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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.

Myanmar's corn exported to external markets by sea and via land borders



Myanmar exported 2.3 million tonnes of corn to foreign trade partners in the 2020-2021 financial year. The majority of them were sent to Thailand and the remaining went to China, India and Viet Nam. Growers are pictured working on the corn plantation.

THE price of corn declined amid weak demand from foreign trade partners, according to Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce (Bayintnaung Wholesale Centre).

The price has been stable at K1,300 per viss since the end

of January. The price moved slightly down by K20 per viss on 25 February.

At present, the domestic market has a bustling trade activity. Myanmar sends corn to China and Thailand via border posts. Myanmar shipped corn to China, India, Thailand,

Viet Nam and the Philippines, according to Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

China is purchasing Myanmar's corn through cross-border trade under the opium substitution programme. Legitimate corn trade between Myanmar and China commenced

at the end of 2022. A total of 112 companies have been given the go-ahead for corn exports.

Thailand gives green light to corn imports under zero tariff (with Form-D), between 1 February and 31 August.

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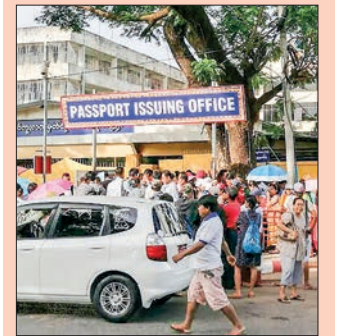
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PYIN OO LWIN (Flower City)

Pwe Gauk

(BE.FALLS)

Waterfalls Resort

Now, Sky Cable car has been just opened, you can see and enjoy the beauty of Pyin Oo Lwin (Flower City) while riding the Sky Cale car.

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.

One new case of COVID-19 reported on 25 February, total figure rises to 633,907

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **633,907** after **one** new case was reported on 25 February 2023 according to the Ministry of Health. The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,395**, including **17** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,490** on 25-2-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. — MNA

Illegal timbers, foodstuffs, consumer goods, industrial materials and vehicles confiscated



Officials check the confiscated illegal timbers.

A mobile team of the Customs Department inspected vehicles on the Myawady-Hpa-an-Yangon Road on 23 February and confiscated 8,500 kilogrammes of PVC resin worth K13,056,085 that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from a

Nissan Diesel tractor head and a trailer (approximate value of K70 million) near Zayetkwin village on the No 2 highway. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

The on-duty teams seized seven cartons of toy small cars

with batteries and remote controls worth K2 million that were different from the Import Declaration (ID) from two containers and 312 kilogrammes of ECG recording paper (thermal paper) worth K6,552,000 that exceeded the Import Declara-

tion (ID) at the Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint on 23 February and four kinds of goods including 300 basin waste P-traps that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from a container at the Myanmar International Terminal (Thilawa) on 24 February. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On 24 February, officials at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint captured 3,000 kilogrammes of empty cement bags worth K6.6 million that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from a Mitsubishi Fuso tractor head and a trailer (approximately K115 million) heading to Yangon from Myawady. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

A combined team made surprise inspections of warehouses in Pale ward 1 in Mingaladon township and nabbed 14 kinds of goods including 108 bags of industrial raw materials, 40 cartons of Lactasoy (soy

milk) and 110 used fans worth K41.48 million without official documents in a warehouse. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

A combined team found motorbikes without Customs duties from two vehicles (approximately K29 million) in Muse township.

Officials also inspected a warehouse near those two vehicles and found another 108 brand-new motorbikes (worth 119 million) without official documents. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On 25 February, a total of 3.3168 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K1,658,400 was captured in Toungoo district and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

Therefore, 15 arrests (estimated value of K413,586,485) were made on three consecutive days from 23 to 25 February, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

Over 1,000 animals protected in sanctuaries

THERE are 11 sanctuaries sheltering over 1,000 animals in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Bago, Magway and Sagaing regions, according to All Myanmar Theravada Buddhists Federation and Sasana Nuggaha Association for Borders, Hilly Regions and Coastal Areas (Mandalay).

"Many animals are protected under the Metta (loving kindness) and Garuna (compassion) of Sayadawgyi. There are 11 sanctuaries in five regions. There are over 600 cattle, 200 goats and over 1,000 animals including turkey, chicken, duck, goose, Muscovy duck, rabbit,

guinea pig and pigeon," said U Hla Win, chairman of the association.

Currently, the 11 sanctuaries — Sedawlay sanctuary in Patheingyi Township, Sedawgyi sanctuary in Madaya Township, Marle Nattaung sanctuary in Singu Township and Zayetkwin sanctuary in Thabeikkyin Township of Mandalay Region, Ywathitkalay sanctuary in Sagaing Kaunghmudaw, three sanctuaries in Debayin, Aunglan monastery sanctuary in Aunglan Township, Kathitwine sanctuary in Bago Township and Khit Aye Parahita sanctuary in Zeyathiri

Township of Nay Pyi Taw — are home to over 1,000 animals.

The animals are kept naturally and officials feed them with vegetables donated by vendors from the near market.

"The animals are kept on natural pasture. We also urged the vendors to pack the vegetable waste hygienically and we get these vegetables. Then, we feed the animals as a supplementary feed," he added.

Those who want to make donations can contact 09 975 764 323, 09 402 692 522 and 09 660 850 399. — Aung Kyaw Kha (Mandalay)/KTZH



Out of more than 1,000 animals, over 600 cattle are also protected in the sanctuaries. PHOTO: AUNG KAUNG KHA (MANDALAY)

Need to export value-added products to external markets

IT is more beneficial to manufacture and export value-added commodities to external markets in spite of rather shipping raw materials both from aboveground and underground resources ...

(Excerpt from the address delivered by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the SAC meeting 7/2022 held on 16 August 2022)

Eighth 47-member State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee holds 13th Plenary Meeting

THE first-day session of the thirteenth plenary meeting of the 8th 47-member State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee was organized at Vijaya Mangala Thabin of Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Hill in Yangon yesterday.

The meeting was attended by members of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee led by Chairman Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dr Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Ko Ko, the director-general of Religious Affairs Department and other officials of departments concerned.

State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Chairman Dr Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa presided over the meeting and Joint Secretary Sayadaw Agga Maha Gandhavasaka Pandita



The first day of the eighth 47-member State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee's 13th plenary meeting is in progress.

Bhaddanta Sandavamsa Lin-kara Bhivamsa acted as the master of ceremonies.

The State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Chairman Sayadaw recited Sarani-

ya Ovada Gatha to start the meeting.

Then, Union Minister U Ko Ko presented matters related to religious affairs.

Then, Joint Secretary

Sayadaw Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Bhaddanta Tithara reported on the activities of the second sub-committee of the eighth Sangha Maha Nayaka conducted during the

fifth term and other Sayadaws also presented from respective sectors.

The Sayadaws also discussed Vinicchaya and religious affairs and concluded the first session.

During the second session, the Sayadaws discussed Vinicchaya and religious-related matters and concluded the event.

Daw Pyone Wai Thi (Saddhamma Jotikadhaja) and their family donated the first meal to Sayadaws and Senior General Than Swe (Retd) and his wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing offered the day meal.

The Union minister and congregation paid homage to Secretary Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Dr Bhaddanta Sandhima Bhivamsa and donated K3 million to Sayadaw. —MNA/KTZH

MoEP Union Minister inspects Kinda 30 MW solar power plant project

UNION Minister for Electric Power U Thaung Han, together with Mandalay Region Natural Resources Minister U Shwe Zin, inspected the Kinda 30-megawatt Solar Power Plant project in Myittha Township, Kinda hydropower plant and the 500 kVA Kankaung sub-power station near Mile Post 293 of Yangon-Mandalay highway road yesterday.

On arrival at the Kinda 30 megawatt Solar-powered Power Plant, the officials reported on the project and tested transmission processes.

The Kinda Solar Power Plant is situated near Kyitaing Village and is built on 132.35 acres of land. At present, 19-megawatt electricity has been distributed on a test run and 90.8 per cent of the project has now been completed.

The Union minister and party went to the Kinda Multi-purpose Dam. During the visit, the Union minister inspected the inflow of water into the dam, water storage, and durability of the dam.

On arrival at Kinda Hydropower Plant, they inspected the operation of the power plants and sending of electricity to the national grid.

The Kinda Power Plant is situated on Paung Laung River and it has two 28-megawatt installed generators which can generate 165-kilowatt hours of electricity annually. The electric power has been sent to the national grid through the 132 kV Kinda-Thazi and Kinda-Ingon power lines.

The Union minister and party then arrived at the 500 kV Kanaung Power Sub-Station



Union Minister U Thaung Han inspects the Kinda 30-megawatt Solar Power Plant project in Myittha Township yesterday.

Project near Mile Post No 293 on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway. They also inspected the transformers, installation of Hybrid Gas Insulated Switch

Gear and Shunt Reactor and construction of the control room.

The Kankaung power substation is the very first project

of the 500 kV substation in Myanmar and 73.19 per cent of the project has been completed so far. — MNA/KTZH

MoI Union Minister urges re-operation of local steel mills



UNION Minister for Industry Dr Charlie Than said yesterday that the Prime Minister had given instructions to put Pinpet and Myingyan steel mills into operation again as the country has to import large quantities of steel from abroad due to the failure of full operation by the local steel mills for various reasons.

The Union minister also called on private entrepreneurs to cooperate in the industrial registration process

and said that there will be a relaxation of rules and regulations regarding the industrial registration process while inspecting steel mills in Mandalay Region.

He also added that as iron and steel mills are producing iron rods for local consumption, using local resources, the government will provide necessary support and assistance for the constant and full-capacity running of iron and steel mills. — MNA/MKKS

Union Minister Dr Charlie Than is pictured inspecting the steel mill.

SAC-conferred honorary titles presented

THE State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister conferred honorary titles on recipients individually on 1 and 2 January in marking the 75th Anniversary (Diamond Jubilee) Independence Day.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Nyunt Win Swe and officials yesterday handed over honor-

ary titles to family members of those who were unable to attend the conferring ceremony on their own and their behalf due to various reasons.

On behalf of Minister for Education U Maung Kyaw Zan, granddaughter Daw May Aye Win received the Thiri Pyanchi title at Yangon City Hall, Kyauktada Township in Yangon. — MNA/KZW



Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein and Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Nyunt Win Swe hand over the Thiri Pyanchi title to granddaughter Daw May Aye Win on behalf of Minister for Education U Maung Kyaw Zan.

Efforts to improve production rate, quality with modern agricultural and breeding systems

DEPUTY Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Gyi met the residents of Htantawgyi village-tract of Tatkon Township of Nay Pyi Taw aiming to develop modern farming practices and proportionate irrigation water to farmlands yesterday.

During the meeting, the deputy minister discussed the implementation of agriculture-based village area, production and quality processes with systematic usage of seedling, agrochemicals and irrigation water and cooperation to transfer into industrial agriculture and also inspected the 150 acres of industrial farmlands.

The deputy minister also inspected the return of farmlands to farmers of Shar Taw village-tract and Gway-



Deputy Minister Dr Aung Gyi inspects farmlands in Tatkon Township in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

pin village and distribution of irrigation water from Shardaw Sinthay Chaung dam through mobile solar-water pumping system marking the 61st anniversary of Peasants' Day.

The deputy minister also check the lab for foot-and-mouth disease (Nay Pyi Taw),

location of the new Department of Livestock and Aquaculture Research, research on gene of land animal and conservation of natural resources and new location for construction of research camp (Shwemyo). — MNA/KTZH

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CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

(+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 454237515

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 251022355

marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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gnlmnews@gmail.com
www.gnlm.com.mm

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Kyat depreciates at K2,880 against US dollar despite reference exchange rate

KYAT weakened to K2,880 against the US dollar in the unauthorized market despite CBM's reference rate of K2,100.

Kyat depreciation against greenbacks persists at K2,860 in the grey market although the Central Bank of Myanmar set the reference exchange rate at K2,100.

CBM has set the currency trading band at 0.3 per cent for the Kyat to fluctuate between these two specified upper and lower exchange rates for transactions, selling or buying, according to a directive issued by the CBM on 10 August 2022.

Therefore, financial institutions including banks and informal money exchanges are instructed to set a dollar value at K2,094 for buying and K2,106 for selling. However, the over-the-

counter Kyat-dollar exchange rate was K2,865 for buying and K2,880 for selling on 25 February.

Investigation and Prosecuting of market manipulation to hike the exchange rate in the local forex market with the malicious rumours will be undertaken, according to the Central Bank of Myanmar's statement released on 10 February.

Some exporters, importers and banks are attempting to raise the exchange rate owing to the rumours. The statement called for bank institutions to govern the market and investigate those fraudsters who circulate rumours.

The CBM released a notice that the exporters, importers and banking institutions are asked not to elevate the exchange rate. Those banking



Kyat depreciation against greenbacks persists at K2,860 in the grey market although the Central Bank of Myanmar set the reference exchange rate at K2,100.

institutions that do not abide by financial regulations will face legal action as well.

Last August, a dollar value

hit an all-time high of over K4,500 in the grey market. Consequently, the CBM sold dollars at its auction market for the sectors

in need, to control the soaring dollar. A total of \$443.8 million were sold at an auction rate in 2021 as well. — NN/EM

Myanmar's corn exported to external markets by sea and via land borders

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However, Thailand imposed a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn imports to protect the rights of their growers if the corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand.

The directive released on 30 June said that transactions for the exports of agricultural products including corn, rice, bean and oil crops are to be made in dollars instead of Yuan-Kyat/Baht-Kyat. Therefore, 65 per cent of export earnings (US dollars) of the corn have to be exchanged according to the reference rate of the Central Bank of Myanmar (K2,100). Nonetheless, there is a large gap between the regulated rate and the unauthorized rate of the US dollar (over K2,880).

Nonetheless, as per the meeting 66/2022 of the Foreign Exchange Supervisory Committee, export earnings of some items can be made in Chinese Yuan and Thai Baht in addition to the US dollar.

The CBM's notice dated 18 November takes effect on those export items; various



pulses (green gram, black gram, chickpea, pigeon pea), edible oil crops (peanut, sesame seeds), corn, rubber, fishery products (fish, shrimp, crab, eel) and livestock products (live cattle, hides, frozen meat, dried meat).

The traders need to apply for a licence to make Yuan or Baht payments. According to the US dollar policy, 65 per cent of earnings must be exchanged for local currency at the CBM's reference foreign exchange rate, while exporters can use 35 per cent of export earnings or transfer or sell them to Authorized Dealers or others with

an over-the-counter rate within 30 days, the CBM announced.

Myanmar exported 2.3 million tonnes of corn to foreign trade partners in the 2020-2021 financial year. The majority of them were sent to Thailand and the remaining went to China, India and Viet Nam.

At present, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. Myanmar has three corn seasons- winter, summer and monsoon. The country produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn every year. — NN/EM

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 25 February 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K2,120
Octane 95	K2,195
Diesel	K2,170
Premium Diesel	K2,250

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,132,400 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,847,000 per tical

US Dollar Vs Kyat

A US dollar set by the Central Bank of Myanmar	K2,100
A US dollar in the forex market	K2,865 to K2,880

The above prices may change from time to time.

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

Sugar prices hit fresh peak in domestic market



Bags of sugar are seen for being delivered to markets.

THE price of sugar spiked at the end of February and hit a new peak of K3,080 per viss in the wholesale market, Ko Kyaw Tun, a trader who sends the goods to the regions outside Yangon, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM). The prices soared to K2,370 from K2,260 per viss on 7 September 2022, showing an increase of K800 per viss.

The sugar price is moving up in the domestic market. Although new sugar was entering the market when the sugar cane crushing mills ran into full operation in late 2022, the price kept rocketing.

There are about 20 sugar mills in the country, with a production capacity of 500,000 tonnes per year. The domestic consumption is about 450,000 tonnes.

The remaining sugar is shipped to external markets. Myanmar conveyed 40,000 tonnes of sugar to Viet Nam in 2022. This year, sugar is expected to fetch US\$600 per dollar. The domestic sugar price is too high compared with the export price.

The Trade Department un-

der the Ministry of Commerce notified on 23 February that 65 per cent of income from rice export through the border area has to be exchanged at the reference rate (K2,100) set by the Central Bank of Myanmar.

Earlier, exporters were allowed to use the whole export income (foreign currency) and did not need to convert them into Kyat at the CBM's reference rate.

This action will come into force for all rice and rice product exports starting from 1 March 2023 to affect export items equally, the Trade Department notified.

The traders keep the stocks in hand. The price is, therefore, going up. Sugar is not an essential good as it can be substituted with jaggery and artificial sweeteners. Sugar substitutes are mostly used in beverage businesses. Yet, artificial sweeteners are harmful, said a consumer.

In 2010, there were many sugar mills on a small scale. When they were forced to relocate to the industrial zone, most of them were suspended, said a

businessman.

New sugar mills are found in the sugarcane sowing areas. So, the number of suppliers of sugar syrup along the Ayeyawady and Chindwin rivers decreased. When the sugar was priced below K1,000 per viss, the sugarcane price was around K40,000 per tonne. When the sugar price hit a record high of K2,500 in late 2022, the sugarcane was offered at K90,000 per tonne at the end of the sugarcane season. The prevailing price of sugar is around K3,000 per viss. As a result of this, the sugar buying price should increase, said a sugarcane grower.

The sugarcane growers in the Myanmar and China border received a profit of K100,000 per tonne for exports after deducting the transport cost.

In 2022, the commodities prices inflated and out of kitchen groceries (rice, edible oil, onion, chilli pepper and sugar), the prices of sugar and low-grade rice showed a tremendous increase than the previous record, a market observer said. — TWA/EM

Plans underway to build bus terminal in Public Rental Housing Project

DISCUSSIONS are being made between the Yangon mayor and the Yangon Region Public Transport Committee-YRTC to build the bus terminal in the Public Rental Housing Project, according to the meeting between Yangon City Development Committee-YCDC Chairman (Mayor) U Bo Htay and the YRTC held on 24 February.

Bus terminal construction works will be carried out to run the bus line for transportation in the Public Rental Housing Project, located on No 7 Main Circular Road in Dagon Myothit (South) Township.

The Department of Urban and Housing Development clarified that the construction activities within the designated land area in the project will be verified according to the perspective of urban planning, and

restrictions will be placed following the procedure. The YRTC presented the conditions to be invested regarding the construction, the design to be built and the proposals for vehicle entrance and exit ways.

Then, the Yangon Mayor instructed to start the bus terminal construction works for smooth traffic since the project construction works will be completed soon.

The 10,000 public rental housing project is being implemented in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay, aiming for the accommodation of civil servants who have difficulties in living, retired employees and low-income people. A total of 194 buildings and 3,104 apartments are being built in Yangon as the first phase and now about 74 per cent have been completed. — TWA/CT



Officials inspect the Public Rental Housing Project in Dagon Myothit (South) Township in 2022.

Online appointment system for passports resumes on 26 Feb

THE online appointment system for applying for passports and passport renewals is to be restarted on 26 February after a system repair, Myanmar Passport Issuing Office issued a statement.

On 24 February, a total of 8,529 applicants were recorded

in the system and made online payments after filling in a form with their personal information. Nonetheless, some faced errors and did not receive the appointment date after making payments, the office stated.

They can check the appointment date on the home

page of the website by putting their name and the citizenship scrutiny card number. After the system repair, it will resume on 26 February. Thanks to public cooperation, the pilot project of the system was successful, as mentioned in the statement.

— TWA/EM



The photo shows the Myanmar Passport Issuing Office in 2018.

EV cars that will operate as taxis to be registered as City Taxis

EV cars that will run as taxis in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon must be registered as City Taxis, according to Yangon Region Public Transport Committee-YRTC.

Companies that have permission to import battery electric vehicles (EVs) must use them for public transport. Effective from the beginning of this year, about 100 EV cars and EV chargers to be used in charging stations in Nay Pyi

Taw and Yangon have arrived. On 23 February, five 7 kW GB AC household chargers also arrived.

At present, there are more than 3,000 cars newly registered as City Taxis, and around 300 cars are being registered every day. There are more than 60,000 vehicles previously registered City Taxis in Yangon Region, according to the YRTC. — TWA/KZW



City taxis are seen in the hub of Yangon city.

Fast service provided to applicants for overseas employment orientation courses, OWICs



Migrant workers are pictured on the Myanmar-Thai border.

THE Department of Labour stated that the application for overseas employment training courses and overseas worker identification cards (OWICs) are reviewed and permitted within two or three days.

It is mentioned in the statement of the Labour Department that some brokers and licenced overseas employment agencies advertise on social media offering services for overseas employment training courses and

overseas worker identification cards (OWICs) and ask for a large amount of service charges.

It is also found that some brokers and licenced overseas employment agencies submit fake work permits, visas, immigration seals, leave letters of employers, certificates of overseas employment training courses, degree certificates, certificates of skill training courses and applications written in the handwriting of only one person.

The department added that, if the brokers and licenced overseas employment agencies are found submitting fake documents, action will be taken against them as well as the workers who engage with those brokers and agencies. It also suggested that the workers should personally apply for overseas employment training courses and overseas worker identification cards (OWICs). — TWA/MKKS

Temporary power cut in 3 townships in Yangon

YANGON Electricity Support Corporation has announced that it will be removing old pylons and relocating the 11 kV power line on 26 February and so there will be temporary power outages in three townships.

Yangon City Development Committee is expanding power lines at the junction of Kyansittha and Minyekyawswa roads in Dagon Myothit (East) Town-

ship. Therefore, YESC will have to remove old pylons and relocate the 11 kV power line from 11 am to 3 pm on 26 February, and there will be power outages in some parts of Dagon Myothit (East), Dagon Myothit (North) and Shwepaukkan townships.

However, arrangements are being made to ensure that there are no power outages in important areas, it is learnt. — TWA/KZW



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

OPINION

ARTICLE BOOKRACK

Encourage drawing typical calendars for Myanmar society

THE Myanmar Calendar Advisory Board is the highest body in managing the compilation of calendars especially typical calendars of Myanmar and Rakhine. Moreover, the board is carrying out drawing the typical calendar for Buddhist monks to calculate the period of the Buddhist lent and compiling the inscriptions of forecasts every year beyond the period of Maha Thingyan.

Myanmar calendar mentions the exact period the Buddhist Lent for members of the Sangha. Thanks to the calendar, those Buddhist monks will have the chance to accurately calculate the Buddhist Lent when they should uphold dos and don'ts to commit sins and break the religious disciplines called Vinaya of the Lord Buddha.

Whatever it may be, the post-graduate diploma course will revitalize the Myanmar traditional culture for improving the rules and regulations, calculating techniques, concepts and perception in drawing the relevant calendars to be able to bring advantages to members of the Sangha and the people. If so, they will have the chance to analyze everything in line with the typical calendars for the Buddhist Lent and the daily lifestyle of the people.

Thanks to endeavours of the Myanmar Calendar Advisory Board, a plan is underway to conduct a post-graduate diploma course specializing the Myanmar calendar subject as from May of 2023-24 academic year. In fact, such an effort was made to open the first-ever course related to the calendar by the board within the 73-year period of its term.

The one and a half years course will improve the talent and knowledge of students to be able to initiate the calendars of the society. Those students need to study the subject in the three semesters. So far, veteran experts and scholars from three groups of the board have compiled the curriculums for the diploma course.

Whatever it may be, the post-graduate diploma course will revitalize the Myanmar traditional culture for improving the rules and regulations, calculating techniques, concepts and perception in drawing the relevant calendars to be able to bring advantages to members of the Sangha and the people. If so, they will have the chance to analyze everything in line with the typical calendars for the Buddhist Lent and the daily lifestyle of the people.

Likewise, the calendar for Rakhine ethnics will bring good advantages for those ethnics to be able to calculate the days and dates of relevant months whether they can do or not things. In fact, the calendar plays a crucial role in daily lifestyle of relevant ethnic people.

Naturally, all arts and science subjects can fade out if the number of enthusiast declines. Whenever the number of enthusiasts increases, any subjects will improve. With regard to the calculation and drawing of Myanmar calendar, it can be seen that number of new generation youths is gradually declining in the Myanmar society. As such, responsible persons and relevant experts need to encourage the new generation youths to study the Myanmar calendar subject enthusiastically.

China speeds up sci-tech innovation amid COVID-19 challenges in past three years

AS ONE of the engines driving China's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the country's science and technology innovation has been accelerated over the past more than three years.

China's space station programme, the country's sci-tech flagship programme, completed its planned tasks in the past three years, such as the maiden flight of the Long March-5B carrier rocket in 2020, the launch of the Tianhe core module in 2021, and the launch of the Mengtian and Wentian lab modules in 2022.

On 29 November 2022, the Shen-

zhou-15 manned spacecraft was successfully launched and docked with the space station, marking the completion of all 12 missions planned for the verification of key technologies and the construction of the space station.

China's space industry

The COVID-19 pandemic brought challenges to China's space industry, making it difficult to guarantee human resources for research and testing activities, said Wang Xiaojun, head of the China Academy of Launch Vehicle Technology, which is under the China

Corporation (CASC).

He added that the pandemic also affected communication and coordination, as well as supply chains and international cooperation.

However, the space industry managed to deal with such difficulties by embracing science-based control policies guided by the country's effective prevention and control measures, such as full vaccination coverage to protect personnel, and the adoption of a more flexible way of work, to ensure that all missions were completed on time, he said.

According to annual reports issued



The COVID-19 pandemic brought challenges to China's space industry, making it difficult to guarantee human resources for research and testing activities. PHOTO: XINHUA

by the CASC, China achieved 39, 55 and 64 space launches in 2020, 2021 and 2022 respectively, up significantly compared to the pre-pandemic period. In 2019, China managed 34 space launches.

The space industry is just one example of how China managed to develop its sci-tech innovation despite the impact of the pandemic.

Ranking first in the world

According to annual statistics issued by the Institute of Scientific and Technical Information of China, which is under the Ministry of Science and Technology, as of September 2022, China

had 1,808 hot papers, accounting for 41.7 per cent of world's total and ranking first in the world.

Hot papers are papers published within the previous two years and which were cited enough times in the most recent two months to be placed in the top 0.1 per cent when compared to peer papers. China had 1,056 hot papers in 2019, and the number grew to 1,375 in 2020 and 1,515 in 2021.

China's highly cited papers reached nearly 50,000 in 2022, accounting for 27.3 per cent of the global total and ranking second in the world.

SOURCE: Xinhua



Book Title - Smart Youth, Future Youth
Writer - Multiple Pens
Publishing House - Seikku Thit
Publication Date - January 2023 (1st Edition)
Price - K4,000

Smart Lunge Ahnagat Lunge

(Smart Youth, Future Youth)

THIS book is a collection of articles contributed by different pens to journals and magazines and other periodicals between 2010 and 2019. The contributors are well-experienced and well-known. The book includes 19 articles by 11 writers - Ye Shan, Myay Lat Myat Thu, Min Chan Mon, Nyi Min Nyo, Maung Maung Nyo, Maung Shin Htet, Lay Ko Tin, Maung Yint Mar (Kyaunggon), Maung Khine Lat, Aung Kyway Tint and Yuda.

As the youths are important to the future of the country, it is of paramount importance for the youths to be serious with the way they are leading their life and to seek knowledge and experience. In this regard, writer Myay Lat Maung Myint Thu has written an article titled, "Youth and Carelessness", in which he quoted Franklin as saying, "For want of a nail, a

hoof was lost. For want of a hoof, a horse of lost. For want of a horse, the horse rider was arrested by the enemy and he lost his life." If one looks at this story, one will see that it all has happened because of the carelessness to hit a nail on a hoof. The writer pointed out the carelessness he found in some youths in the literature field. He said one of his cousin brothers was so weak in the observation that the latter did not even know whether the mole on his mother's lip was on the left or the right side. He warned the youths to be mindful because carelessness will someday become a hindrance to reaching their goal in future. Saya Myay Lat also quoted writer Min Nan (Mawgyun) as saying, "The mind guarded by the mindfulness brings two benefits - the power that brings the benefits and the

power that wards off the evils." Saya Maung Yint Mar (Kyaunggon) who is good at composing essays has also contributed an article to a magazine, and his article is included in this collection under the title, "Pu Thaw Lan [The hot path]." In his article, he pointed out that many people who have achieved success are self-reliant. Such achievers do not depend upon wealthy parents and/or relatives. He provided case studies to make his statements strong. When the writer asked a good friend of his who was a retired Police officer about the latter's elder son, he said, "We arrived at that place when my son grew up and started to spend money. As you know, the place where I was assigned duty was a place in which people can buy all sorts of opium. And gambling was

rampant. My son was spoiled by the people in that town who wanted to seek my favour. As he was having a fat sum of money in the form of pocket money, he became a spoiled adolescent." The writer remarked that if a plant grows luxuriantly at an early stage, it will yield only poor-quality fruits.

Similarly, the writer also provided two more case studies - one is about the child of a rich friend whereas the other is concerned with the child of a poor friend. The rich man's son has not become a successful businessman in his adulthood while the poor man's son has become a rich man running the highway trucks. He also quoted Saya Nanda Thein Zan as saying, "Diamonds have undergone overheating."

This book also contains Nikki Delfin's Lessons Learnt from A Youth Peace Network translated by Aung Kyway Tint.



Book Title - Phayaung Ooyin
Writer - Pyo
Publishing House - Sar Yeik Myaing
Publication Date - February 2023 (2nd Edition)
Price - K8,500

Phayaung Ooyin

DESPITE being a young pen, the writer has achieved good remarks from the readers. She has five novels published already viz Phayaung Ooyin, Zalat Ni, Wut Hmon, Ahnya Yai Ahlwan Yai Mi Chaw Yai and Ahlwan Zar. The book under review is the second impression. Concerning the reason why this book composed by Sayama Pyo is published for the second time, I heard people urging the writer to publish this book again when Ahnya Yai Ahlwan Yai Mi Chaw Yai has been published. Under today's situation, priority is important to publishing books. Obviously, the publishers will choose to publish the new ones. I was rather hesitant to publish this book with over 300 pages again. However, this

book which was first published in 2018 is so attractive to me that I cannot resist my desire to publish it again. It is not only me but also many readers who are captivated by her style of writing. Reading this book will enable adult readers to know how to cultivate their beloved ones. The writer has shared her own experience in bringing up her own offspring. This book should be read not only by the parents but also by the teachers who are obliged to cultivate the children, said the publisher. Amidst the most important tasks in this world of us, upbringing the children is more important. I would like to quote Reverend Shwehintha Sayadawgyi as saying that only when the children are good-natured, will the adult

be good-hearted. Again, only when the mature people are great enough, will the country prosper. The youth of today will become the adults in future. This being so, the future of a country is in the hands of the youth of today. Such being the case, proper upbringing plays a paramount role in the production of good and able citizens.

The writer of this book has served with a child-friendly school in Northern Shan State as a volunteer. The school is called Myitta Shin School. During her contribution of labour, she has met with difficulty. But she was happy with the children who were very close to her. The age group is between two and five. She wrote about the provision of food of nutri-

tional value, how the kids look at the world around them and their lovely characters and or behaviour. Additionally, the readers will be able to enjoy the writer's way of solving the problems posed by the children. More importantly, the readers will learn about early childhood care and development.

The characters in my stories are quite lovely. I really miss them a lot. I am reminiscent of them very often, and that's why I happened to write this book, said the writer. What is certain is that this book can be a teaching aid. The writer said if this book is of some benefit to the readers, she will be happy, forgetting the strenuous effort she has had to exert in the production of this little book.

SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

Euclid spacecraft prepares to probe universe's dark mysteries



The European Space Agency's Euclid spacecraft, which launches in July on a mission to probe dark matter and dark energy. **PHOTO: AFP**

FOR now, Europe's Euclid spacecraft sits quietly in a sterilized room in the south of France, its golden trim gleaming under the fluorescent light.

But in a few months the space telescope will blast off on history's first mission to search for two of the universe's greatest mysteries: dark matter and dark energy.

Though together they make up 95 per cent of the universe, almost nothing is known about either -- a glaring hole in scientific understanding that Euclid project manager Giuseppe Racca dubbed a "cosmic embarrassment".

Aiming to shed light on these dark secrets, the European Space Agency's mission will chart a 3D map of the universe encompassing two billion

galaxies across more than a third of the sky.

The third dimension of this map will be time -- because Euclid's gaze will stretch out to 10 billion light years away, it will offer new insight into how the 13.8-billion-year-old universe evolved.

The two-tonne spacecraft, which is 4.7 metres (15 feet) tall and 3.5 metres (11 feet) wide, was unveiled to the media for the first time this week in a clean room of the Thales Alenia Space company in the southeastern French city of Cannes.

Only a few final tests remain before it heads to Cape Canaveral in the United States for a launch scheduled between 1 and 30 July on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket. —AFP

Quake-prone Istanbul not at heightened risk: expert



Seismologists at Türkiye's Kandilli Observatory have been monitoring aftershocks since the 6 February quake. **PHOTO: AFP**

FEARS of another major earthquake have been rekindled in Istanbul since the 6 February disaster that hit Türkiye and Syria, but a prominent Turkish

seismologist has reassured the risk "hasn't increased".

"The risk hasn't increased because we are talking about completely different systems,"

Dogan Kalafat, the director of the Kandilli Observatory's Earthquake-Tsunami Monitoring Centre in Istanbul, told AFP.

Türkiye's most populated city is situated near the North Anatolian Fault while the recent 7.8-magnitude quake that killed 43,500 people occurred along another fault in the country's southeast, Kalafat explained.

Still, the 16 million residents of Istanbul, a city that spreads over two continents and has seen skyscrapers mushroom in recent years, are wondering if they're ready for the "Big One".

"I'd like to say it, but sadly, it's a very big city with too many poorly constructed buildings," said Kalafat, who has denounced using low-quality cement and building on "soft soils".—AFP

Heavy snow hits parts of southern California

HEAVY snow fell in southern California on Friday, as the first blizzard in a generation pounded the hills around Los Angeles, with heavy rains threatening flooding in other places.

Breathless television weather presenters more used to deliv-

ering a same-every-day forecast of warm sunshine found themselves knee-deep in the white stuff as the region grappled with its worst winter storm for decades.

Major roads were closed as ice and snow made them impass-

able, including sections of Interstate 5, the main north-south highway that connects Mexico, California, the Pacific Northwest and Canada.

Authorities said there was no estimate when it would be reopened.—AFP

Canada's First Quantum suspends Panama mine operations

CANADIAN mining giant First Quantum Minerals announced Thursday the suspension of its operations at a major mine in Panama, saying it was being blocked from exporting copper abroad.

The move to suspend processing operations at the Cobre Panama mine, putting some 8,000 employees and contractors out of work, is the latest escalation in a dispute with the Panamanian government over taxes and royalties.

In a statement, the Toronto-based company said the stoppage "is the result of the

Panama Maritime Authority's refusal to permit copper concentrate loading operations at the mine's port, Punta Rincon".

Cobre Panama is considered the largest private investment in the Central American nation's history, making up four per cent of its GDP and accounting for 75 per cent of export revenues.

Negotiations on a new contract at the huge open pit mine have been underway for more than a year but have deadlocked on the issue of how much the company would pay to Panama.—AFP



Cobre Panama mine, operated by Canada's First Quantum Minerals, is the largest open-pit copper mine in Central America. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

Bhutan to implement “Health in all policies” strategy to ensure public well-being

‘HEALTH in all policies’ is an approach where impacts on health are considered in all decision-making and across all sectors and policies, The Bhutan Live reported.

According to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention of Bhutan, the approach considers potential health outcomes when making policy decisions about transport, education, housing and other areas that affect communities.

“People should be aware that health needs to be considered when designing a system

or policy. This is because at the end of the day, who are we designing the policy for? We are designing the policy for people, we are designing policies so that the people are healthy. If people are healthy, people are economically productive so there are many incentives to consider health in all policies,” said Dechen Wangmo, Health Minister as reported by Bhutan Live. The minister said while some policies in the country have been developed considering the health and well-being of people, there is more to do.

With the country undergoing a significant transformation across all sectors, the ministry is optimistic that it will incorporate health and well-being more policies.

“With transformation, along with the transformation, mandates have been cleared.

We had a huge governance transformation whereby now responsibility and, mandates have all been clarified. Now I think it’s a fertile ground to work with agencies to embed in all policies,” he added. —ANI



As per the report by Bhutan Live, for a country to ensure the well-being of its people, it requires a whole-of-society approach. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ UNICEF**

Brazil suspends beef exports to China over mad cow case



Customers buy meat at a Chaoshifa supermarket branch in Haidian District of Beijing, capital of China, 14 June 2020. **PHOTO: REN CHAO /XINHUA**

BRAZIL, the world’s biggest beef producer, suspended exports to China Thursday after detecting a case of mad cow disease, though experts believe it is the less-dangerous “atypical” variant, said Agriculture Minister Carlos Favaro.

Exports to China, Brazil’s biggest beef customer, are automatically suspended under a deal between the two countries if regulators detect the disease, known as bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE).

Brazil’s agriculture min-

istry said in a statement the case had been identified in a nine-year-old male animal on a small farm in the northern state of Para.

Samples have been sent to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) in Canada for testing, it said.

BSE is linked to the fatal human condition Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease if contaminated meat is eaten.

The atypical variant sporadically occurs in older cattle, while the classic form is spread when farmers feed their herds with the meat and bone meal of infected animals.

The classic form poses more danger to humans.

Favaro said the farm in question raised grass-fed cattle, making it likely the case was atypical.—AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

WHO concerned about bird flu after girl’s father tests positive

THE World Health Organization expressed concern about bird flu on Friday after the father of a 11-year-old Cambodian girl who died from the disease also tested positive, raising fears of human-to-human transmission.

Since late 2021, one of the worst global avian influenza outbreaks on record has seen tens of millions of poultry culled, mass wild bird die-offs and a rising number of infections among mammals.

In Cambodia, the girl fell ill on 16 February with a fever, cough and sore throat, and died on Wednesday from the H5N1 bird flu virus, according to the health ministry.—AFP

Syria rebel rescuers urge help after child dies of quake injuries

WHITE Helmets rescuers in rebel-held northwest Syria called on international help Friday to save people with quake-related crush injuries after a boy they rescued died from the condition.

The group had spearheaded rescue efforts in rebel-held areas with virtually no outside help after a 7.8-magnitude quake that struck war-torn Syria and Türkiye on 6 February killed more than 46,000 people.—AFP

Deaths in US prisons up by 50% during 1st COVID-19 year: data

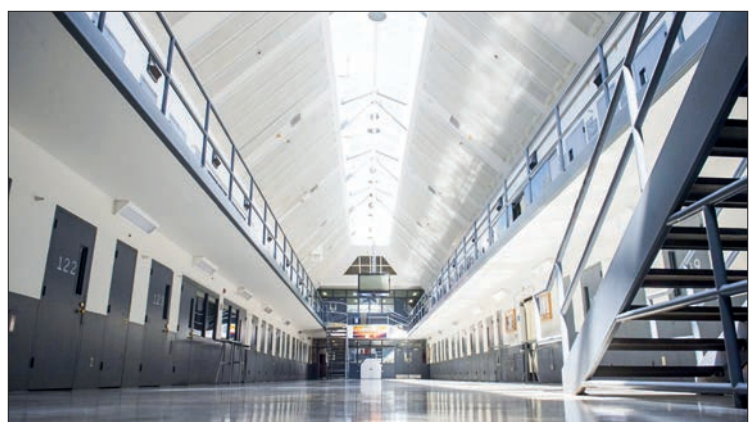
US state and federal prisons saw deaths surging nearly 50 per cent during the first year of the pandemic, and in six states they more than doubled, The New York Times reported Sunday, citing the first comprehensive data on prison fatalities in the era of COVID-19.

“The tremendous jump in

deaths in 2020 was more than twice the increase in the United States overall, and even exceeded estimates of the percentage increase at nursing homes, among the hardest-hit sectors nationwide,” said the US daily.

While there was ample evidence that prisons were COVID hot spots, the data underscored

how quickly the virus rampaged through crowded facilities, and how an aging inmate population, a correctional staffing shortage and ill-equipped medical personnel combined to make prisoners especially vulnerable during the worst public health crisis in a century, according to the report.—Xinhua



A prison cell block in El Reno Federal Correctional Institution in El Reno, Okla. **PHOTO: SAUL LOEB/AFP/FILE**

ECONOMY WORLD

Modi calls for World Bank reform at G20 finance meet



Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined others in calling for the World Bank to widen its remit beyond tackling poverty. **PHOTO: AFP**

INDIAN Prime Minister Narendra Modi added his voice Friday to calls for reform of global lenders such as the World Bank, as G20 finance ministers and central bank heads met.

The talks in Bengaluru focused on the continuing damaging effects of the Covid pandemic and the Ukraine war, as well as debt relief for poorer nations reeling from high food and fuel prices.

“Trust in international financial institutions has eroded. This is partly because they

have been slow to reform themselves,” Modi said by video link as the two-day gathering began.

“We need to collectively work to strengthen multilateral development banks for meeting global challenges like climate change and high debt levels,” he said.

The remarks echoed calls by others for the World Bank to boost lending and widen its remit beyond tackling poverty, although this has raised concerns that it could lose its top-notch credit rating.

US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said on Thursday in Bengaluru it was “critical that they integrate work on global challenges into their core mission to sustain progress on these priorities”.

World Bank chief David Malpass this month said he was stepping down in June, a year early.

He had drawn fire for refusing multiple times to say if he believed man-made emissions contributed to global warming.

On Thursday, Washington nominated Indian-American former Mastercard CEO Ajay Banga as his successor, drawing criticism over his corporate background and gender.

“We don’t need another World Bank president who will further corporate interests like fossil fuel and industrial agriculture,” Friends of the Earth said.

“Nothing in Banga’s resume inspires confidence that he will turn the World Bank away from a path of neocolonialism and predation by Global North corporations upon Global South countries,” said pressure group the Revolving Door Project.—AFP

Ukraine war turns French port of Rouen into grain powerhouse

DOZENS of miles inland from the English Channel, the Seine River port of Rouen is bustling with shipments of wheat, barley and other grains, a boom fuelled by the Russian chokehold on Ukraine’s agriculture exports.

Moscow’s invasion has forced countries worldwide to find other sources for essential cereals, propelling France to the world’s fourth-largest exporter of wheat – and making Rouen and its 18,000 workers a key player in the global market.

“We’ve had unusual destinations such as Pakistan, Iran, India and Saudi Arabia. And countries like Algeria, which had shifted towards the Black Sea, have come back,” said Ma-

nuel Gaborieau, head of cereals development at Haropa Port, which manages Rouen as well as the ports of Le Havre and Paris.

Rouen, the biggest cereals port in Western Europe, saw record loadings of five million tonnes in the first half of 2022, usually the low point of the year, after Ukraine was attacked last February, he said.

The port has a long history as a trading hub, but grains came to prominence only in the 1960s when producers built the first silos at the site.

It now houses six grain terminals capable of storing 900,000 tonnes, and up to 110,000 tonnes can be loaded onto ships in a day.—AFP



Silos at the port of Rouen in northwest France, where grain exports have surged since the Ukraine war. **PHOTO: AFP**

UN tourism body hails reopening of China for tourism



Chinese tourists interact with Maasai performers at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi, Kenya, 11 February 2023. A flight carrying 40 Chinese group tourists arrived at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi on Saturday. **PHOTO: HAN XU/XINHUA**

THE World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) on Thursday hailed the importance of the reopening of China for tourism, given the country’s huge impor-

tance to the global tourism market. “The reopening of China represents the ‘missing piece’ in the recovery of world tourism after the worst crisis in its history,” the

UNWTO said in a press release.

In 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic, China was the world’s largest outbound tourism market. Chinese tourists made 166 million international trips, and spent 270 billion US dollars, much of it in destinations in developing economies, according to UNWTO data. Almost three trillion US dollars in tourist revenues were lost globally between 2020 and 2022 due to the pandemic. Therefore, the organization said the lifting of Chinese travel restrictions will benefit the entire world.

Chinese citizens made six billion domestic trips in 2019, the UNWTO said, adding this shows that tourism is a key driver of employment and economic growth, including for rural communities in China.—Xinhua

Negative GDP revision adds to German recession fears

GERMANY’S economy contracted by more than first thought over the last three months of 2022, figures published Friday showed, upping concerns Europe’s industrial powerhouse could be headed for a recession.

Gross domestic product shrank by 0.4 per cent between October and December, the federal statistics agency Destatis said, revising down its initial estimate of 0.2 per cent.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine triggered a sharp rise in energy prices in Europe, as Moscow dwindled important gas supplies to the continent.

The subsequent increase

in inflation, climbing to a multi-decade high in Germany, dragged on the economy, said Destatis.

Rising prices slowed consumer spending and business investments, the statistics body said.

The negative revision to growth figures showed that a “recession is in the making”, said Carsten Brzeski, head of macro at the ING bank.

The German economy had shown “more resilience than feared”, with the help of government support and element winter weather that took the sting out of the energy crisis, Brzeski said.—AFP

Walloped by hurricane, Cuba's tobacco sector struggles to its feet

CUBAN farmer Maritza Carpio, 62, is optimistic. Five months after Hurricane Ian wreaked havoc on the island nation and its vital tobacco industry, she has started drying leaves for habano cigars again.

Carpio, who inherited a 5.6-hectare farm from her parents, said she will never forget 27 September 2022 when Cuba's west coast was battered for hours on end by Ian, with gusts of up to 208 kilometres (129 miles) per hour. The Category 3 hurricane was particularly rough on the Vuelta Abajo region – described as Cuba's tobacco triangle. Trees were uprooted, roofs blown off, fields flooded, and tobacco drying houses collapsed.

Carpio is rebuild-

ing hers, "stronger and more modern" this time, she told AFP while overseeing workers installing roof panels on the wooden structure.

Drying houses, with their roofs of palm leaves or tin, allow tobacco leaves to brown gradually without losing their flexibility due to a perfect mix of temperature, humidity and airflow. Planting is pointless if the leaves cannot be dried in optimal conditions directly after harvest. "Once I was sure the drying house would be ready, I decided to plant," Carpio said, showing off her plants now standing a metre (3.2 feet) tall.

Rolled tobacco is one of Cuba's main exports, along with fisheries products, nickel and vaccines.—AFP

Thailand, China to expand trade cooperation via Chinese entrepreneurs convention, mini FTAs

THAILAND has been stepping up concrete cooperation with China by upgrading Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between China and ASEAN, especially expanding mini FTAs with cities and provinces of China, Thailand's deputy prime minister Jurin Laksanawisit has said.

The deputy prime minister made the remarks at the Thai-Chinese Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday.

"The two countries enjoy practical cooperations under mechanisms including the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and mini FTAs between Thailand and provinces of China like Hainan and



A worker arranges durians at a durian processing factory in the Chanthaburi province, Thailand, 5 May 2022. PHOTO: WANG TENG/XINHUA

Gansu," said Jurin, also minister of commerce, at a press conference.

The Thai side has asked to expand the Thai-Hainan Mini FTA with success seen in negotiations over the sales of goods and joint train-

ing sessions for business operators from Thailand and Hainan, he noted.

This resulted in the bilateral trade value rising by 91.9 per cent in 2022 to 18.2 billion baht (about 527 million US dollars), he said.

"We will expand trades with more places (in China) including Shenzhen and Yunnan province through such mini FTAs in the near future."

The press conference also announced the World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention (WCEC) will kick off in Bangkok on 24 June.

"The Thai-Chinese Chamber of Commerce has been contributing significantly to promoting economic cooperations and people-to-people exchanges between Thailand and China. I believe the WCEC this year will be an impressive event with fruitful results," said Jurin.—Xinhua

Ericsson to cut 8,500 jobs worldwide

TELECOM equipment maker Ericsson said Friday it would slash 8,500 jobs worldwide, part of a cost-cutting programme as financial headwinds push operators to rein in spending.

Ericsson, which had a total of 105,000 employees at the end of 2022, last month posted disappoint-

ing full-year 2022 earnings, as operators slow spending on rolling out the latest 5G networks due to the global economic slowdown and rising inflation.

The Swedish company said most of the layoffs would be implemented in the first half of 2023 and the rest in 2024, as it accelerated its \$860 million

cost saving plan announced late last year. "We see potential to simplify and become more efficient across the company, especially in structural costs. But we are also working on our service delivery, supply, real estate and IT," spokeswoman Jenny Hedelin told AFP.

"It will, however, unfortunately also result in a

need to address headcount. We believe a total of 8,500 positions will be affected", she said. Ericsson said 1,400 of the job cuts were in Sweden, which had already been announced earlier this week.

For 2022, the group posted a 17 per cent drop in net profit to 19.1 billion kronor (\$1.8 billion).—AFP



The 23rd edition of The Habano Festival opens in Havana next week after a two-year hiatus due to the Covid-19 pandemic. PHOTO: AFP

The Global New Light of Myanmar
www.gnlm.com.mm

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V KITI BHUM VOY.NO. (1000W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V KITI BHUM VOY.NO. (1000W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-2-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.
Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V FILOTIMO VOY.NO. (308S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V FILOTIMO VOY.NO. (308S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-2-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP/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: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:
M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Boat service linking S Korea's Busan and Japan's Tsushima resumes

A high-speed boat service linking South Korea's port city of Busan and Tsushima, the Japanese island that lies closest to the Korean Peninsula, resumed Saturday after a three-year lull due to the coronavirus.

The restart of the route between South Korea's second-largest city and Hitakatsu port in Tsushima, Nagasaki Prefecture, comes amid growing hopes in both countries for increased travel to Japan's "border island" just under 50 kilometres from Busan.

Two South Korean operators serve the route, mostly on weekends for the time being, with the

number of passengers limited to 100 per sailing. Seats on passenger ships departing Busan are fully booked until the end of next month.

"I used to go fishing at least five times a month before the pandemic," said a 63-year-old from Daejeon in the central part of South Korea who boarded a boat from Busan on Saturday morning. "I'm excited about being back for the first time in a long while." A regular boat service between the two ports began in 1999. With jetfoils entering into use in 2011, linking them by a roughly 70-minute ride, Tsushima's popularity soared.—Kyodo



A high-speed boat carrying passengers from Busan, South Korea, is pictured after its arrival at Hitakatsu Port in Tsushima, Nagasaki Prefecture, on 25 February 2023. PHOTO: KYODO

EU states call for stronger borders, migrant return deals

FIFTEEN EU states on the migration front line on Friday called for stronger borders and agreements to be struck with third-party countries to accept migrants.

"It is worthwhile exploring the possibility of, and where relevant legally enabling, safe third-country arrangements with relevant countries along the EU's external borders and beyond," they said after a two-day conference in Athens on border management.

The EU is currently exploring ways for its border agency, Frontex, to operate in third-party states to dissuade migration.—AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Russia commends China paper on Ukraine crisis settlement



Patriotic posters such as this, saying "The motherland that we defend", attempt to stir up patriotic fervour for the war. PHOTO: OLGA MALTSEVA / AFP

THE Russian Foreign Ministry on Friday praised a paper released by China stating its position on the political settlement of

the Ukraine crisis.

In the document issued earlier in the day, China calls for international efforts to create

conditions for the resumption of peace talks, saying that dialogue and negotiation are the only viable solution to the Ukraine crisis.

"We highly value the aspiration of our Chinese friends to contribute to a settlement of the conflict in Ukraine through peaceful means," the ministry's spokesperson Maria Zakharova said in a statement. "We share the views of China. We are committed to complying with the principles of the UN Charter and the provisions of international law, including humanitarian law and indivisibility of security," she said. "As for the Ukraine crisis, Russia is open to achieving the goals of the special military operation via political and diplomatic means," Zakharova said.—Xinhua

Japan's LNG stockpile surges in Ukraine war-induced energy crisis

JAPAN'S inventories of liquefied natural gas has surged since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, government data showed, in an effort to address concerns over potential disruptions of the biggest portion of fuel for power generation in the country.

LNG inventories in Japan stood at 5.9 million tonnes as of the end of August, up 17.6 per cent from a year earlier and the largest since comparable data became available in 2008, according to the most recent data from the Japan Organization for Metals and Energy

Security, a government agency.

Nine major Japanese utilities ramped up their combined LNG stockpiles 56 per cent from a year earlier to 2.63 million tons as of 19 February. The volume is above their average stockpiles in the previous five years, according to data from the Natural Resources and Energy Agency. Concerns over LNG supplies increased after Russia reduced supplies to the European Union, prompting LNG importing countries to scramble to look for other suppliers and intensifying global competition.—Kyodo



LNG inventories in Japan stood at 5.9 million tonnes as of the end of August, up 17.6 per cent from a year earlier and the largest since comparable data became available in 2008. PHOTO: KYODO/FILE

Thousands rally in Georgia for Ukraine, EU

THOUSANDS rallied in Georgia on Friday in solidarity with Ukraine on the first anniversary of Russia's invasion of the fellow ex-Soviet nation and in support of Tbilisi's European Union membership. Some 30,000 demonstrators gathered outside parliament

waving Georgian, Ukrainian and EU flags, according to an estimate by an AFP reporter.

The rally was organised by several opposition parties and Georgia-based Ukrainian activists. Crowds chanted "Glory to Ukraine!" after Georgian and

Ukrainian anthems were performed at the demonstration.

"We, citizens of Georgia, political parties, civil society and Ukrainians living here unite today in solidarity with the heroic Ukrainian people," the organizers said in a statement.—AFP

Philippine protesters celebrate 'People Power' ousting of Marcos Sr

PHILIPPINE protesters held a noisy rally Saturday for the 37th anniversary of the "People Power" revolution, which ousted President Ferdinand Marcos Jr's dictator father and sent the family into exile.

It was the first commemoration of the uprising since Marcos Jr took office in June 2022. He has praised his father's 20-year regime, which critics describe as a dark period of human rights abuses and corruption that left the country impoverished.

As leftist rock music blared over a loudspeaker, hundreds of protesters, including survivors of the elder Marcos's martial law crackdown that led to the killing, torture and imprisonment

of thousands of political foes and critics, marched on the "People Power" monument in Manila in memory of the brutal era.

Some chanted "Marcos, Duterte all the same, fascist dictators", in reference to former president Rodrigo Duterte and his successor Marcos Jr, as about 200 police with shields stood by.

Veteran rights activist Sister Mary John Mananzan urged protesters to "remain vigilant" following the return of the Marcoses to power. Nearly four decades on from the toppling of Marcos Sr, Julio Montinola, 53, told AFP the challenge was to keep the "message and spirit" of the uprising alive.—AFP



Protesters mark the anniversary of the 1986 'People Power' revolution that ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos Sr. PHOTO: AFP

Italy impounds MSF charity rescue ship

ITALIAN authorities have detained a migrant rescue vessel run by Doctors Without Borders (MSF) for allegedly breaking new government rules on life-saving missions in the Mediterranean, the charity said Friday.

The Geo Barents ship was impounded late Thursday for 20 days and will be fined between 2,000 euros (\$2,100) and 10,000 euros (\$10,590), MSF spokesman Maurizio Debanne said.

The charity said it had been accused of failing to share information, including voyage data recorder (VDR) information on the position and movement of the ship, something it says it has never before been asked to share.

Debanne linked the de-

tention of the ship, which is in Sicily, to a new decree introduced by Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's government.

Meloni, the leader of the far-right Brothers of Italy party, took office in October after promising to curb the number of migrants landing in Italy.

The new decree, which was converted into full law by parliament on Thursday, obliges charity ships to only perform one rescue at a time.

Critics say it increases the risk of deaths in the Central Mediterranean, which is the most perilous crossing in the world.

"It's unacceptable to be punished for saving lives," MSF said, adding that it was considering a possible legal challenge.—AFP



The Geo Barents rescue ship brought 48 rescued migrants to shore in Italy on 17 February. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Nigerians vote for new president in closely fought election

NIGERIANS vote on Saturday for a successor to President Muhammadu Buhari in a tightly fought race dominated by three political veterans.

Nearly 90 million people are eligible to vote in the poll, which is unfolding as Africa's most populous democracy grapples with a security crisis, a sluggish economy and widening poverty.

For the first time in Nigeria's modern history, a third candidate has emerged to challenge the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and main opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

With Buhari stepping down after two terms in office, the APC's Bola Tinubu, 70, a former Lagos governor and political kingmaker, says "It's my turn" for the presidency.

He faces a familiar rival — PDP candidate and former vice-president Atiku Abubakar, 76, who is on his sixth bid for the top job.

But the emergence of a sur-

prise third candidate appealing to young voters, Labour Party's Peter Obi, 61, has thrown the race open for the first time since the end of military rule in 1999.

—AFP



For the first time in Nigeria's modern history, a third candidate has emerged to challenge the ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) and main opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). PHOTO: AFP

'French Oscars' reward femicide film but criticized for lack of women

THE lack of women nominees was a talking point on Friday at the Cesar Awards, France's answer to the Oscars, despite the top prize going to a film focusing on femicide.

Best Film went to "The Night of the 12th", a thriller based on the true story of a young woman's murder.

There was a spot of Hollywood glitz thanks to a surprise cameo by Brad Pitt, presenting David Fincher (who directed him in "Fight Club" and "Seven") with a lifetime achievement award.

But there was a lot of focus on the lack of female nominees, with no women up for best di-

rector — indeed, none have won the award since 2000 (Tonie Marshall for "Venus Beauty Institute").

The only woman filmmaker whose movie was in the running for best film was Valeria Bruni Tedeschi, sister of France's former first lady and singer Carla Bruni.—AFP

Philippine protesters celebrate 'People Power' ousting of Marcos Sr

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SPORT

Man Utd, Newcastle bid to end trophy droughts in League Cup final

MANCHESTER United will aim to end their six-year trophy drought when Erik ten Hag's resurgent side face Newcastle in Sunday's League Cup final, while the Magpies' Saudi-funded revolution could produce the club's first major prize since 1969. As underachieving members of English football's aristocracy in recent years, United hope the showpiece at Wembley can serve as a long-awaited rebirth.

However, revelling in their role as nouveau riche irritants to the Premier League's established powers, Newcastle believe the final can serve as concrete proof they are now a force to be reckoned with. United haven't won a major trophy since the 2017 Europa League, a prize they claimed just weeks after beating Southampton in their most recent League Cup final appearance. As if their longest trophy drought for 40 years wasn't bad enough, United also suffered the indignity of watching bitter rivals Manchester City surpass them as England's preeminent football force. United, who last won the title in 2013, finished a dismal sixth in the Premier League last term.—AFP



Manchester United and Newcastle clash in the League Cup final on Sunday. PHOTO: AFP

Defending champ Alcaraz reaches Rio Open semifinals

WORLD number two Carlos Alcaraz clawed back a break in both sets and dominated the tie-breaker to beat Dusan Lajovic 6-4, 7-6 (7/0) on Friday in the ATP Rio Open quarterfinals.

The 19-year-old Spaniard notched his third win in three matches against 32-year-old Lajovic, including a quarterfinal win over the 80th-ranked Serbian in the quarterfinals at

the Argentina Open last week. Alcaraz went on to win that title to cement his return from a four-month injury layoff that saw him miss the Australian Open. — 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.

ISPE FC beat Ayeyawady United 2-0 in MNL Week 2

ISPE FC made a win over Ayeyawady 2-0 in the Myanmar National League Week 2 match played at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon yesterday.

It is a meeting between two teams that have lost a win in the opening game. Ayeyawady United make some squad changes when faced with Dagon Star FC. Both teams were attacking from the start of the match and had chances to score. ISPE FC found an icebreaker heading goal which was scored by Win Pyae Maung. In the second half, ISPE FC tried to score another goal, while the Ay-

eyawady team changed players and played with high intensity to score an equalizing goal. At 64 minutes, ISPE FC got a penalty and it was beautifully scored by striker Thurein Tun. ISPE FC got three marks after two matches and Ayeyawady United got one mark after two matches. As the second day of Match 2, Rakhine FC and Dagon Star FC will play at Thuwunna Stadium today. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZW

An Ayeyawady United striker (jersey No 7) tries to net a goal in yesterday match. PHOTO: MNL

