish and vegetables at fair prices.

Promotions educational qualifications

All Tatmadaw members must give an education legacy to their offspring to turn out a new generation of youths on whom they, Tatmadaw and the State can rely. All Tatmadaw members must observe discipline and dutifully serve assignments for uplifting the prestige of the Tatmadaw.

Presenting foodstuffs and cash awards

The Senior General presented foodstuff for Tatmadaw mem-

bers and families to the local naval region command commander.

The Senior General attended to the needs of Tatmadaw members and families.

Yesterday afternoon, the Senior General heard reports on military affairs of the naval region command headquarters, security, controlling the region, rule of law, development of the region and regional data.

The Senior General gave instructions on security, rule of law, agriculture and livestock farming tasks, disciplinary acts, education promotion of Tatmadaw members and accumulation of general knowledge. — MNA/TTA

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NATIONAL

Dinner held in honour of 76th Anniversary Shan State Day

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar pockets over US\$235 mln in mineral exports in past ten months

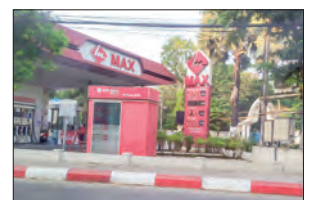
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CURRENT AFFAIRS

Only K20 difference per litre in retail reference price of diesel, octane 92

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National Objectives for 76th Anniversary of Union Day 2023

1. To strive for the perpetual existence of national solidarity and perpetuity of the Union through the internal strength
2. To make collaborative efforts of all ethnic nationals to restore perpetual and durable peace
3. To join hands in harmony for ensuring the prosperity and food sufficiency of the nation as two national plans through the Union spirit
4. To help develop all regions and states on equal terms and increase employment opportunities with ensuring the health and fitness of the entire National people
5. To practise the genuine, discipline-flourishing multiparty democratic system through fraternity, solidarity and united endeavours of all ethnic national brethren for building the Union based on democratic and federal systems

Public Notice for Elimination of Violence

1. Declaring themselves to be “for the people”, the so-called CRPH, NUG and PDF terrorist groups are lawlessly killing Buddhist monks, civil servants including schoolteachers, and members of the general public, as well as looting and robbing.
2. Not encouraging, supporting, or assisting “CRPH”, “NUG”, and “PDF” terrorists, who are intimidating and killing people and committing destructive activities, is to protect the lives and property of the general public.
3. Giving information secretly to the authorities on terrorists and on the possession and transport of weapons/ammunition is tantamount to protecting the lives and property of innocent people.

Application for registration, political party establishment rights ongoing

THE State Administration Council announced the Political Parties Registration Law 2023 for the establishment of political parties in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar by the State Administration Council Law No 15/2023 on 26 January.

The Union Election Commission announced the rules for the registration of political parties through Notification No 10/2023. Announcements No 2/2023 and 3/2023 regarding the right to establish and continue the

establishment and registration of political parties were announced on 31 January 2023.

Under Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Act, Myanmar People's Democratic (MPD) Party, which wishes to establish a political party, applied yesterday for permission to establish a political party under the law and rules, and the Union Election Commission is processing further verification. — MNA/KZL

Information released on detection of SARS-CoV-2 Omicron Variant

1. The Ministry of Health is continuously conducting “COVID-19 Molecular Disease Surveillance”, and releasing information on the detection of COVID-19 cases and SARS CoV-2 Omicron Variant from those who return by commercial flights and relief flights, and via land borders in a real-time manner.
2. The 17 laboratory samples of the COVID-19 virus of positive cases to the Department of Medical Research and the SARS-CoV-2 Omicron Variant BA.5 and its variants were found in nine laboratory samples and BA.2 in eight laboratory samples on 6 February 2023. The laboratory samples that tested BA.2 contain two variants that detected XBB.1 subvariants.
3. Nine patients with BA.5 and five patients with BA.2 (including two with XBB.1) are returnees from foreign countries and the other three patients with BA.2 were local transmissions. They all were in complete isolation since they tested positive for COVID-19, and are in good condition at present.
4. According to the findings of international countries, Omicron variants cause less severe illness and fewer deaths among those who are fully vaccinated.
5. Therefore, the Health Ministry is stepping up the COVID-19 disease monitoring and containing measures plus disease prevention, control and treatment activities.

Ministry of Health

4 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 8 February, total figure rises to 633,850

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **633,850** after **4** new cases were reported on 8 February 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,321**, including **six** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country recorded **19,490** on 8-2-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic.

The country has vaccinated **30,920,475** people aged 18 and above for COVID-19 vaccines and **6,811,776** people aged under 18 till 7 February 2023.

Status of COVID-19 vaccination (as of 7 February 2023)

People aged 18 and above who received vaccines	30,920,475
People under 18 years old who received vaccines	6,811,776

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 of the Ministry of Health.—MNA

Taking State responsibilities under the 2008 Constitution

- The State Administration Council government is controlling the country in accord with the 2008 constitution.
- Protests and violence were handled in accord with the law.
- Meetings were held with the government officials concerned to solve the election problems. But they failed and attempted to grab State power by calling a parliament. Therefore, we had to take over State duties unavoidably.

(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)

Collaborative efforts of Tatmadaw, departmental personnel and local people can combat terror acts: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the meeting with departmental officials and town elders of Hainggyikyun and Ngaputaw Township yesterday.

AS Ayeyawady Region has proper water and land facilities, local people can successfully operate agriculture and livestock farms including fish farming tasks, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in meeting with departmental officials and town elders of Hainggyikyun and Ngaputaw Township at the local naval region command headquarters in Hainggyikyun yesterday afternoon.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said an emphasis is being placed on the development of the Hainggyikyun region and smooth transportation. Health infrastructures have been built as well as educational facilities have been provided for the region, aiming to develop the region and promote the education standard of local people. So, arrangements are being made

... they are not a political government but a government serving the national interests of the nation. All need to show their individually successful assignments.

for the citizens to complete the KG+9 learning scheme.

Taking State responsibilities under the Constitution

As vote-rigging events happened in the 2020 multiparty democratic general elections, the Tatmadaw has been taking State responsi-

bilities. Although Tatmadaw requested the officials to solve the tremendous errors of voter lists several times, anyone did not solve it and then made attempts to grab the State's power by convening the Third Hluttaw.

The government is solving the unrest based on political controversies under the law. The government legally handles the terrorists who commit explosions and terror acts. Collaborative efforts of Tatmadaw, departmental personnel and local people can combat the terror acts.

Striving for the development of agriculture and livestock farms as the region is fertile

As Ayeyawady Region has proper water and land facilities, local people can successfully operate agriculture and livestock farms including fish farming tasks. Officials need to



The Senior General cordially greets the meeting attendees.

SEE PAGE-4

Only when the amount of circulated money rises in the nation will the government serve the interests of the citizens: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets government and departmental officials in Ayeyawady Region on 8 February 2023.

PUBLIC service personnel are to follow disciplines under the Constitution and they must be loyal to themselves, their departments and their companions, as well as the State, State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, was quoted as saying at the meeting with Ayeyawady Region government and departmental officials at the lounge of Patheingyi Airport yesterday afternoon.

First, the Senior General delivered a speech, saying that

Ayeyawady Region has booming businesses of agriculture and livestock farms and local people are making greater efforts for increasing more per-acre yield than now. Only when per-acre yield increases, can products be exported to foreign countries to improve the State economy. Consequently, the government can earn increased revenue. Only when the amount of circulated money rises in the nation will the government be able to serve the interests of the citizens.

The Senior General stressed

the need to improve the tourism industry to develop the economy of the region. All the people need to create clean and pleasant environs at their homes as well as roads. Staff need to do office works with goodwill under discipline and keep all office clean and pleasant.

Public service personnel are to follow disciplines under the Constitution and they must be loyal to themselves, their departments and companions as well as the State. The Senior General noted that arrangements

must be made for creating the entitlement and rights of staff. They all have to look on each other as family members and solve social and family problems. Public service personnel are to act properly do for the sake of the people and they have to try for themselves to be accepted by the people. The government has provided accommodation facilities to public service personnel. It cannot be said to be complete fulfilment but these facilities can contribute to their life to some extent.

While encouraging school learning for all school-age children, the government has arranged a KG+9 learning scheme for all citizens. Public service personnel are to encourage their offspring to have higher education standards. The Senior General stressed the need for Ayeyawady Region to become a model in the agriculture sector among other regions and states.

The Senior General cordially greeted the Ayeyawady Region government and departmental officials. —MNA/TTA

Collaborative efforts of Tatmadaw, departmental personnel and local people can combat terror acts: Senior General

FROM PAGE-3

raise the rule of law for regional development. A government needs to serve the social interest of the people. The Senior General said that they are not

a political government but a government serving the national interests of the nation. All need to show their individually successful assignments. Some regions and states are

facing difficulties to hold the election. The election must be prestigious and it must be publicly acceptable. **The previous election of the past government did not have prestige,**

and the current government is striving for holding the prestigious election with the utmost effort in all aspects.

After the meeting, the Senior General presented foodstuff

to departmental personnel and town elders of Hainggyikyun and Ngaputaw to an official. The Senior General also cordially greeted the attendees. — MNA/TTA

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Mottos for 76th Anniversary of Union Day 2023

1. Let's go forward in joining hands among ethnic nationals in unison
2. Let's firmly join hands among national brethren of the Union in unity
3. Energetic harmony and stronger unity represent the souls of the Union

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SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing pays homage to Mawtinsun Pagoda, inspects pagoda platform expansion and renovation work



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views round the pagoda platform expansion and maintenance work at Mawtinsun Pagoda yesterday.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by SAC members, Ayeyawady Region Chief Minister U Tin Maung Win, South-West Command Commander Brig-Gen Kyi Khine and other officials, paid homage to Maha Maktayanthi Mawtinsun Pagoda in Hainggyikyun Township of Ayeyawady Region yesterday

morning.

First, the Senior General and party were welcomed by officials, town elders and the pagoda board of trustees. Then, they paid homage to the pagoda and offered flowers and water to the pagoda.

The Senior General and party went round the pagoda in a clockwise procession and inspected the pagoda platform expansion and maintenance

work.

Then, the region chief minister reported on the pagoda platform expansion and renovation process and structures to be seen after the work.

In his response to the reports, the Senior General said the Mawtinsun pagoda is a historic pagoda and it should conduct maintenance and renovation processes to ensure stability in such a manner that

would not affect its originality. It should also record the work processes systematically. It needs to estimate the natural disaster and focus on the pleasant and decent things of the pagoda. Then, the Senior General and party observed the displayed record photos of pagoda renovation work in different eras, pagoda platform expansion, maintenance and scale models.

The Senior General and

party also viewed round the pagoda including the renovation of ancient religious buildings and instructed them to conduct the renovation and systematic maintenance work on edifices if necessary.

Then, the Senior General presented cash donations for the all-round renovation of the pagoda to officials of the pagoda board of trustees.—MNA/KTZH

Dinner held in honour of 76th Anniversary Shan State Day



The commemorative dinner for the 76th Anniversary Shan State Day is in progress yesterday.

AN honorary dinner for the 76th Anniversary Shan State Day was held 7 February evening in Taunggyi in Shan State.

SAC members Daw Dwe Bu, Porel Aung Thein, Dr Kyaw Tun and U Shwe Kyein, Union ministers, the Shan State chief minister, state cabinet members, departmental officials, ethnic representatives, cultural troupes, excellent awardees and guests attended the commemorative dinner.

Speaking on the occasion, Shan State Chief Minister U Aung Zaw Aye expressed that the 76th Anniversary Shan State Day was grandly convened and presented honorary awards to those who deserved. He called for continued efforts

to ensure peace, stability and all-round development of Shan State.

To fulfil the needs of food, shelter and clothing for local ethnic people in Shan State, micro-, small- and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs) are under implementation, and the necessary support and assistance will be provided by the Shan State government, he added.

Afterwards, SAC members and attendees enjoyed dinner together and viewed the entertainment performed by ethnic traditional cultural troupes. A flower basket and cash awards were presented to members of cultural troupes. — MNA/TS

MoBA Union Minister inspects reception centres, temporary shelters in Rakhine State

ACCOMPANIED by the chief minister of Rakhine State, the Rakhine State Stability, Peace and Development Work Coordination Committee Chair Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung and Union ministers arrived in Taungpyoletwal Reception Centre on 7 February and visited the Myanmar-Bangladesh Friendship Bridge, where internally displaced persons from Rakhine State will be accepted when they return.

At the centre, the officer in charge explained arrangements being made to accept IDPs as per procedures and the completion of maintenance work with approved funds and work to be done.

For those who will re-enter, the Union minister then gave

instructions on procedures such as household registration, obtaining biometric data and filling e-ID, issuing NVC cards, health conditions including Covid test, preparations for fire safety by the fire brigade and temporary accommodation in the camp.

On arriving at Ngakhuya Reception Centre, the Union ministers coordinated and implemented necessary actions based on the presentation of the officer in charge of the camp, and followed up and inspected the completion of the re-acceptance process. The Union ministers and party arrived at the Ngakhuya Basic Education High School and gave cash assistance for nutritious food to students.

After inspecting the Hlaphoekhaung Transit Centre



Union Minister Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung is pictured during the inspection tours.

in Maungtaw Township in the afternoon, the Union ministers and the state chief minister arrived

in Yathedaung Township where Union Minister Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung cordially greeted locals

from the Zaytitaung temporary IDPs camp. — MNA/KZW



U Tin Yu presents Credentials to Vice-President of United Arab Emirates

U Tin Yu, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the United Arab Emirates, presented his Credentials to His Highness

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President of the United Arab Emirates on 6 February 2023 in Abu Dhabi, Qasr Al-Watan Palace.—MNA

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State Administration Council Press Release

Re-invitation to Myanmar citizens who reside in various regions for many reasons

1. Some student youths, State service personnel and citizens, with worries, have evaded to areas of EAOs and foreign countries due to the incitements and intimidation of NLD members, extremist followers, unlawful associations and terrorist groups such as CRPH and NUG, stimulation of CDM, and persons and organizations at home and abroad not wishing to restore peace and stability of the State since Tatmadaw assumed the State responsibilities on 1 February 2021.
2. They are further worried about the dictatorship statement and speeches of unlawful association and terrorist group CRPH and NUG, and some relevant persons. As they face no security guarantee and difficulties in socio-economic life in those areas, they wish to return to their native lands.
3. **The State Administration Council will specifically ease restrictions for service personnel, intellectuals and intelligentsia, and persons from various arenas and citizens who, with worries, absconded from the country except for persons who committed murders, robberies, setting fires, mine explosions and intentional attacks on security troops, those who crowded to attack public service personnel and some people, those who destroyed government and private-owned buildings and those who are highly involved in the CDM activities by providing monetary assistance and other means.**
4. As those who evade their native areas are also citizens, the State Administration Council will arrange their returns from the evaded areas to various parts of Myanmar.
5. As such, the information was released that if those who evaded to various areas, except for persons who committed any kinds of crime, wish to return to their native lands in Myanmar of their own accord due to multiple worries, the citizens abroad can contact nearby ward, village, township and district administration bodies and relevant embassies, military attaché offices and consulates in accord with the easing restrictions under the law.

Information Team
State Administration Council

THE State Administration Council will specifically ease restrictions for service personnel, intellectuals and intelligentsia, and persons from various arenas and citizens who, with worries, absconded from the country except for persons who committed murders, robberies, setting fires, mine explosions and intentional attacks on security troops, those who crowded to attack public service personnel and some people, those who destroyed government and private-owned buildings and those who are highly involved in the CDM activities by providing monetary assistance and other means.

LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar pockets over US\$235 mln in mineral exports in past ten months



An expert is seen appraising raw jade stone.

MYANMAR generated US\$235.477 million from mineral exports between 1 April 2022 and end-January 2023 in the current financial year, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

During the April-January period, the public sector performed mineral exports valued at \$23.43 million whereas the private sector saw mineral exports worth \$212.04 million.

The export items are gems

and jewellery, gold, jade, pearl, diamond, lead, tin, tungsten, silver, copper, zinc, charcoal and other minerals.

Myanmar earned \$564.457 million from mineral exports between April and 27 January in the last FY2021-2022.

Myanmar targets to achieve exports worth \$15.5 billion and imports worth \$14 billion in the 2022-2023 FY, the National Planning Law stated. —TWA/EM

Myanmar ships over 600,000 tonnes of rice in ten months

MYANMAR conveyed more than 600,000 tonnes of rice and broken rice to China in the past ten months of the current financial year 2022-2023, Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

Myanmar has shipped over 1.9 million tonnes of rice and broken rice with an estimated value of US\$700 million as of 31 January 2023 in the current financial year 2022-2023 since April 2022, according to Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

Myanmar primarily sent rice and broken rice to China (over 620,000 tonnes), followed by Belgium (270,000 tonnes), Bangladesh (230,000 tonnes) and the Philippines (160,000 tonnes).

The export values were recorded at \$82 million from 250,947 tonnes in April 2022, \$51 million from 153,507 tonnes in May, \$50 million from 146,094 tonnes in June, \$66 million from 182,550 tonnes in July, \$53 million from 156,893 tonnes in August, \$37 million

from 93,792 tonnes in September, \$65 million from 163,189 tonnes in October, \$106 million from 264,038 tonnes in November, \$90 million from 228,445 tonnes in December and \$107 million from 268,835 tonnes in January 2023, totalling \$679 million from 1,908,288 tonnes in ten months in the current financial year 2022-2023.

Myanmar pocketed \$707 million from 1,908,288 tonnes in the past ten months. During the April-January period, the export

volume hit the lowest in September 2022 and the highest in January 2023.

Myanmar has been exerting concerted efforts to grow 10 per cent yearly in the rice export sector. To raise foreign income, it has been prioritizing the exportation of high-grade rice and boosting export volume, MRF stated.

Myanmar bagged over \$700 million from approximately two million tonnes of rice export in the 2020-2021 FY.—NN/EM



Myanmar bagged over \$700 million from approximately two million tonnes of rice export in the 2020-2021 FY.

500 companies fail to submit AR in Jan

A total of 500 companies failed to submit annual returns (AR) on the online registration system in January, MyCO, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

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

Additionally, 5,000 companies failed to submit AR in 2022, the DICA stated.

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

All registered companies need to submit AR on the

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

According to Section 266 (A) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public companies must submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5) simultaneously. All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within 28 days of the financial year ending, as per Section 53 (A-1) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

As per DICA's report, thousands of companies were suspended for failing to submit AR forms before the due date. Newly established companies are required to submit ARs within

two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns.

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

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

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 8 February 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K2,155
Octane 95	K2,220
Diesel	K2,175
Premium Diesel	K2,255

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,219,600 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,858,000 per tical

Dollar Price

A US dollar set by the Central Bank of Myanmar	K2,100
A US dollar in the forex market	K2,840 to K2,855

The above prices may change from time to time.

OPINION

Give learning chances to students for choosing options

THE promotion of educational qualifications of the people is crucial for the development of the country. Up to now, Myanmar people require improvement in education qualifications, according to the statistics.

However, it is regrettable that the majority of people above 25 stop their learning education less than the middle school level. It indicates that the country needs to create learning opportunities for the people while conducting the reform process in the education sector.

Practically, economic growth is basic for uplifting the living standard of the people. In order to boom businesses, it is necessary

to make chances for people to learn school education, skills and techniques. Hence, it is necessary to set a plan for the improvement of the people's education at least at the KG+9 schemes. If one completes the KG+9 education, they will have easy-to-learn vocational training for their lives. As such, plans are underway to establish the institutes of technical, agriculture and livestock breeding.

Currently, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Science and Technology jointly implement the project for the establishment of these schools at 51 basic education high schools in 50 districts for the students who have completed the middle school education.

In the coming academic year, students will have the chance to learn not only school education but vocational courses so that they have to easily seek jobs. The students who have passed the Grade 9 examination will have the chance to choose basic education high

school education, technical, agriculture and livestock breeding subjects. Regularly, those students can learn education in Grade 12.

While learning high school education, the students will have the chance to study technical knowledge on building construction, and electric and mechanical production. After studying the three-year courses, those who passed the examinations with credits will secure an engineering degree and a technological degree. The qualified students will have a diploma in engineering. Those who passed the exams at the ordinary level will operate owned businesses with valuable skills and knowledge.

The students learning agriculture and livestock farms will have equal terms of opportunities in comparison with the technical course. The establishment of these subjects on vocational courses aims to uplift the life of youths who missed chances of learning to join the workplaces for their livelihoods. Such a new scheme will help improve the lives of students in choosing the learning options to be able to see a brighter future.

ANYONE who has been doing any business worthwhile mentioning could not avoid DICA (Directorate of Investments and Companies Administration). There are around 100,000 registered companies in Myanmar (both local and foreign) that will under the jurisdiction of DICA. It also acts as the secretariat for Myanmar Investment Commission, performing all the administrative and other works for the MIC.

DICA has been in the news recently, when the NNCP (NUG, NLD, CRPH, PDF) terrorist groups abused information obtained from DICA search, to target specific companies deemed to have some relations with Tatmadaw (Myanmar's Armed Forces) or their past and present leaders, based mostly upon make-believe or false information. DICA has since suspended the search function that existed on its website previously. Using that function, anyone could search information relating to a particular company

by paying 10,000 Kyats. It is exactly the same facility that is made available in other countries e.g., ACRA in Singapore. Now the function is no longer available here.

The other noteworthy recent announcements of DICA included the ban on the use of nominee directors and shareholders and requirement to use corporate bank accounts for companies.

DICA is also in charge of carrying out policies set by MIC, which also included ensuring of the compliance of MIC rules, for those entities what are enjoying the benefits of MIC permit. Investment Monitoring Section is responsible for ensuring that MIC rules, such as capital input commitments, local labour requirements, etc., are being complied with by MIC permitted companies, be they local or foreign. In terms of getting MIC approvals, Project Assessment Team is there to ensure all the required conditions are met, before the investment/FDI proposal

DICA & FDI

By UAC

reaches the MIC.

Registration and De-registration

Just like in all countries, the setting up a company is also a piece of cake in Myanmar. It has to be kept this way, so that we remain competitive relative to our neighbouring countries in the region and to signal that this government is pro-business. The ease of setting up a new business weighs heavily in competitive ranking such as Ease

of Doing Business Index. Hence registration of a company can be completed within a couple of days online here.

At the same time, just like an individual, once a company becomes alive, it would have a thousand and one issues, ranging from shareholders, directors, employees, taxes, etc. Thus, de-registration is not so straightforward. We need to engage an insolvency practitioner in line with the Insolvency Act, to go through the process of liquidating

the company.

The Main Challenge

The main challenge for DICA seems to be balancing the needs of the investors, in accordance with what has been agreed upon the MIC permit and the needs of the country and serving the national interest, in this couple of years of 'special' circumstances, while trying to attract future quality investments into the country. For example, there is the free capital repatriation of retained

earnings, after tax under MIC permit; which is close to impossible under present circumstances. Loan repayments have been temporarily halted by the CBM. Import licenses become incredibly difficult to obtain at least in year 2022. And then there is the requirement to change the incoming \$ revenues at the official rate up to a certain %. Obviously, with the NNCP terrorists and other destructive outside forces, hellbent on the country collapse, desperate times require desperate measures in order to prevent the country from becoming a failed state. The worse may be over, yet, with the terrorists and external forces planning to do all they can to disrupt the upcoming 2023 elections, those who had believed in Myanmar may still have to ensure at least 2023, become seeing the light at the end of the tunnel.

Current Status

There is good news coming from the FDI CMP (Cut Make

Pack) manufacturing sectors. The orders from overseas are still coming into the country especially in solar, CMP and electricity generation sectors. The lead country is our neighbouring Thailand. Maybe they had experience going through more coups than Myanmar and businesses are confident of continued business development after the change of governments.

Meanwhile, exchange and import permit issues are catching up with foreign investors' #1 complaint of unreliable electricity supply. We must address the electrification issue once and for all.

On a related matter, one ex-CIA agent/advisor did mention that the US not wanting closer China-Myanmar ties and rapid economic development of Myanmar, in late 2011, Myanmar NGOs and public were just taught not to criticize the government, demonstrate or attack, but just put forward the environmental concerns incessantly to stop the

Myit Sone dam construction. That dam would have fulfilled much of the country's electricity needs. The scheme seems to have worked as President Thein Sein gave in to the demand of those, hoping that would create unity and peace in subsequent years. Bring forward a year later, with that Myit Sone scheme already a success, demonstrations and attacks gathered in full force, attempting to overthrow Thein Sein government. Lesson in point: Prioritizing the country and people development over the concerns of NGOs or paid environmental lobbyists, just like China, may serve the country and the people better in the long run.

Myanmar is definitely in need of a huge electrification project and harsher penalties for terrorists who destroy the nation's infrastructures and companies. That would be a welcoming start for DICA to start attracting an even better crowd of foreign investors.

Study finds link between cancer patients and long Covid-19

The team of scientists identified patients receiving care at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center who were diagnosed with Covid-19 between March and September 2020 and followed their progress for up to 14 months via remote symptom monitoring and their usual hospital visits, according to the study.

A NEW study has revealed that more than one in two cancer patients experienced long Covid-19 symptoms for more than six months after initial infection. The research is published in the journal eLife, according to the news agency ANI. The result also shows that women undergoing cancer treatment seem at higher risk than men. In the general population, reports of the prevalence of long Covid-19 - also known as post-acute sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 infection (PASC) - vary from 10 per cent to 87 per cent, with symptoms persisting beyond 30 days in patients who had severe initial Covid-19 symptoms or were hospitalized.

Lead author Anne-Marie Chaftari, Associate Professor, at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Texas, US said, "Although cancer patients fall into a higher Covid-19 risk group there is limited data on PASC in cancer patients and how it affects their



Medical workers conference before a patient meeting inside the Covid-19 ward of the Veterans Affairs Boston Healthcare system campus in West Roxbury, Mass., on 11 January. PHOTO: FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY/ JOSEPH PREZIOSO/AFP

progression, care, and treatment." "In order to provide a better

understanding of post-Covid-19 management among cancer pa-

tients, we sought to characterize the patterns of long Covid-19

specifically in these patients," she said. The team of scientists identified patients receiving care at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Centre who were diagnosed with Covid-19 between March and September 2020 and followed their progress for up to 14 months via remote symptom monitoring and their usual hospital visits, according to the study.

It stated that questionnaires were sent out to patients daily for 14 days after the initial Covid-19 diagnosis. They were asked to record symptoms including fatigue, cough, chest tightness, difficulty breathing, headache, fever, altered sense of smell or taste, muscle aches, gastrointestinal (GI) symptoms, sleep disturbance, and any limitations with activities of daily living.

Long Covid-19 was defined as coronavirus-related symptoms persisting beyond 30 days of diagnosis or the emergence of new Covid-19 symptoms, ANI reported.

The team collected data for 312 cancer patients, of whom 188, or 60 per cent, developed long Covid-19. Those who had relapsed or had treatment-resistant cancer at baseline, or those who had more severe acute Covid-19 infections, were less likely to develop long Covid-19, the study said.

The link between BP and the risk of severe acute Covid-19 is thought to be due to the binding of the Covid-19 spike protein to angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE-2), the target of many BP-lowering drugs. These findings might rule out this mechanism is important for the development of long Covid-19, it added as quoted by ANI.

Senior author Issam Raad, professor, the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Centre said, "Our study found that long Covid-19 occurred in the majority of our cancer patients and was more prevalent in women than men."

SOURCE: ANI

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

Fires break out in Yangon's six townships within one day

ACCORDING to the fire brigade headquarters, six fires broke out in six townships in Yangon Region within one day.

Fires broke out in six townships between 10:00 am and 7:30 pm on 8 February.

The fires occurred at Samsung Showroom on Theinbyu Road, Mingala Taungnyunt Township, Yangon Region at 10:29 am, a factory on Bayintnaung Road, 144th Quarter, Dagon Myothit (South) Township at 1:40 pm, a building between 35 and 36 streets, Merchant Road, Kyauktada Township at 3:44 pm, and Bala Kyawswa passenger ship near Dala Shipyard, Dala Township at 4:50 pm.

The fires also broke out near Hninsi Street, Gandama Quarter, Ahlon Township at 7:25 pm, and Tharaphi Road, No 14 Ward, South Okkalapa Township at 7:38 pm.

Township fire brigades and rescue teams went to six places where fires broke out and helped put out fires in a short time.

Out of the six places where fires broke out, South Dagon

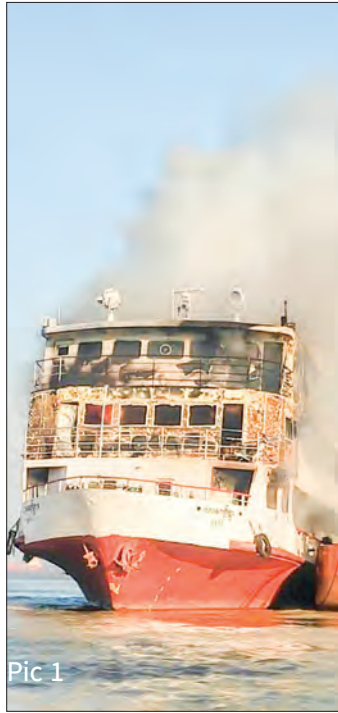
Township and Ahlon Township were classified as Level 1 so fires were extinguished by increasing vehicle groups.

According to the fire brigade headquarters, they were able to extinguish the fire within a short period in the remaining four townships.

"There was improper electricity supply. These fires often occur due to the careless use of electrical appliances, resulting in electric short. When using household electrical appliances, people should not handle them carelessly and use them with caution," U Tun Tun Latt, manager of the construction company in South Okkalapa Township told GNLM.

Last month, there were 45 fires in Yangon Region, killing four people and injuring some members of the fire brigade and volunteers.

In January, fires broke out in Htantabin, Thingangyun, Hmawby, Hlinethaya, Kamayut, Shwepyitha, Mingala Taungnyunt, Taikkyi, Dagon Myothit (East), Hlegu, Mingaladon, Dagon Myothit (North), Dagon Myothit



Pic 1

Pic 1: The fire on Bala Kyawswa passenger ship.



Pic 2

Pic 2: The fire on the apartment on Hninsi street in Ahlon Township.

(South), North Okkalapa, Dagon Myothit (Seikkan), Dala, Khayan, Thanlyin, Kyauktan, Kyimyindine, Thakayta, Latha, Bahan, and Mayangon townships.

Among these fires, three women and one man died in a house fire in Dagon Myothit (North) township, including an elderly woman over 90 years old.

Out of 45 fires that occurred in January, 26 were house fires, 16 were forest fires and grass forest fires, and three were vehicle fires.

In the past year 2022,

there were 224 fires in Yangon Region, so seven people died and 22 were injured. Nationwide, there were a total of 1,507 fires and 96 people died due to fire hazards, according to the statistics of the Myanmar Fire Brigade Headquarters.

Stove fire and electricity fire are the most common causes so officials have instructed people to use electricity carefully.

A fire prevention warning states that people may need to avoid using faulty electrical equipment. — TWA/KZL

Land of Shwezigon Pagoda and guest house to be leased for long term by auction

THE land belonging to Shwezigon Pagoda and the guest house will be leased for a long term by auction, according to the board of trustees of Shwezigon Pagoda.

Local entrepreneurs who are interested in selling food will be able to open souvenir shops, lodgings, and high-end restaurants in those areas that will be leased for a long duration.

Businesspeople who want to rent will be allowed five months free of charge as a preparation period from 1 March to 31 July, and they will rent with a five-year contract starting from 1 August. In addition, the guest house will be allowed free for three months from 1 March to 31 May as a preparation period and will be leased with a five-year contract from 1 June, according to the board of trustees.

Application forms will have to be sent in on 21 February at the latest. — TWA/KZL

Only K20 difference per litre in retail reference price of diesel, octane 92

ON 8 February 2023, the retail reference price of diesel fuel was only K20 per litre higher than that of octane 92, according to the reference prices.

The retail reference prices per litre of fuel on 8 February

were only K2,155 for octane 92, K2,220 for octane 95, K2,175 for diesel and K2,255 for premium diesel. On 7 February 2023, octane 92 and diesel were traded at K2,075 and K2,185 per litre respectively.

The gap between octane 92 and diesel in the retail reference price per litre was K110 on 7 February and declined to K20 on 8 February.

In the fuel oil market, diesel prices tend to be higher than gasoline prices. Thus, the rental for diesel vehicles is higher than that for gasoline vehicles.

As most freight vehicles consume diesel rather than petrol, it is more convenient in transportation when the diesel price is only slightly higher than the petrol price, Ko Aung Zaw, a truck owner, told the GNLM.

Authorities make an announcement of fuel and edible oil reference prices based on foreign prices. The fuel oil price is

announced daily and the price of edible oil is notified once a week.

On 6 February, a barrel of octane 92 and diesel was priced at US\$92.18 and US\$105.71 respectively in the foreign market. The prices changed to \$96.64 and \$105.23 respectively on 7 February, according to the daily foreign fuel prices. In the foreign fuel market, the price of gasoline is rising and that of diesel is falling, Ko Aung Zaw added.

Starting from May 2015, the weekly prices of gasoline were announced in the State-owned newspapers, and it is known that diesel was cheaper than gasoline in those years.

A barrel of diesel (50 gallons) in Yangon skyrocketed to

around K300,000 in 2008. On 21 February 2009, the price dropped to K79,000. If we observe the domestic fuel price changes over the past decade and this year's price changes, it can be seen that only diesel is mainly used in cargo transportation.

This year, diesel is more expensive than petrol. However, due to the situation these days, the price difference has become less, and the number of truck operators is increasing.

Compared with the end of August 2022, it is known that the price of diesel in this month has become cheaper by K1,000 per litre, around K5,000 per gallon and over K200,000 per 50-gallon barrel. — TWA/CT



A petrol station is seen displaying fuel oil prices on 8 February 2023.

HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

Race against time to find survivors at epicentre of Türkiye's massive earthquakes

RESCUERS were racing against time and a bitter cold to find survivors in Kahramanmaras, the epicentre of two huge and deadly earthquakes that struck Türkiye and Syria on Monday.

"We have found survivors here, but also corpses. We can't abandon the search, the next hours will be crucial to find people still alive," Mehmet, a Turkish rescuer, told Xinhua on Tuesday.

His team was searching for trapped residents under a mound of rubble that used to be the Ebrar apartment complex, flattened by two powerful tremors.

Once in a while, they ask anguished people who gathered

around the rubble searching for family members or volunteers to remain completely silent as they listen out for someone to call for help.

Residents were asleep when a magnitude 7.7 quake jolted Kahramanmaras and several other neighboring provinces before dawn.

A second earthquake of magnitude 7.6 struck several hours later, complicating rescue efforts. "The problem here is that if there are other survivors, they had to endure the cold which can cause hypothermia, and their chances of survival are getting slim," Mehmet noted.

The rescuer explained that the complex that collapsed like a



From a castle in Gaziantep to a citadel in Aleppo, as rescuers search desperately for survivors after the devastating earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, concerns were also growing Tuesday for some of the region's most cherished historic sites. **PHOTO: AFP**

house made of cards was home to some 120 residents, most

of whom are still believed to be under a mass of metal and

concrete. Throughout Monday, dozens of major aftershocks rattled the region. The latest official death toll from the massive earthquakes in Türkiye stood at 5,894 with 34,810 injuries early Wednesday. Over 6,000 buildings have collapsed, but authorities believe that the actual number is much higher. Thousands of rescue workers were scattered across the vast quake-hit zone, which covers 10 provinces of Türkiye, home to around 13.5 million people. But as the quakes have also seriously disrupted the zone's infrastructure, making highways and roads inaccessible, some cities were left mostly unattended, Xinhua correspondents witnessed.—Xinhua

Sweden puts brakes on treatments for trans minors



Gender dysphoria is a term that describes a sense of unease that a person may have because of a mismatch between their biological sex and their gender identity. This sense of unease or dissatisfaction may be so intense it can lead to depression and anxiety and have a harmful impact on daily life. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE / AFP/FILE**

SWEDEN, the first country to introduce legal gender reassignment, has begun restricting gender reassignment hormone

treatments for minors, as it, like many Western countries, grapples with the highly-sensitive issue. With the number of

diagnoses soaring, the medical community faces the dilemma of weighing precaution against the risks associated with not offering treatment to those suffering from "gender dysphoria".

Sweden decided in February 2022 to halt hormone therapy for minors except in very rare cases, and in December, the National Board of Health and Welfare said mastectomies for teenage girls wanting to transition should be limited to a research setting.

"The uncertain state of knowledge calls for caution," Board department head Thomas Linden said in a statement in December. So-called puberty blockers have been used in young teens contemplating gender transition to delay the onset of unwanted physical changes.—AFP

Spain lifts face mask rule for public transport

PEOPLE in Spain will no longer have to wear face masks on public transport, the government said Tuesday, ending one of the country's last remaining rules against the coronavirus pandemic.

The rule requiring mask wearing on trains, buses and

ferries will expire Wednesday but will still apply in hospitals, health centres and care homes, Health Minister Carolina Darias said.

The measure is possible because Spain's Covid-19 "epidemiological situation is enormously stable at the moment,"

she told a news conference after a weekly cabinet meeting.

Spain in April 2022 ended a nearly two-year rule requiring the use of masks indoors, keeping the obligation only for public transport, hospitals, health centres and care homes.—AFP

US doctors demoralized by nation's health system

AMERICAN physicians are now increasingly suffering from demoralization, which is not a reaction to a medical condition, but rather to the diseased systems they work for, said an article published on The New York Times website on Sunday.

The United States is the only large high-income nation that doesn't provide universal healthcare to its citizens. Instead, it maintains a lucrative system of for-profit medicine, said the opinion piece, authored by Eric Reinhart, a political anthropologist and physician at Northwestern University.

"For decades, at least tens of thousands of preventable deaths have occurred each year because healthcare here is so expensive," it noted.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the consequences of this policy choice have intensified. One study estimates at least 338,000 COVID deaths in the United States could have been prevented by universal healthcare, it said.

In the wake of this generational catastrophe, many healthcare workers have been left shaken, said the article.—Xinhua



Protesters walk along a street outside Mount Sinai Hospital in Manhattan, New York, the United States, on 11 January 2023. Thousands of nurses from New York City's Mount Sinai Hospital and Montefiore Bronx continued to be on strike the third day on staffing shortage, low wage and other issues. **PHOTO: ZIYU JULIAN ZHU/XINHUA**

ECONOMY WORLD

India slows rate hikes but inflation still 'sticky'

INDIA'S central bank slowed the pace of interest rate hikes on Wednesday but warned that core inflation in the world's fifth-biggest economy remained stubbornly high.

Central banks around the world yanked up borrowing costs last year to arrest soaring prices due to the Ukraine war, but many have now slowed the pace of rate hikes as inflation cools.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday raised the benchmark repurchase rate by 25 basis points to 6.5 per cent, the sixth and smallest increase since May when it stood at 4.0 per cent.

The move was in line with most analysts' expectations.

Most had also expected the



As inflation increases, manufacturers will see the need to make adjustments due to the uneasy buying patterns of consumers. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

RBI to change its policy stance from neutral to accommodative, meaning it would be the last hike in the current cycle, but bank

governor Shaktikanta Das kept the door open for further tightening.

"Consumer price inflation in

India moved below the upper-tolerance level during November and December 2022... core inflation, however, remains sticky," Das said in a webcast.

"Looking ahead, while inflation is expected to moderate in 2023-24, it is likely to rule above the 4.0 per cent target."

Das added that the outlook was clouded by "continuing uncertainties from geopolitical tensions, global financial market volatility, rising non-oil commodity prices and volatile crude oil prices".

The US Federal Reserve has reduced the size of its rate hikes in recent months, while the European Central Bank has remained hawkish.—AFP

France to turn wine into industrial alcohol to battle surplus



There are seven primary wine-producing regions in France: Alsace, Bordeaux, Burgundy, Loire, Provence, and the Rhone Valley comprise the dominant French wine regions. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ AFP**

FRANCE plans to spend millions of euros to turn wine into industrial alcohol for pharmaceuticals and cosmetics to drain a massive surplus, the agriculture ministry has said. The world's second-largest wine producer after Italy, France has long been known as a nation of wine aficionados. But growers in the southwest region of Bordeaux say overproduction and a drop in domestic consumption of their more affordable brands have filled up their cellars and left them with nowhere to store the fruits of their next harvest.

The agriculture ministry said Monday that it would spend

up to 160 million euros (\$170 million) on distilling the tippable into industrial alcohol to use up some of the backlog.

In Bordeaux, winemaker Didier Cousiney said the amount was only enough to help each small business for just a couple of months when spread across the industry nationwide.

We have "24 months' worth of backlog in our cellars", he said.

Agriculture unions in the Bordeaux region, which have staged several protests, instead want compensation in exchange for uprooting part of their vineyards, a practice known as "grubbing up" the land.—AFP

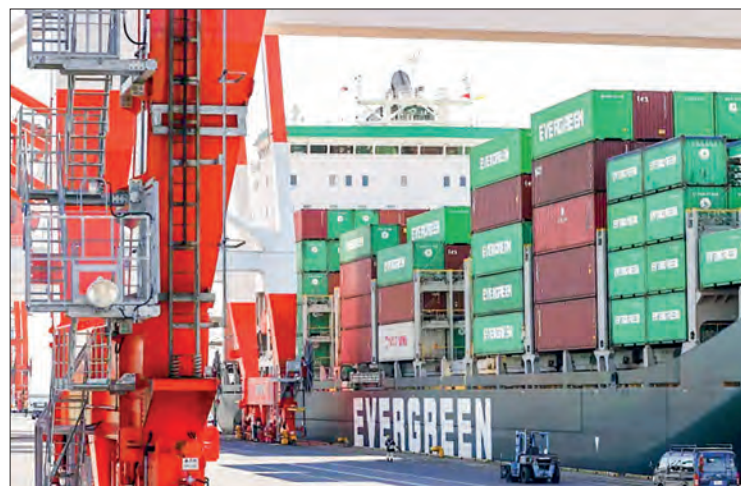
Japan's current account surplus halves to 8-yr low in 2022

JAPAN'S current account surplus nearly halved in 2022 from a year earlier to 11.44 trillion yen (\$87 billion), its lowest level in eight years, weighed down by a record trade deficit caused by swelling imports and a weakening yen, the Finance Ministry said Wednesday. The biggest ever year-on-year decline of 10.15 trillion yen came despite a record surplus in primary income, which reflects returns on foreign investments made by Japanese firms, underscoring the magnitude of the hit to resource-scarce Japan from surging imports of higher-priced

energy and other items.

The nation's surplus in the current account, one of the widest gauges of international trade, was the smallest since hitting 3.92 trillion yen in 2014.

Japan's trade deficit stood at 15.78 trillion yen after imports jumped 42.0 per cent to 114.47 trillion yen, outpacing exports that grew 19.9 per cent to 98.69 trillion yen. The values of both imports and exports were the highest since comparable data became available in 1996, according to the ministry's preliminary data.—Kyodo



The nation's surplus in the current account, one of the widest gauges of international trade, was the smallest since hitting 3.92 trillion yen in 2014. **PHOTO: KYODO**

NEWS IN BRIEF

US trade deficit surges by 12.2% in 2022

TRADE deficit of the United States widened by 12.2 per cent in 2022 amid stronger exports and imports, according to data released by the US Bureau of Economic Analysis and the US Census Bureau Tuesday.

The goods and services deficit was 948.1 billion US dollars in 2022, up from 845 billion dollars in 2021. Exports were three trillion dollars, up 453.1 billion dollars from 2021. Imports were 3.96 trillion dollars, up 556.1 billion dollars from 2021.

The goods and services deficit was 3.7 per cent of current-dollar gross domestic product in 2022, up from 3.6 per cent in 2021, the report showed.

The 2022 increase in the goods and services deficit reflected an increase in the goods deficit of 9.3 per cent to 1,191.8 billion dollars and a decrease in the services surplus of 0.6 percent to 243.7 billion dollars, the report noted.—Xinhua

UK's PM creates four ministries with new energy drive

BRITISH Prime Minister Rishi Sunak vowed Tuesday to slash sky-high power bills as he reshuffled his government with a focus on energy, climate net zero targets and scientific innovation.

Sunak created four new ministries in his first cabinet overhaul since his surprise ascent to power in October, as he bids to salvage his ruling Conservatives' chances in May local elections. Referencing Russia's invasion of Ukraine, he said that events over the past year showed the danger "when we're reliant on imported energy from hostile countries". "That's why the creation today of a new department focused specifically on energy security and net zero is so important," he told reporters. "It's going to mean that we can reduce people's energy bills," as well as drive the "transition to cleaner forms of energy as we hit our net zero ambitions and create jobs in the process", he added.—AFP



A cook serves roast duck for customers at a restaurant of a shopping mall in Beijing, capital of China, 25 December 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

China's catering sector sees robust rebound

AT noon outside Makai Restaurant in central Beijing, a long queue of eager customers could be seen almost every day over the past two weeks, as businesses continue to revive following China's optimization of its COVID-19 response.

"At rush hours during

the Spring Festival (from 21-27 January), diners needed to wait for a long time for tables to clear, while dining booths were fully booked well ahead of the Lantern Festival (on 5 February)," said Lyu Yongjie, manager of the restaurant.

China's catering in-

dustry is seeing a strong rebound and the Spring Festival tourism market also boomed, following relaxation in the COVID-19 response and also thanks to a government rollout of a spate of measures aimed at spurring consumption.

During the Spring

Festival holiday, China's dine-in consumption increased by 15.4 per cent from the previous year, with average consumption per restaurant rising by 10.8 per cent year on year, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce.

—Xinhua

Video conferencing star Zoom cuts staff by 15%

THE company behind the Zoom video conferencing platform — which became a household name during the pandemic — announced Tuesday it is laying off about 15 per cent of its staff.

Zoom Video Communications chief executive Eric Yuan is also taking a 98 per cent cut in salary this year and forgoing his executive bonus, he said in a blog post about the job cuts.

He added that members of his executive leadership team are taking a 20 per cent salary reduction and also forfeiting bonuses this year.

While people and

businesses continue to rely on Zoom "as the world transitions to life post-pandemic", the Silicon Valley-based firm is seeing customers cut back on spending, Yuan said in the post.

Zoom has made the "tough but necessary" decision to lay off about 1,300 people, or roughly 15 per cent of its staff, according to Yuan.

"Our trajectory was forever changed during the pandemic when the world faced one of its toughest challenges, and I am proud of the way we mobilized as a company to keep people connected,"

Yuan said.—AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V TC SYMPHONY VOY.NO. (72E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V TC SYMPHONY VOY.NO. (72E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **9-2-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AYIT** 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 GOLD STAR LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V BLPL TRUST VOY.NO. (1302S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BLPL TRUST VOY.NO. (1302S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **9-2-2023** 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 BLPL SHIPPING LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V HF SPIRIT VOY.NO. (2304S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V HF SPIRIT VOY.NO. (2304S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **9-2-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V OCEAN FAITH VOY.NO. (103590)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V OCEAN FAITH VOY.NO. (103590)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **10-2-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** 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: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CHUN AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS CO LTD

MYANMA PORT AUTHORITY HOLIDAY NOTICE

AS the wharves, warehouses and chellan Offices of Yangon Port will be closed on the **12th FEBRUARY 2023 (UNION DAY)**, Loading, Unloading and delivery for Goods will be received on Payment as Holiday Fees.

CHANGING THE NAME OF INSECTICIDE TRADING

The foreign manufacture **Makro Chemical** will import and distribute the following insecticides registered in Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board changing trading name –

No	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	Active Ingredient Name	Registration Type	Registration Number
1	Shwe Me Khae	Shwe Furan	Thiamethoxam 0.5%G	Provisional	P2022-5815

It is therefore announced to come and reject within two weeks to joint Secretary, Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein in wishing to make any objection in respect of the said changing trading name of insecticide.

Address : **Golden Key Co., Ltd.**
No. 258/262, 11th FLOOR, Classic Strand Condo,
Strand Road, Pabedan Township, Yangon Region, Myanmar.
PH: 01-371629

CHANGING THE NAME OF INSECTICIDE TRADING

The foreign manufacture **MAC Chem (Asia) Co., Ltd.** will import and distribute the following insecticides registered in Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board changing trading name –

No	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	Active Ingredient Name	Registration Type	Registration Number
1	Mega Mophos	Shwe Sunfos	Abamectin 0.2% + Triazophos 19.8% EC	Full	F2018-1860

It is therefore announced to come and reject within two weeks to joint Secretary, Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein in wishing to make any objection in respect of the said changing trading name of insecticide.

Address : **Mega Grow International Co., Ltd.**
No. 216/222, 9th FLOOR, B8-C8, Bo Myat Tun Housing,
Mahabadoola Road, Pazudaung Township, Yangon Region, Myanmar.
PH: 01-292772

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

N Korea marks 75th anniv of army's founding, may stage parade

NORTH Korea on Wednesday marked the 75th anniversary of the founding of its army, with the possibility of a military parade featuring intercontinental ballistic missiles being staged in the capital Pyongyang.

Leader Kim Jong Un visited the quarters of general officers of the Korean People's Army on Tuesday together with his "respected daughter" and "extended noble tribute and warm congratulations to all the officers", the official Korean Central News Agency said Wednesday.

He did not mention the

country's nuclear programme or the United States in a speech delivered on the eve of the anniversary. KCNA released pictures of a girl thought to be his second child Kim Ju Ae, aged around 10, and his wife Ri Sol Ju accompanying the leader.

It is unusual for the honorific word "respected" to be used for anyone other than the leader.

In November last year, state-run media described the girl as "most beloved" and "precious," fueling speculation that she could be a potential successor to her father.—Kyodo



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (front R) visits the quarters of general officers of the Korean People's Army with a girl thought to be his daughter (front L) on 7 February 2023. **PHOTO: KCNA/KYODO**

Rebels take New Zealand pilot hostage in Indonesia's Papua



The West Papua National Liberation Army (TPNPB), the military wing of Papua's main separatist group, claimed Tuesday's attack on a Susi Air plane in Nduga district. A Susi Air aircraft in Jakarta in 2011. **PHOTO: BAY ISMOYO/ AFP/FILE**

SEPARATISTS in Indonesia's eastern region of Papua have taken a New Zealand pilot hostage after attacking a small

passenger plane and setting it on fire at an airport in a remote mountainous area, officials and a rebel group said. Papuan insurgents who seek independence from Indonesia have previously threatened and attacked aircraft they believe to be carrying military or government personnel and supplies for Jakarta's forces. The West Papua National Liberation Army (TPNPB), the military wing of Papua's main separatist group, claimed Tuesday's attack on a Susi Air plane in Nduga district — an area where rebels have launched several attacks on authorities and civilians in recent years. "The pilot has been taken to a TPNPB headquarters, it is very far away in another district," TPNPB spokesman Sebby Sambom told AFP Wednesday.—AFP

Biden accuses social media companies of exploiting children

PRESIDENT Joe Biden called on US lawmakers Tuesday to restrict how social media companies lure children and collect their data, as he accused Big Tech of conducting a "for-profit" experiment on the nation's youth.

"We must finally hold social media companies accountable for the experiment they are running on our children for profit," Biden said during his State of the Union Speech before a joint session of Congress.

"And it's time to pass bipartisan legislation to stop Big Tech from collecting personal data on kids and teenagers online, ban targeted advertising to children, and impose stricter

limits on the personal data that companies collect on all of us."

Biden's remarks, which drew robust applause from members of both parties, were his latest shot across Big Tech's bow.

The president, highlighting the risks that social media pose for Americans, last month urged Republicans and his Democrats to break through years of political gridlock and pass laws that would rein in the power of US-based tech giants Apple, Google, Amazon and Facebook-owner Meta.

Biden has repeatedly advocated for greater protection of people's online privacy and their personal data.—AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Brussels on tenterhooks for long-awaited Zelensky visit

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky has so far only made one trip abroad since Russia invaded his country almost a year ago — receiving a hero's welcome in Washington in December.

Now EU officials are hoping he will head to Brussels on Thursday to meet European leaders in a largely symbolic but nevertheless keenly anticipated visit after months of European support for Ukraine.—AFP

Russian interest in German airport sparks criticism

A Russian investor's interest in an insolvent German airport created uproar Tuesday, as Russian business dealings in Europe's biggest economy face heightened scrutiny due to the Ukraine war.

The German region of Hesse, a minor shareholder in the airport, was "very critical" of the potential sale, a spokesman for its finance ministry told AFP.

Two offers are on the table for Frankfurt Hahn airport after

it went under at the end of 2021, in the wake of widespread travel disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic. The bidders are German real estate group Richter and NR Holding, which owns the nearby Nuerburgring race track and is backed by the Russian oligarch Viktor Kharitonin. The pharma billionaire is however not among the Russian businessmen on the European Union sanctions list in response to the invasion of Ukraine.—AFP



Frankfurt-Hahn Airport is an international airport in the municipality of Hahn, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany. **PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA**

Russia's Lavrov vows aid for W Africa's jihadist fight



Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has described his Mali visit as a "historic" first. **PHOTO: RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY/AFP**

RUSSIAN Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Tuesday pledged assistance to West African states battling jihadists, as Moscow seeks to expand its influence on a continent in a diplomatic tug-of-war between global powers.

Lavrov hailed the alliance that has been forged between Moscow and Bamako in fighting extremists on his first visit to Mali, which Russia's top diplomat described as "historic".

"The fight against terrorism is, of course, an issue for the other countries in the region," Lavrov told a press conference in the capital Bamako.

"We are going to provide our assistance to them to overcome these difficulties. This concerns Guinea, Burkina Faso and Chad and the Sahel region generally and even the coastal states on the Gulf of Guinea," he said.

Mali had long relied on former colonial power France for

military assistance in fighting the insurgency. But Paris pulled troops out of the West African nation last year as tensions with the ruling junta reached breaking point.

Since seizing power in 2020, Mali's ruling junta has brought in Russian planes, helicopters and paramilitaries to strengthen its fight against jihadist militants.

France says the Russian operatives are Wagner mercenaries – a private military group that Moscow has deployed in Syria and now Ukraine, experts say.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) and the UN have implicated Wagner and the Malian army in an alleged massacre at Moura in central Mali last March in which several hundred people were rounded up and killed.

The landlocked state is the epicentre of a jihadist insurgency that began in northern Mali in 2012 and spread to neighbouring Niger and Burkina Faso in 2015. — AFP

Police seize enough cocaine to supply N Zealand for 30 years

POLICE said Wednesday they had seized enough cocaine to supply New Zealand for 30 years, after snaring a massive bundle of drugs floating in the Pacific Ocean.

New Zealand police commissioner Andrew Coster told reporters the haul – containing 81 bales of cocaine – weighed 3.2 tonnes and had a street value of around \$316 million. "This is the largest find of illicit drugs by New Zealand's agencies by some margin," he said.

Officials believe the drugs were dropped at a "floating transit point" in the Pacific Ocean, where they would have been picked up and taken to Australia.

A police photo showed the massive haul was bound by netting and covered in yellow floats. Some of the bales had a Batman symbol on them, and the packages of cocaine inside are labelled with what appeared to be a four-leaf clover print. —AFP



Police said Wednesday they had seized enough cocaine to supply New Zealand for 30 years, after snaring a massive bundle of drugs floating in the Pacific Ocean. **PHOTO: NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE/AFP**

Bulgaria accused of brutal border pushbacks

BULGARIA faces mounting accusations that it is abusing people trying to cross its border with Türkiye, with asylum seekers saying they have been pushed back, locked up, stripped and beaten.

The EU member serves as a gateway into the bloc and is trying to tighten the border to stop a rising number of people seeking to cross, which has reached levels unseen since 2015.

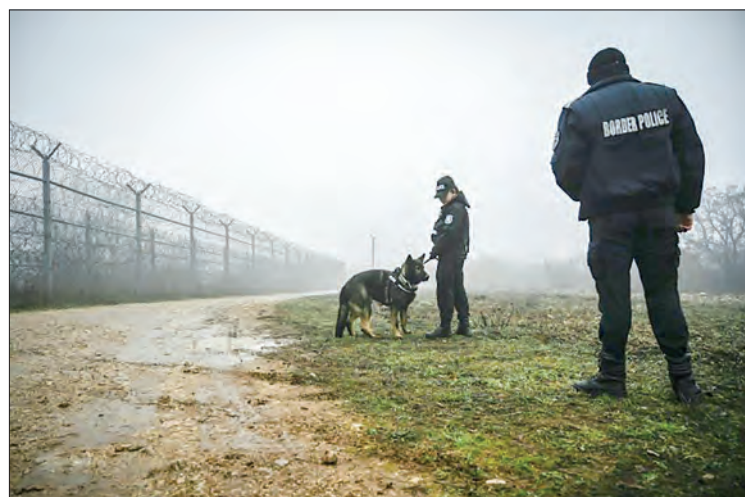
"Since the beginning of last year we have been seeing very intensive and brutal pushbacks of people," a practice that is illegal in the EU, said Diana Dimova, head of Bulgarian refugee help group Mission Wings.

Asylum seekers' testimonies collected by AFP and reports by the European border guard agency Frontex likewise point to the use of brutal methods at

the Balkan nation's southeastern frontier.

Border police thwarted 164,000 "irregular crossing" attempts in 2022, compared to 55,000 in 2021, interior ministry figures show.

Rising numbers in Bulgaria have already contributed to Austria and the Netherlands blocking its bid to join the Schengen visa free zone and will also be high on the agenda of an EU summit in Brussels later this week. — AFP



Asylum seekers' testimonies and reports by the European border guard agency point to the use of brutal methods at the Balkan nation's southeastern frontier. **PHOTO: AFP**

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Pilots walk away from 737 crash in Australia

TWO pilots have made a "miraculous" escape after their Boeing 737 water-bombing plane crashed and burned while fighting a blaze in remote Western Australia. The plane left a long scar in the scrub and tree-covered landscape when it came down while battling a bushfire in the Fitzgerald National Park about 420 kilometres (260 miles) southeast of Perth. Aerial images taken shortly after the accident, which happened on Monday, showed thick black smoke spewing from the aircraft on the ground, with the rear of the fuselage consumed by the inferno. The impact had left a long sand-coloured trail through the greenery behind the plane. —AFP

UN states spar over Syria chemical attack report

SEVERAL UN Security Council members called on Syria to give guarantees regarding chemical weapons after a global watchdog concluded it had conducted a chlorine attack in 2018, accusations rejected by Damascus. Last month, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) blamed Damascus for the strike on the rebel-held town of Douma, which killed 43 people.

The OPCW report, discussed by the Council Tuesday, said there were "reasonable grounds to believe" that at least one Syrian air force helicopter had dropped two cylinders of the toxic gas on the town. —AFP



Yangon United sign Thai League III player on one-year loan



Yan Lin Aung holds the insignia of Yangon United after arriving at the club for one season. PHOTO: YUFC

YANGON United recently announced the signing of midfielder Yan Lin Aung from Kamphaeng Phet FC of Thai League III on

a one-year contract, according to the team officials.

"I can't express how much I feel delighted to be offered, and

I will do as much as I can for the team," said Yan Lin Aung on his arrival at Yangon United.

"Yan Lin Aung is one of the generations of Myanmar U-20 who participated in the FIFA U-20 World Cup New Zealand and is a product of the Yangon youth team. He had been scouted in Myanmar National U-19 in 2013 and made his appearance with Myanmar U-20 in FIFA U-20 World Cup," Yangon United team officials said.

"He began his professional career in the Yangon United youth team in 2012 holding the Champions title at the end of the season and was promoted to the senior team in 2016. Looking back to his achievement with Yangon United, he won the 2018 Charity Cup, and 2018 Myanmar National League and won back-to-back General Aung San Shield Champions in 2018 and 2019," team officials stated. — KZL

Man City face uncertain future after Premier League charges

MANCHESTER City were the ultra-rich "noisy neighbours" who became the Premier League's dominant force. But they now face an uncertain future that includes the ultimate threat of relegation.

Abu Dhabi-backed City were charged by the English top flight on Monday with more than 100 alleged breaches of financial rules between 2009/10 and 2017/18, and

referred to an independent commission.

The reigning champions have also been accused of failing to cooperate with investigations by the Premier League.

The club faces a range of possible punishments, including a reprimand, points deduction or even expulsion from the Premier League.

City, who last month topped

the Deloitte money league of the world's richest clubs, appear to be confident they can ride out the storm, insisting there is "irrefutable" evidence that supports their case.

It is not the first time the club, transformed on and off the pitch after their takeover by the Abu Dhabi United Group in 2008, have been in the spotlight over issues of finance.—AFP



Manchester City were charged for over 100 alleged breaches. PHOTO: PAUL ELLIS/AFP

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council: Twelve 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 prioritize 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.
- (d) To ensure peace, stability, rule of law, and the safe and smooth functioning of transport networks across the Union.

2. Economic affairs

- (a) To enhance development based on agriculture and livestock using modern production techniques and to 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 assure support for the sustainability of Micro-, Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) that prioritize import substitution, export production, and the use of domestically produced raw materials, in order to increase domestic production and generate employment opportunities.
- (d) To advance the socioeconomic life of the people, in order to ensure the country's prosperity and food security.

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 people and preserve and safeguard their faiths, beliefs, culture, and characteristics of patriotic nationalism.
- (c) To strengthen basic health care in order to achieve the emergence of a health system that enhances the longevity and health of the entire nation.
- (d) To comprehensively promote the education sector to make it capable of producing the human resources necessary for building a modern, developed, and progressive democratic nation.

Tedesco named Belgium national football coach

DOMENICO Tedesco will take over as head coach of Belgium, the country's federation announced (RBFA) on Wednesday. The 37-year-old Italy-born Tedesco succeeds Roberto Martinez, who stepped down after Belgium failed to qualify for the knockout stages at the World Cup in Qatar. "His mission is to qualify the Belgian Red Devils for the Euro 2024 in Germany. The first qualifying match will be played on 24 March in Stockholm against Sweden," the RBFA said. Tedesco, who has coached Schalke, Spartak Moscow and RB Leipzig, will be

presented to the press later on Wednesday. "For me it is a great honour to be the new head coach of Belgium. I'm really looking forward to the task and I'm extremely motivated. I had a very good feeling right from the first conversation," Tedesco said on the RBFA website.

The appointment had been expected since late January. The delay led to suspicion that Tedesco was considering the vacant Hoffenheim job. Barely 15 minutes after the RBFA announcement, the Bundesliga club tweeted they had hired Pellegrino Matarazzo.—AFP