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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 meets rice export target for 2022-2023FY



Export rice bags are pictured being loaded onto the merchant vessel at Yangon Port.

MYANMAR achieved its rice export target of two million tonnes for the current 2022-2023 financial year, Myanmar Rice Federation's data showed.

The country delivered more than two million metric tons of rice and broken rice to foreign trade partners by sea and border channels in the past

11 months (April-February) of the current FY. The federation aimed to export 150,000 tonnes of rice each in February and March respectively. The vol-

ume of rice exported last month totalled 191,404 MT, surpassing its expectation.

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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 Cable car.

PYIN OO LWIN(Flower City)

Pwe Gauk

(BE.FALLS)

Waterfalls Resort



Objectives of 78th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day

- To serve primary duties of Tatmadaw for successfully safeguarding Our Three Main National Causes, and protecting the State Constitution and shielding the genuine disciplined multiparty democratic system
- To emphasize agreements in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) as much as possible for the restoration of the durable and perpetual peace across the nation as ceasing of armed conflicts is an actual requirement for realizing the multiparty democratic system
- To safeguard the national interest of the State, lives and property of people, and to put a strenuous effort on respective corners in times of natural disasters.
- To provide the necessary assistance by Tatmadaw for holding a free and fair multiparty democratic general election upon completion of undertakings in accord with the provisions of the state of emergency for the emergence of the Union based on democracy and federalism.

Long white choy sum from PyinOoLwin, plains fetch good prices

THE arrival of long white choy sum from PyinOoLwin and plains to the Thirimarlar wholesale centre in Aungmyaythazan District of Mandalay Region fetch good prices, according to these centres.

A total of five or six choy sum trucks enter the Thirimarlar wholesale centre daily. The prices become stronger than in previous months. The price of a 30-viss bag was between only K12,000 and K15,000 per bag last month and now it is between K15,000 and K22,000, said U Aung Moe Naing, owner of Aung Wholesale Centre.

"Currently, the long white choy sum from mainland and PyinOoLwin enter the market. The prices are drastically on the rise due to the decreasing

numbers of farmers, materials and transportation difficulties. Currently, five or six trucks enter this market. They are produced in PyinOoLwin and the plains and the prices are increasing as the demand is high. The production rate from hilly regions is low. Therefore, the farmers get proper prices," he added.

In addition to the long white choy sum, other raw vegetables such as potato, cucumber, tomato, cabbage, chilli, snow pea, chayote, eggplant, kidney bean and cauliflower also fetch good prices in the market. Currently, various commodities trucks enter the market as usual daily.

— Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)/KTZH



Growers prepare bags of choy sum for the delivery to markets. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG

Myanmar meets rice export target for 2022-2023FY

FROM PAGE-1

Myanmar has been endeavouring to have 10 per cent growth in the rice export sector year over year, MRF stated.

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 mil-

lion from 163,189 tonnes in October, \$106 million from 264,038 tonnes in November, \$90 million from 228,445 tonnes in December, \$107 million from 268,835 tonnes in January 2023 and \$76 million in February, totalling \$783 million from 2,099,693 tonnes in the past 11 months till February 2023.

Myanmar shipped rice and broken rice to regional countries, countries in Africa and European Union member countries through maritime trade. It

is also exported to neighbouring countries, China and Thailand through cross-border posts.

China is still the main buyer of Myanmar's rice in the past 11 months, purchasing over 365,000 tonnes of rice and over 410,000 tonnes of broken rice.

Myanmar exported rice to nearly 30 foreign markets in the past months, mostly to China (365,958 MT), followed by Bangladesh, the Philippines and other European countries such as Italy, Spain, Poland,

Belgium, the Netherlands and France.

Additionally, Myanmar primarily conveyed 411,329 MT of broken rice to China and 276,438 MT to Belgium. It is also sent to the Netherlands, Spain, the UK, Poland, Lithuania and other countries.

The export price of Myanmar's rice was relatively lower than the rates of neighbouring Thailand and Viet Nam, according to the MRF.

Myanmar bagged US\$700

million from 2 million tonnes of rice exports to foreign countries in the past 2020-2021 financial year.

Next, the rice prices stood at over K75,000-K100,000 per bag for high-grade Pawsan rice varieties and K50,000-K62,000 per bag for low-grade rice varieties in the domestic market. Meanwhile, the prices of broken rice moved in the range between K41,000 and K46,000 per bag depending on different qualities. — KK

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.

Ten new cases of COVID-19 reported on 4 March, total figure registers 633,945

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases registered **633,945** after **ten** new cases were reported on 4 March 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,409**, including **seven** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,490** on 4-3-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. — GNLM

Private sector and individual role – the main driving force for the State in the market economic system

ENCOURAGING MSMEs means encouraging the business centred on the private sector. The country is practising market economy and multiparty democracy. The private sector and individual role are the main driving force for the State in the market economic system.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of the MSME Development Central Committee Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting 1/2022 of the central committee on 23 September 2022)

SAC member Daw Dwe Bu, Union Minister Jeng Phang Naw Taung meets religious leaders, ethnic literature and cultural organizations in Myitkyina

STATE Administration Council Member Daw Dwe Bu accompanied by Union Minister for Ethnic Affairs Jeng Phang Naw Taung, the Kachin State chief minister and officials met religious leaders from all branches of Christianity in Myitkyina Township of Kachin State yesterday.

During the meeting, SAC Member Daw Dwe Bu urged the leaders to pray for peace and tranquillity of the country and prosperity and work together for the development of the country.

Then, the SAC member and party provided cash to various churches.

They also paid homage to Myitkyina Township Sangha Nayaka Committee Chairman Sayadaw and monks at Antawshin Monastery in Myitkyina and donated rice, cooking oil, offertories and cash to Sayadaw and paid homage to Antawshin



The meeting between the SAC member, the Union minister and religious leaders and ethnic literature and cultural organizations is in progress yesterday.

Pagoda.

They then met with officials of 14 ethnic literature and culture

organizations at Manaw house in the Manaw compound of Myitkyina.

During the meeting, the SAC member highlighted the efforts of SAC for the ethnic

people and the need to cooperate in literature and cultural affairs and work together with the government for State peace and tranquillity.

Officials then provided K300,000 to each of the 14 ethnic literature and cultural organizations after the remarks of Union Minister Jeng Phang Naw Taung and the Kachin State chief minister.

At noon, the SAC member attended the public meeting held at Myitkyina City Hall and underscored the implementation works of SAC as per the five-point roadmap and 12 objectives for the State's stability and tranquillity, security and socioeconomic development of the public.

The meeting came to an end after a discussion with residents and a remark from Union Minister Jeng Phang Naw Taung. — MNA/KTZH

Efforts made to increase export, agricultural sector development

A meeting to reduce crop losses and increase exportation in the agricultural sector was held yesterday morning at the Department of Agriculture's Crop Protection Division in Insein Township, Yangon Region.

Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Dr Aung Gyi said that the comprehensive crop protection system should be implemented based on the international crop protection standards; the agricultural products should be inspected and monitored to ensure exportation and importation; export products should comply with the standards of agreements with relevant countries; the pesticide import, package and distribution should be controlled under existing laws,

rules and regulations, and officials should hold responsible and accountable in the issuance of crop pest-free certificates.

In the afternoon, the deputy minister met officials from Myanmar Fisheries Federation, Myanmar Livestock Federation, affiliated associations and private businesspersons. They discussed matters in connexion with further cooperation between the government, the private sector and entrepreneurs in the development of the meat and fish sector, the enhancement of technology and capital, the production of import-substitution finished goods, the development of domestic and international markets, the breeding and production of animals free from diseases and



Deputy Minister Dr Aung Gyi inspects the fishery processing factory.

chemical residues and full with nutrition meeting international standards, emergency meas-

ures in case of outbreak of the disease in the aquatic and meat sector, and the production of

export items to meet the standards set by relevant countries. — MNA/KZL

Ceremony to hoist diamond bud and golden umbrella at Bopanta Hill Mahavamsa Bodh Gaya held in Taunggyi



SAC Member U Khun San Lwin and Shan State Chief Minister U Aung Zaw Aye attend the ceremony in Taunggyi yesterday.

THE consecration ceremony and mounting of the diamond bud and golden umbrella at the top of the Bopanta Hill Mahavamsa Bodh Gaya in Pa-O Self-Administered Zone in special region (6) of Taunggyi Township of Shan State (South) yesterday.

After the ceremonial procedures, the participants including Pa-O national leader U Aung Khan Htee took nine precepts from State Ovadacariya Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Pannasiri of Mula Mingun Monastery in Taunggyi Township.

Then, the SAC Member U Khun San Lwin and Shan State Chief Minister U Aung Zaw Aye presented the diamond bud to Sayadaws and the Shan State

chief justice, state ministers, the state advocate-general, the secretary of the state cabinet, the chairman of the Pa-O Self-Administered Zone and donors presented the golden umbrella and other materials to other Sayadaws.

Afterwards, they listened to the sermons delivered by Presiding Sayadaw of the Mula Mingun Monastery and shared merits.

The SAC member, the Shan State chief minister and officials conveyed the diamond bud and golden umbrella going round the Mahavamsa Bodh Gaya pagoda clockwise for one time and hoisted the diamond bud and golden umbrella to the pagoda. — Maung Maung Than (Taunggyi)/KTZH

2611th Buddha Pujaniya Tabaung Festival held in Shwedagon



Devotees are seen at the festival yesterday in Shwedagon Pagoda.

THE 2611th Buddha Pujaniya Tabaung Festival and alms donation ceremony were held yesterday at 4 pm in the precinct of Shwedagon Pagoda.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein and wife, Yangon Command Commander Maj-Gen Nyunt Win Swe and wife, regional cabinet members and their wives, members of the board of trustees, departmental personnel, religious associations and well-wishers offered rice alms on 117 members of Sangha and 27 nuns, totalling 144. — Zaw Min Latt (MNA)/KZW

Illegal timbers, jade, consumer goods, foodstuffs, electronics, lubricants and vehicles confiscated

THE on-duty team confiscated five kinds of things including eight suspected jade bracelets worth K10.5 million without official documents from luggage at the Yangon International Airport on 1 March, 225 cartons of Lactasoy (300 millimetres) and 100 cartons of Wai Wai instant vermicelli bag worth K8.6 million without official documents from three vehicles (estimated value of K57 million) which stopped on Yangon-Myawady Pyidaungsu highway road and 150 cartons of Lactasoy and 200 cartons of Lipvitan-D worth K4.35 million from a vehicle (estimated value of K30 million) at the Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint in Mon State on 2 March. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On 2 March, the anti-unregistered vehicle teams captured an unregistered Toyota

Succeed auto (approximately K3.5 million) on Thudama road in North Oakkalapa township, an unregistered Toyota Crown auto (approximately K4 million) in Hlaingthaya township and an unregistered Honda Airwave auto (approximately K4 million) in Thanlyin township. The action was taken under the Law.

Officials nabbed a total of 2000 kilogrammes of Mask worth K3,954,380 that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from a Nissan-Diesel auto (approximately K40 million) heading to Mandalay from Chinshwehaw at the 16th-Mile Kyaukchaw checkpoint. The action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

The Monghsat District Anti-Illicit Trade Task Force made a surprise check and seized duty-free batteries and

lubricants worth K7 million that were stacked about two miles from Sikekhauk checkpoint between Sikekhauk village and Kaungmuton village. The action was taken under Customs procedures.

On 3 March, an unregistered Canda 125 motorbike worth K100,000 was captured in Khamti township and action was taken under the Export and Import Law.

A total of 22.7982 tonnes of illegal teaks and hardwoods worth K14,206,060 in Pyu and Minhla township and action was taken under the Forest Law.

Therefore, 18 arrests (estimated value of K187,210,440) were made on three consecutive days from 1 March to 3 March, according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/MKKS

First-ever EV Charging Station inaugurated in Nay Pyi Taw

THE opening ceremony of Myanmar's very first EV Charging Station was held at Thabayaygon market in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

It was attended by the Union ministers, the chairman of Nay Pyi Taw Council, the deputy ministers, the deputy mayor of Nay Pyi Taw, the permanent secretaries and officials.

Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman U Tin Oo Lwin remarked and Chairman U Nang Phyo Kyaw of NPK Motor Co Ltd explained the establishment of the MG EV Charging Station (NPT).

Then, Union Commerce Minister U Aung Naing Oo, Union Construction Minister U Myo Thant and Nay Pyi Taw Council Chairman U Tin Oo Lwin cut the ceremonial rib-

bon to inaugurate the charging station and Union Information Minister U Maung Maung Ohn pressed the electric button to launch the signboard of the Electric Vehicle Charging Station.

Then, the attendees observed the MG EV Charging Station (NPT) and conducted the test driving of electric vehicles.

The National-level Leading Committee on Development of Electric Vehicles and Related Businesses launched pilot projects of establishing charging stations in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay and along the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway under the guidance of the SAC Chairman Prime Minister.

NPK Motor Co Ltd opened



Union ministers and officials are pictured at the inauguration event of the EV Charging Station in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

the first charging station in the EV taxis, and plans are charging stations across the nation. —MNA/KTZH

Yangon Region Central Thingyan Pandal, region-level departmental and entertainment pandals to be constructed at People's Square

THE Yangon Region Central Thingyan Pandal, region-level departmental and entertainment pandals will be set up at People's Square, said U Bo Htay, chairman of Yangon City Development Committee during the meeting on holding of Myanmar Traditional Water Festival on 4 March.

"Yangon Region Central Thingyan Pandal, region-level departmental and entertainment pandals will be constructed at People's Square this year to ensure the safety of the public and the Yangon Mayor's Maha Thingyan Pandal will be in front of the City Hall to express the tradition of Thingyan festival," he added.

He continued that the festival will include district-level



pandals, entertainment of dance troupes and award-giving ceremonies. Therefore, the working committee or sub-committee should cooperate to be able to hold the Thingyan festival successfully.

The film, music and theatrical artistes will perform at Yangon Mayor's Maha Thingyan Pandal. The dance competition of university-level, basic-education-level, primary-level, departmental-level and freelance dance troupes in addition to ethnic traditional dance will be conducted at the same Thingyan pandal. —TWA/KTZH

The opening ceremony of the 2022 Yangon Maha Thingyan Festival.



Electric vehicles arrive in Yangon and Muse border

A total of 19 BYD-brand electric vehicles imported by Earth Renewable Energy Co Ltd arrived at Htitan port in Yangon on 3 March and were allowed to claim them under Customs procedures.

Asia Pacific Automaker Corporation Co Ltd imported 30 Dongfeng electric vehicles via the Muse 105-Mile Trade Zone in Shan State (North) and claimed them under Customs procedures.

The importation of battery electric vehicles (EVs) is allowed with an exemption of Customs tariffs for the development of the domestic electric vehicle sector. — MNA/KZW

Officials are seen checking the new arrival of electric vehicles.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Bean growers reap handsome profit of K600,000 per acre this year

THE growers of black gram and green gram are making a great profit of K600,000 per acre early this year, said bean growers.

Before the cultivation, land treatment equipment costs K40,000 for two times. The price of the seed is estimated at K70,000-100,000 per basket. The growers spend around K200,000 for land nutrients and K140,000 for 35 wage workers per acre. The cost for the harvester is K25,000 per acre. The yield is about 20 baskets per acre.

The cultivation cost is approximately K600,000 per acre of black gram and green gram. In early March 2023, the prices of both black gram and green gram were around K600,000 per basket. We can reap a profit of K600,000 per acre after deducting cultivation and production cost, said a grower from the Kyaunggon area.

The pigeon pea can be grown under the mixed-cropping system. They are resistant to extreme weather and their

straws can be used as fuel. Additionally, the price of pigeon peas is higher than that of black gram. Those growers also receive a handsome profit like other pulses, Soe Win, a grower of pigeon peas from Kynthia village in Meiktila Township told the Global New Light of Myanmar.

Mixed cropping involving pigeon peas and sesame crops saves nearly half of the agricultural input costs. So, the cultivation cost of pigeon peas is cheaper than that of black gram. About 10-15 baskets are produced per acre with rainfed agriculture.

On 4 March 2023, the prices stood at K1,875,000 per tonne of black gram, K2,174,000 per tonne of pigeon pea (red gram) and K2,330-2,420 per viss of green gram and K3,915 per tonne of green gram (Shwe Wah variety) from the Kayan area in the Yangon market.

Increasing pulses prices raised the income of the growers last year. — TWA/EM



An aerial view of the forest fire in Mount Zweekabin on 1 March.

Forest fire broke out in Mount Zweekabin

A forest fire broke out starting night on 1 March in Mount Zweekabin in Hpa-an township of Kayin State.

Though the fire lasted for a day and a half, it could not be extinguished due to the surrounding area at the top

of the mountain. A member of the Myanmar Social Rescue told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM) that the fire was caused by dried grass due to the heat, burning at the same time in the east and north of the mountain up to

the space under the cable glass square.

The forest fire started on 1 March night and was extinguished on 3 March. In 2020, a forest fire has been occurred for about a week in Mount Zweekabin. — TWA/MKKS

Daily newspapers available online

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

Five dead, 30 hurt in car crash on Yangon-Mandalay Expressway



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FIVE people, including former Myanmar Lethwei champion Shwe Duwun, were killed and 30 injured in a car accident at 167-Milepost on the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway.

The express passenger bus, which is running Yangon-Taunggyi, crashed at about 5:30 am on 4 March killing five

on the spot with 30 being injured. The hurt passengers were taken to Swar hospital.

Former Myanmar Lethwei champion Shwe Duwun was included among the five dead, according to social welfare organizations. Close friends and the Myanmar Lethwei community posted condolence mes-



An overturned express bus is seen in the crash site (left). Former Myanmar Lethwei champion Shwe Duwun died in the accident (top).

sages on social media.

Ten seriously injured persons, including a month-old baby, were taken to a 1,000-bed General Hospital, Nay Pyi Taw.

The car accident is under investigation by the Thagaya expressway police force. — TWA/MKKS

Japan offers 735 job demand letters to Myanmar

THE Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo, Japan issued a notification that it received 234 job offers to recruit 735 Myanmar workers for companies in Japan. The Myanmar Embassy in Tokyo sent the information about these demand letters to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after verification between 16 and 28 February.

A total of 353 men and 382 women will be recruited through the letters. The job demand letters were sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and verified in a

timely manner.

The verification process was performed by checking whether the labour supervision company in Japan and the recruitment factories and or companies are officially established in Japan, and by sending back the verification and findings on the documentary evidence and opinions to the MoFA via the MoFA.

Myanmar workers from licensed employment agencies in Myanmar will be despatched to Japan through the received demand letters. — TWA/CT



Myanmar workers are seen working in a workplace in Japan.

LOCAL BUSINESS

Bell pepper price doubles this year from last year

THE prices of bell peppers in the first quarter of 2023 increased two times higher than those from the corresponding period last year.

Those traders who keep the stocks in hand might reap low profits if they resell them this year; Ko Han, who runs a chilli pepper business on Seinpan Street told the Global New Light of Myanmar. The prices increased to K14,500-K16,500 per viss on 4 March from K7,000-K8,000 per viss on 4 April 2022.

On 17 November 2022, the price of bell pepper processed in the cold storage facility hit a record high of K31,000 per viss

When the chilli pepper price peaked at K20,000-K30,000 per viss in mid-2022, the traders reaped a great profit. On 24 December 2022, the price plunged to K13,000 per viss from K29,000 recorded in November 2022.

The price went up to K14,500-K16,500 per viss on 4 March. It is the time that the traders store them. So, there is a small chance for the price to go down. In early 2022, the chilli pepper prices were around K5,000 per viss. This year, the price touched a high of K10,000-K15,000 per viss. — TWA/EM



The picture shows chilli peppers being harvested in Mahlaing Township, Mandalay Region.

Green gram price soars to K1.8 mln per tonne on foreign demand



At the end of February, the green gram fetched K1,742,000 per tonne. The price climbed to K1,797,000 per tonne on 4 March 2023. The price showed an increase of K50,000 per tonne within days. **PHOTO: SUPPLIED**

THE price of green gram surged to approximately K1.8 million per tonne in the Mandalay market on the back of strong demand by foreign trade partners.

At the end of February, the green gram fetched K1,742,000 per tonne. The price climbed to K1,797,000 per tonne on 4 March 2023. The price showed an increase of K50,000 per tonne within days.

The newly harvested green gram started to enter the market at the end of 2022. The prices of green gram vary depending on qualities, the Mandalay commodity depot stated.

Myanmar has been preparing to export green gram to European Union countries in 2023, according to the Ministry

of Commerce.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation and the Ministry of Commerce agreed to export the green grams for sprouts in 2015.

The steering committee has been holding a series of meetings to call for bids, conduct awareness courses for the farmers and inspect farm-level processing regarding exports of the green grams for bean sprouts.

The Agriculture Department takes in-charge of farmer and collector inspection and testing, while the Consumers Affairs Department carries out processor inspection and training. Myanmar Inspection and Testing Service (MITS), the authorized organization of the State, was asked to mon-

itor processor level to meet the criteria, food safety and quality standard set by the EU. Those inspectors from MITS are trained by the experts of the Plant Protection Division, the Agriculture Department and the German Development Agency GIZ.

MITS conducted inspections annually, with nine in 2018, 10 in 2019, six each in 2020 and 2021 and five in 2022 respectively.

For Myanmar's bean and pulse exports to the EU, handling and hygiene practices are crucial for bean export to the EU.

The inspection undergoes the following stages; purchasing green grams, warehousing, processing and refining green grams, cargo handling for exports, quality control and health and hygiene of the workers.

The MITS undertakes inspections once at a factory that meets the criteria and standards. If the MITS finds the requirements during inspection, they set a timeframe for the factory manager to fix them. Then, they went on a second inspection tour. They present certificates for those factories that pass the test.

The MITS is ready to implement a processor-level test for those exporting companies to the EU this year. — NN/EM

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 4 March 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K2,145
Octane 95	K2,215
Diesel	K2,245
Premium Diesel	K2,325

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,186,600 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,845,000 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	K2,860 to K2,875

The above prices may change from time to time.

The Global New Light of Myanmar

www.gnlm.com.mm

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OPINION

ARTICLE BOOKRACK

Restore peace and stability first to develop the State economy

MYANMAR faced an economic crisis in 2021 because of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic which hampered trade and domestic manufacturing processes. Meanwhile, unscrupulous persons attempted to attack and instigate the banking systems to collapse to deteriorate the State economy. Hence, the government poured out strenuous efforts to the prevention of banking system from collapsing and impacting on State economy. For the time being, the government encourages domestic manufacturing functions to improve the domestic economy. In consequence, the people did not severely face shortages of foods but unavoidably experienced the disadvantages of high prices of commodities similar to other countries.

At that time, most global countries encountered consequences of severe infection by the Covid-19 pandemic across the world, political tension, shortages of commodities and skyrocketing prices of fuel. So also, Myanmar faced bad impacts of these consequences unavoidably.

Everybody needs to assess their capabilities and endeavours how they can do, what they can do and how to do anything. Not only the governing bodies but also the people are to seek the best ways and means to be applied for improvement of the socioeconomic life of the people as well as the State economy. All the people have to understand the important role of peace and stability and they need to consider that only when the country is peaceful and stable, can development undertakings be carried out in a smooth process.

Fortunately, as Myanmar is an agro-based country, products from agriculture and livestock farms are sufficient for domestic consumption. It enables the export of surplus products to foreign countries. Hence, boosting production will help the country improve the State economy. In 2022, Myanmar could control the infection of the pandemic and resume the border trade process to some extent. As such, the minute situation of the State economy led to the plus. On the other hand, the government allotted funds to regions and states to operate manufacturing industries using domestic raw materials. Thus, these manufacturing industries help the regions and local people increase their incomes and improve socioeconomic life.

Any job cannot be accomplished without the efforts of individuals. So also, all the missions and visions must be implemented through collaborative efforts of the people and the government. People throughout the nation need to overcome challenges in all working processes including any disturbances to secure achievements in all sectors. In this regard, these achievements must be contributions to the development of the nation.

Everybody needs to assess their capabilities and endeavours how they can do, what they can do and how to do anything. Not only the governing bodies but also the people are to seek the best ways and means to be applied for improvement of the socioeconomic life of the people as well as the State economy. All the people have to understand the important role of peace and stability and they need to consider that only when the country is peaceful and stable, can development undertakings be carried out in a smooth process.



People queue outside a pharmacy for COVID-19 antigenic testing on 10 January 2022 in Marseille, as France announces plans to bolster its testing capacity as long queues form outside testing centres amid a fresh wave of the virus fuelled by the Omicron variant. PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE /NICOLAS TUCAT/AFP/FILE

Countries begin negotiations on global agreement to protect world from future pandemic emergencies

COUNTRIES of the World Health Organization have begun negotiations on a global accord on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, using the “zero draft” as a basis for negotiating an agreement to protect nations and communities from future pandemic emergencies.

Ending Friday, discussions on the draft pandemic accord took place during the weeklong fourth meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB), which includes WHO’s 194 countries. Negotiations on the draft will continue over the next year according to a timetable laid out by the World Health Assembly.

WHO pandemic accord
Mr Roland Driee, Co-Chair of the INB Bureau, from the Netherlands, said: “The start of discussions of concrete language for the WHO pandemic accord sends a clear signal that countries of the world want to work together for a safer, healthier future where we are better prepared for, and able to prevent future pandemic threats, and respond to them effectively and equitably.”

Fellow INB Bureau Co-Chair, Ms Precious Matsoso of South Africa, said: “The efforts this week, by countries from around the world, was a critical step in ensuring we do not repeat the mis-

takes of the COVID-19 pandemic response, including in sharing life-saving vaccines, provision of information and development of local capacities.”

Need to work together
Ms Matsoso added: “That we have been able to move forward so decisively is testimony to the global consensus that exists on the need to work together and to strengthen WHO’s and the international community’s ability to protect the world from pandemic threats.”

WHO Member States will continue negotiations of the zero-draft of the pandemic accord at the

INB’s next meeting, to be held over 3-6 April, with a view to collecting all inputs necessary to develop the first draft.

According to the process agreed by governments at a special session of the World Health Assembly in late 2021, negotiations on the draft pandemic accord will aim to produce a final draft for consideration by the 77th World Health Assembly in 2024.

Collaboration between the processes
During the week, the senior diplomats from Israel and Morocco, who are serving as co-facilitators of the United Nations General

Assembly High-Level Meeting on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness, and Response, briefed the INB on their preparations for the 20 September meeting, in order to ensure collaboration between the processes.

In parallel with the pandemic accord negotiations, governments are also discussing more than 300 amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005) in an effort to make the world safer from communicable diseases and ensuring greater equity in the global response to public health emergencies.

SOURCE: WHO



Book Title	- Kyay Taya (A collection of fiction)
Writer	- Khin Khin Htoo
Publishing House	- Udaya Kyaywa
Publication Date	- February 2023 (4 th Edition)
Price	- K3,500

Kyay Taya (A Collection of Fiction)

BEFORE dealing with this book, I would like to talk about why the book is named after kyay, a bird. In those days under the rule of the colonialists, people struggled for freedom. During the independence struggle, patriotism overwhelmed the Myanmar people. As a gesture of patriotism, people chose to wear cloth made domestically. Mostly, people wore cloth woven by the traditional weaving machine or made by handloom. In Yadabon Period, people wore the head gong with a Kyay Taya pattern. Our forefathers were proud of wearing the head gongs woven domestically. Similarly, they were

over-fond of wearing the nether garment made by the people from the Yaw area. The nether garment coming from the Yaw area is known as Kyay Taya pasoe (the nether garment). This book is named after the nether garment made in the Yaw area. There are 25 stories in toto. Eight stories fall under the category of the village custom whereas three, the literature custom, five, travelogue and nine, fiction respectively. The book starts with Padauk Hle, depicting the tradition of distributing the padauk flowers to the young girls from the village. The time of distribution of the

padauk flowers coincides with the time of celebration of the Water Festival or Thingyan in Myanmar parlance. This special flower blooms only in the month of Tagu — that is April in the solar calendar. The rain that heralds the Water Festival makes the flowers bloom. Reading this story made me reminiscent of the adolescence age we got through. In the story titled, “Kyunma Hnit Sar Oak Myar” i.e. My Books and Me,” the writer said that when they got married, they had not much furniture at home, that most of the spaces were overwhelmed with books, that they were busy, compiling the list of

the books, that they had difficulty maintaining the books, that the books published by Ludu Printing House were kept separately and that those books written by Ludu Daw Ahmar were kept within her reach so that she could read her books any time. The writer recalled that she was always encouraged by Ludu Daw Ahmar to write. She quoted Daw Ahmar as saying, “Don’t be too lazy, girl. Don’t give lame excuses like you having to take care of the children, do the household chores and spend time on social activities. I have five children to look after, manage the printing press and contribute news and views to my own newspaper: Once you have become a lazy bone, you will be discouraged to write. Write one article a month at least.”



Book Title	- Mali (Old Mali and the Boy by D R Sherman)
Translator	- Ne Win Myint
Publishing House	- Duwun
Publication Date	- January 2023 (3 rd Edition)
Price	- K3,000

Mali (Old Mali and the Boy by D R Sherman)

THIS book is a translation done by writer Ne Win Myint and was first published in 2021. This is the third impression published by Duwun Printing House in 2023. This is a story set in northern India about a fatherless young white boy and his mother’s elderly gardener, Mali, and the adventures they have when they go hunting together in the jungle until disaster tests the boy’s resources to the full. According to the translator, loyalty, love and adventures are the backbone of the story. He said this is not just the differences between the youth and the old age; this is, indeed, a story of caring and sharing between an old man

and a boy. The original writer Dennis Ronald Sherman was born in Kolkata in India. The story is based on life in a small city which is 20 miles away from Darjeeling. The main character is Mali, who is the gardener of the writer D R Sherman. The novel was opened with a scene in which the headmaster gave corporal punishment to the three students for having stolen maize and eaten the roasted grain — the cereal. The boy called Geoffrey was one among the three students. Our main character Geoffrey was an honest boy. His mother was a very strict woman, particularly strict with his son’s

homework. She was so strict with his school lessons that Geoffrey had gone so far as to think sometimes that how nice it would be if his mother disappeared from this world. But he loved Mali who was his hero, his role model. The old Mali had his head shaved, and his clean-shaven head was covered by a head gong. Despite his old age, Mali was strong and agile. He had narrow eyes and a thin upper lip. What made him most appealing was his moustache going upward sharply. He seemed to be highly proud of his moustache. Additionally, he had a yellowish-brown complexion. He had a broad forehead, which was a sign of wisdom. When he

smiled, there appeared lines of wrinkles on his face—a sign of old age. Geoffrey was in the habit of gazing at Mali with admiration when the latter smiled. He envied Mali. He also wanted his face to appear the lines of wrinkles when he smiled. He like Mali that much. The adventures of Mali and Geoffrey are quite exciting with them being faced with the danger posed by the beasts in the jungle. The attachment the boy has formed to the old man is quite strong, and it will inspire the readers to have some kind of love and attachment between the young boy and the old man. The fiction does not have a happy ending. The last episode is about how the boy has brought back home the dead body of the old man.

ENVIRON WORLD

Toilet paper adding to 'forever chemicals' in wastewater: study



Packs of toilet paper on a supermarket shelf in Septemes-les-Vallons near Marseille, France. **PHOTO: CHRISTOPHE SIMON / AFP**

TOILET paper is an unexpected source of potentially harmful "forever chemicals" in wastewater across the globe and could be leaching into soils via sewage, a new study on Wednesday said.

"Forever chemicals", or PFAS, are found in cosmetics, non-stick cookware and waterproof clothing.

They have been linked to

several types of cancers, cardiovascular disease, fertility problems and developmental disorders in children.

The synthetic chemicals are present in soil and waterways across the globe, and a new study on Wednesday found that toilet paper "should be considered as a potentially major source" of PFAS in wastewater treatment systems.

The researchers said reducing PFAS in wastewater is "critical", since the chemicals are potentially harmful.

"Wastewater effluent and sludge are commonly reused for irrigation and/or land application; research has already shown that these two pathways pose a risk for human and environmental exposure to PFAS," said the study in the Environmental Science and Technology Letters journal.

Some manufacturers add PFAS when converting wood into pulp, traces of which may contaminate the final toilet paper product.

Recycled toilet paper may also be made with fibres that come from materials containing PFAS, said the study.

The researchers collected toilet paper rolls sold in North America, Latin America, Africa and Western Europe, along with sewage samples from wastewater treatment plants in the United States. — AFP

Hatching leatherback turtles get helping hand on Thai beach

IT is past midnight on a beach in southern Thailand and 12-year-old Prin Uthaisangchai is anxiously staring at a leatherback turtle nest, waiting for scores of the endangered hatchlings to scurble out from the sand.

The Bangkok secondary school pupil is producing a short documentary about the snappers, under a programme run by the Environmental and Social Foundation, an NGO working to educate children about conservation.

That morning a team of marine biologists noticed the sand covering one of the leatherback nests on Phang Nga beach was beginning to sink in on itself.

That was a telltale sign the eggs buried inside were starting to crack and that sometime that night the hatchlings would emerge and make a dash to the ocean under the cover of darkness.

But after more than 20 hours with no sign of any baby turtles,

Prin and the team grew worried. Donning plastic gloves, they carefully dug into the nest to give each squirming critter a helping hand into the world.

Soon the tiny turtles were scrambling towards the shore where waves swept in, taking them into their new ocean home.

"I feel very disappointed

how we have to interfere with a natural living thing that shouldn't need a human's help," said Prin.

"But in the end, we have to help." Leatherbacks – the world's largest sea turtle weighing up to 500 kilogrammes – are a rarity in Thailand thanks to habitat loss, plastic pollution and consumption of their eggs. — AFP



Leatherbacks are the world's largest sea turtle and a rarity in Thailand thanks to habitat loss, plastic pollution and consumption of their eggs. **PHOTO: AFP**

Tractors block Brussels roads in farmer protest

SLOW-MOVING convoys of some 2,700 tractors blocked roads in Brussels on Friday as farmers from the Flanders region protested at moves to cut nitrogen emissions.

Central thoroughfares were closed as the agricultural vehicles trundled through the Belgian capital carrying signs and beeping their horns.

"No future without farmers," read one of the banners.

Flemish farmers are up in arms over a green push by the government of their

Dutch-speaking region aimed at slashing nitrogen emissions from fertilisers and livestock.

The production and use of nitrogen fertilizers generates climate-warming greenhouse gas emissions, as does livestock waste.

The agricultural industry insists it would be too hard hit by the moves which could see some farms deemed too polluting forced to close. The debate has threatened to split the ruling coalition in the northern Flanders region. — AFP



Belgian farmers blocked roads in Brussels over plans to reduce nitrogen emissions. **PHOTO: AFP**

At least four dead, tens of thousands evacuated in Malaysia floods

AT least four people have died and nearly 41,000 were evacuated in Malaysia after floodwaters caused by "unusual" torrential rains lasting days swept through several states, officials said Saturday.

Local reports and social media posts showed images of flooded roads, submerged cars, waterlogged homes and rows of shops closed in the affected areas, mainly in the southern state of Johor near neighbouring Singapore.

The rains have continued unabated, hampering relief efforts.

Police said at least four people have died since Wednesday, including a man whose car was swept away by floodwaters and an elderly couple who drowned. — AFP

US largest lithium mining project draws strong protests from environmental groups

THE construction of the planned Thacker Pass lithium mine in the remote north of US state of Nevada, the largest known lithium deposit in the United States, has drawn concerns and protests from environmental groups as well as Native American tribes.

A federal appeals court on Wednesday refused to block construction of the largest lithium mine in the country, despite strong resistance from Nevada conservationists and tribes who claimed the government illegally approved it in a rush to produce raw materials for electric vehicle batteries. The Ninth US Circuit Court of Appeals denied a request for an emergency injunction that would block Lithium Americas, the mining company developing the mine site, from moving forward with the project. — Xinhua

HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

India bats for equitable healthcare access in its G20 Presidency

IN its ongoing G20 Presidency, India strives for equitable access to healthcare for all. India is also giving a lot of importance to a value-based healthcare system.

“With the G20 presidency, we have the opportunity to create multilateral collaborations between countries facilitated by knowledge sharing and leading to the formulation of effective policies aiding accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare to citizens across the world,” India’s Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Bharati Pravin Pawar said recently.

The pandemic has brought serious health-related issues prominently into the picture, posing detrimental future consequences.

The recent health hazards have made it essential to have high-quality, affordable, and accessible health services equitably available for all, irrespective of boundaries.

Here, the first Health Working Group meeting under India’s G20 Presidency proved very effective in addressing the



In its ongoing G20 Presidency, India strives for equitable access to healthcare for all. India is also giving a lot of importance to a value-based healthcare system. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ANI**

vulnerabilities and disparities of the systems, besides advocating holistic and universal health and well-being.

The meeting widely resonated on health priorities like emergencies, prevention, preparedness, strengthening cooperation, and digital health innovation and solutions, especially when the situation in low and middle-income countries is

worrisome owing to a restricted and uneven health care system.

Recognising that the pandemic policy must be a defining part of our health policy, as any health crisis of today leads to a humongous economic crisis of tomorrow in an interconnected world, is now becoming an essential part of the agenda for our preparedness and response together. — ANI

US records 18,000 flu deaths so far this season: CDC



Influenza strains vary from year to year, but one thing remains constant: everyone six months and older should get an annual flu shot. **PHOTO: BRYAN R. SMITH/AFP**

THERE have been at least 26 million illnesses, 290,000 hospitalizations, and 18,000 deaths from flu so far this season in

the United States, according to the latest estimates published Friday by the US Centres for Disease Control and Preven-

tion (CDC).

A total of 117 pediatric flu deaths have been reported in the country this season, according to the CDC.

The number and weekly rate of flu hospital admissions continued to decline in the country. About 1,500 people were hospitalized with flu in the latest week ending 25 February, CDC data showed.

The CDC recommends that everyone ages six months and older get an annual flu vaccine as long as flu activity continues.

There are also prescription flu antiviral drugs that can be used to treat flu illness, which need to be started as early as possible, said the CDC. — AFP

Trudeau says cocaine licences are not for selling drug to public

PRIME Minister Justin Trudeau said Friday he was “surprised” that companies licensed to sell cocaine to pharmacists or hospitals seemed to signal Canada would soon allow legal sales of hard drugs to the public.

Earlier this week, several companies announced that Canada’s federal health agency had allowed them to produce and sell cocaine.

The announcement came a month after the province of British Columbia launched an experimental decriminalization process meant to address an opioid overdose crisis that has killed thousands.

The province decriminalized the possession — but not sale — of small amounts of cocaine and other hard drugs, under a three-year pilot project,

with the aim of removing the stigma associated with drug use that keeps people from seeking help.

Advocates have also been pushing for safer supplies of drugs to be made available to addicts who face a risk of dying from toxic drug poisoning linked to illicit street drugs.

Trudeau clarified Friday that the companies did not have “permission to sell it commercially or provide it on an open market,” adding that the misunderstanding would be corrected.

“There are limited and very restricted permissions for certain pharmaceutical companies to use that substance for research purposes and for very specific narrowly prescribed medical purposes,” he explained. — AFP



Earlier this week, several companies announced that Canada’s federal health agency had allowed them to produce and sell cocaine. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/AFP**

Cancerous skin lesion removed from Biden’s chest, no further treatment required: physician

A cancerous skin lesion had been removed from US President Joe Biden’s chest, White House physician Kevin O’Connor said on Friday.

O’Connor wrote in a memo that the tissue was removed as part of Biden’s health assessment at a military hospital last month and sent for a traditional biopsy. “As expected, the biopsy confirmed that the small lesion was basal cell carcinoma. All cancerous tissue was successfully removed,” O’Connor re-

vealed. “No further treatment is required.” Basal cell carcinoma is the most common form of skin cancer and the most frequently occurring form of all cancers, according to the Skin Cancer Foundation. Basal cell carcinoma lesions do not tend to “spread” or metastasize, O’Connor said, adding that “they do, however, have the potential to increase in size, resulting in a more significant issue as well as increased challenges for surgical removal.” — Xinhua

ECONOMY WORLD

China vows solid measures to ensure employment stability

CHINA will continue to implement solid measures this year to “go all out to maintain overall stability in employment”, a senior official said on Thursday.

China’s overall employment situation will stay stable in 2023 as the economy continues to recover with sound fundamentals unchanged, Minister of Human Resources and Social Security Wang Xiaoping told a press conference.

China maintained employment stability last year against the backdrop of an economic

slowdown, epidemic resurgence and a complex and fluid external environment, with 12.06 million jobs created in urban regions, Wang said.

Wang attributed these achievements to effective employment-first measures, including helping businesses, promoting entrepreneurship and strengthening training and services for job seekers.

She acknowledged that pressure and challenges in ensuring employment still exist, noting that the number of college

graduates will reach 11.58 million this year, placing pressure on the country’s job market.

Solid measures will be rolled out to support business startups, the service sector, micro and small enterprises, and help those who have recently shaken off poverty, while large-scale training programmes for key groups will be carried out, said Wang.

“We are confident that we can successfully meet the annual employment target and maintain overall stability in employment,” Wang said. — Xinhua



Workers weld components at a workshop of an automobile manufacturing enterprise in Qingzhou City, east China’s Shandong province, 28 February 2021. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

German exports rebound in January



The Port of Hamburg is not only the largest seaport in Germany and the third largest in Europe, but also Europe’s largest railway port - even leading worldwide in many areas of hinterland connections by rail. At the same time, it is the largest industrial area in northern Europe.

PHOTO: AFP/FILE

GERMAN exports rebounded in January after sharp declines in recent months, data showed Friday, with shipments to all major trading partners rising in a boost for Europe’s top

economy.

Germany exported goods worth 130.6 billion euros (\$138.5 billion), a 2.1 per cent increase on the previous month, according to seasonally adjusted

figures from federal statistics agency Destatis.

Compared to January 2022, exports were up 8.6 per cent.

But ING economist Carsten Brzeski cautioned that the increase was “not quite enough to offset” a sharp drop in shipments from the export-driven economy in December.

“In the very near term, the ongoing weakening of export order books, the expected slowdown of the US economy, high inflation and high uncertainty will leave a clear mark on German exports,” he said.

In January, exports to the United States rose 3.1 per cent and those to China, Germany’s biggest trading partner, were up 1.4 per cent to China, according to Destatis. — AFP

Bank of Mexico cuts forecast for economy in 2023, 2024

THE Central Bank of Mexico (Banxico) cut its forecast for the growth of the country’s economy in 2023 and 2024, due to a deterioration of US expectations, especially in the industrial sector, an inflation report released Wednesday said.

The bank now forecasts economic growth of 1.6 per cent for Mexico in 2023, lower than the 1.8 per cent predicted in the previous report, while for 2024 the projection is reduced to 1.8

percent, from 2.1 per cent.

“The lower growth expected for 2023 and 2024 ... is mainly due to a deterioration in growth expectations for the US economy, especially for its industrial activity,” Banxico governor Victoria Rodriguez explained during a virtual conference.

The central bank added that this will be reflected in a reduction of Mexico’s external demand and a slowdown in the country’s productive activity. The balance

of risks remains biased to the downside, given the complex environment expected for the global economy and the possibility of a deep and lasting recession in the United States, among other risks, it continued. Regarding inflation, the central bank indicated that Mexico’s situation “continues to be complex” given the deep, generalized and lasting shocks it suffered due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the armed conflict in Eastern Europe. — Xinhua

US pick for World Bank looks to more private sector financing

THE United States’ candidate to head the World Bank, Ajay Banga, told reporters Thursday he is looking towards more private sector funding to tackle financing for global problems.

Banga’s comments came a week after President Joe Biden announced his nomination, and as the development lender carries out the selection process for its new leader.

His nomination comes amid a push for organizations like the World Bank to revamp and more effectively address global problems like climate change.

“There is not enough money, whether in the multilateral development banks or in the large developed world governments, or in civil society, even with the most philanthropic intentions,” Banga said.

“There is not enough mon-

ey without the private sector,” he added, noting that this could come in many ways.

Banga said that an organization like the bank would have to create an engagement model, whether it involves sharing of risk or mobilizing private capital, rather than just lending its own capital.

“These are all tools in the toolkit and I’m going to try and figure it out,” said Banga, who is Indian-American and formerly Mastercard’s chief executive.

For now, Banga said he was meeting with various stakeholders to understand what their priorities are.

He is planning to meet officials in Europe, Africa, parts of Asia including China, India and Japan, as well as Latin America in the coming weeks.

— AFP



Ajaypal Singh Banga is an Indian-born American business executive. On 23 February 2023, he was nominated by President of the United States Joe Biden to lead the World Bank. **PHOTO: AFP**

Airlines sue Dutch over Schiphol airport flight cuts

TOP airlines including KLM, Delta and EasyJet said Friday they are taking the Dutch government to court over plans to limit flights at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport for environmental reasons.

The Netherlands said in June that it would cut flights at Schiphol to 440,000 annually by 2024, down from a pre-Covid level of 500,000, to stem noise pollution and emissions.

The airlines, along with TUI and Corendon, were taking legal action



Residents of the area around Schiphol, a densely populated zone, have regularly complained about the airport's noise nuisance. **PHOTO: ANP/AFP**

“to keep the Netherlands connected to the rest of the world via Schiphol

Airport”, KLM said in a statement. They accused the

Dutch government of breaching local, EU and international law with the “incomprehensible” decision, and of ignoring their efforts to be more environmentally friendly.

“As the government appears not to hear our call, unfortunately we find ourselves compelled to take legal action,” KLM chief executive Marjan Rintel said. The Dutch flag carrier and its subsidiaries account for some 60 per cent of air traffic at Schiphol, one of Europe's busiest hubs. — AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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GLOBAL AFFAIRS

“Barefoot Gen” manga removal from Hiroshima programme sparks backlash

THE education board of Hiroshima has decided to withdraw the famous “Hadashi no Gen” (Barefoot Gen) comic depicting the atomic bombing of the western Japan city from its peace curriculum for public schools, sparking a backlash from survivors groups and others.

The manga, which centres on the life of elementary school-

er Gen, is based in part on the experiences of its late creator Keiji Nakazawa, who was exposed to the 1945 US atomic bombing of Hiroshima at age 6.

First released in 1973, the series has been published in more than 20 countries, and part of the work has been featured in Hiroshima’s peace education programme since fiscal 2013.

But from the 2023 school year starting April, the board is set to replace it with a lesson on a survivor who lost family members in the attack and her daughter’s activities to pass on her story, saying the change is to adapt to changing times.

While the board has said the move “is in no way an attempt to distance children” from the

manga, its decision has met resistance, including from prominent atomic bomb survivors and online.

Kunihiko Sakuma, who heads an association for Hiroshima atomic bomb survivors’ groups and who was exposed to the bomb at nine months old, called on city officials to rethink the change. — Kydoo



File photo shows the 10 volumes that make up manga “Hadashi no Gen” (Barefoot Gen). **PHOTO: KYODO**

Indonesians search charred homes after fuel depot fire kills 17



A woman reacts as she walks past a burnt vehicle in a residential area in Plumpang, north Jakarta on 4 March 2023, after a fire at a nearby state-run fuel storage depot run by energy firm Pertamina. **PHOTO: ADITYA AJI / AFP**

RESIDENTS searched through the remains of their charred homes Saturday after a fuel storage depot fire in Jakarta left at least 17 people dead, including two children.

After Friday night’s blaze at state energy firm Pertamina’s Plumpang depot in north Jakar-

ta, Indonesian officials called for an audit of “all fuel facilities and infrastructures” in the country.

Fifty people were injured, with many left with severe burns, and hundreds more living in residential areas near the depot had to be evacuated, the Jakarta fire and rescue department said.

“It started with a very strong smell. It was so strong that we could hardly breathe,” witness Swastono Aji told AFP.

“Then we were leaving this area when we suddenly heard a very loud explosion.”

Top officials including the minister responsible for state-owned firms like Pertamina called for a probe into the fire’s cause and an audit of the country’s energy facilities after several fires in recent years.

“After we had multiple fires... it is clear that we must audit all fuel facilities and infrastructures, especially tanks and refineries,” Sugeng Suparwoto, head of the parliament’s energy commission, told local broadcaster Metro TV on Saturday.

In 2021, a massive blaze broke out at the Balongan refinery in West Java, also owned by state oil company Pertamina and one of Indonesia’s biggest oil refineries. — AFP

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Russian submarine test-fires missile from Sea of Japan

THE diesel-electric submarine Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky of the Russian Pacific Fleet test-launched a Caliber cruise missile from the Sea of Japan, the Russian Defence Ministry said Friday.

As part of a combat training plan, the submarine secretly arrived at the designated area in the Sea of Japan and launched the missile from underwater, which successfully hit a coastal target located over 1,000 km away in Russia’s Khabarovsk region, the ministry said in a statement.

Ships and aircraft of the Russian Pacific Fleet closed the missile firing area in advance, the ministry added. — Xinhua

Kremlin vows ‘measures’ to prevent incursions across Ukraine border

THE Kremlin said Friday it would take steps to prevent cross-border incursions after Moscow blamed “Ukrainian nationalists” for killing two civilians in southern Russia the day earlier.

“Measures will be taken to prevent similar events in the future,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Russian President Vladimir Putin will later Friday chair a meeting of his Security Council, Peskov added.

On Thursday, Moscow claimed that “Ukrainian nationalists” had crossed into the southern Russian region of Bryansk and killed two civilians, an allegation dismissed by Kyiv as a “deliberate provocation”. — Xinhua

Anger boils in Greece over deadly rail disaster

THOUSANDS of people demonstrated across Greece on Friday to demand justice for at least 57 people killed in the country’s worst rail disaster, with some protesters condemning the tragedy as “a crime”.

Police clashed with some of the demonstrators at a handful of protests, as public anger grew over the role that government mismanagement played in the

tragedy.

A passenger train ran for several kilometres on the same track as an incoming freight train before the crash late Tuesday, reportedly after the station master in Larissa, central Greece, failed to reroute one of the trains.

It was carrying many students returning from a holiday weekend and at least nine young people studying at Thessaloniki’s

Aristotle University were among the dead, while another 26 others were injured.

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, who is seeking re-election this spring, has blamed the disaster on “tragic human error”.

But protests blaming government mismanagement continued on Friday, in the capital Athens and several major cities across Greece. — AFP



The passenger train was carrying many students returning from a holiday weekend. Thousands of Greek students staged sit-ins and demonstrated in Athens and other cities on 3 March to demand justice for the victims of the country’s worst train tragedy, which occurred on 28 February. **PHOTO: LOUISA GOULIAMAKI / AFP**

UN nuclear chief to meet Raisi during crucial Iran talks

THE UN nuclear watchdog chief was in Iran on Saturday for expected talks with President Ebrahim Raisi and other officials after the discovery of uranium particles enriched to near weapons-grade level.

The two-day visit by the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency comes as the Vienna-based organization seeks greater cooperation with Iran over its nuclear activities.

Rafael Grossi arrived in Iran on Friday and a diplomatic source told AFP that he would meet Raisi during his trip to “relaunch the dialogue” on Iran’s atomic work and to “reset the relationship at the highest level”.

Grossi had made clear “that he was only prepared to go to Tehran if he had an invitation to speak with the president,” the source added.

Uranium particles enriched up to 83.7 per cent -- just under the 90 per cent needed to



A handout picture provided by the Iranian presidential office on 10 April 2021, shows a grab of a videoconference screen of an engine inside Iran’s Natanz uranium enrichment plant. PHOTO: AFP

produce an atomic bomb -- had been detected at Iran’s underground Fordow plant about 100 kilometres (60 miles) south of the capital, according to a confidential IAEA report seen by AFP this week.

Tehran denies wanting to acquire atomic weapons, and said it had not made any attempt to enrich uranium be-

yond 60 per cent purity.

Iran’s government noted that “unintended fluctuations... may have occurred” during the enrichment process.

The discovery came after Iran had substantially modified an interconnection between two centrifuge clusters enriching uranium, without declaring it to the IAEA. — AFP

Hundreds of fearful sub-Saharan migrants flee Tunisia

AROUND 300 nationals of Ivory Coast and Mali were to be flown home from Tunisia on Saturday, fearful of a wave of violence against sub-Saharan migrants since President Kais Saied delivered a controversial tirade against them last month.

In his 21 February speech, Saied ordered officials to take

“urgent measures” to tackle irregular migration, claiming without evidence that “a criminal plot” was underway “to change Tunisia’s demographic makeup”.

Saied charged that migrants were behind most crime in the North African country, fuelling a spate of sackings, evictions and physical attacks against the com-

munity.

The African Union expressed “deep shock and concern at the form and substance” of Saied’s remarks, while governments in sub-Saharan Africa scrambled to organize the repatriation of hundreds of fearful nationals who flocked to their embassies for help.

A first group of 50 Guineans were flown home on Wednesday, while Mali and Ivory Coast are to repatriate 300 of their citizens on special flights on Saturday.

“Air Cote d’Ivoire has a flight scheduled for 0700 (0600 GMT) on Saturday morning that will carry 145 passengers,” Ivorian ambassador Ibrahim Sy Savane said.

In total, 1,100 Ivorians have applied to be repatriated from Tunisia, he added.

According to official figures, there are around 21,000 undocumented sub-Saharan migrants in Tunisia, a country of about 12 million inhabitants. — AFP



Fearful Ivorians camp outside their country’s embassy in Tunis desperate to be repatriated following a wave of attacks targeting sub-Saharan migrants in the North African country. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

Austria far-right eyes comeback under new hardline leader

SUNK by a corruption scandal four years ago, Austria’s far-right is rapidly regaining lost ground under its new hardline leader and topping polls in the small Alpine nation.

Freedom Party head Herbert Kickl delighted 300 cheering supporters at an event ahead of weekend elections in southern Carinthia state, setting out his party’s stall.

Besides its trademark opposition to migration, the Freedom Party (Österreichische Volkspartei, ÖVP) has been able to tap into voter anxieties over the Ukraine war and inflation, as well as anger over strict Covid-19 measures during the pandemic.

It has also lured back voters from the conservatives, who lost their charismatic leader Sebastian Kurz when he stepped down in 2021, facing a string of corruption accusations.

‘Fortress Austria’

Since Kickl, a 54-year-old former interior minister, took over the FPÖ in 2021, it is polling 29 per cent, according to recent voter intention surveys, up significantly from 16 per cent won at 2019 elections.

The opposition Social Democrats and the conservatives -- whose mandate to govern with the Greens runs until 2024 -- lag behind, polling head-to-head at around 24 per cent in the country of just over nine million. — AFP



Since Kickl, a 54-year-old former interior minister, took over the FPÖ in 2021, it now polls up to 29 per cent. PHOTO: APA/AFP

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Former Ecuador president put under house arrest on graft charges

FORMER Ecuador president Lenin Moreno was put under house arrest Friday for allegedly receiving bribes from a Chinese firm in exchange for a contract to build the country’s largest hydroelectric dam, authorities said.

Moreno, who was president from 2017 to 2021, and 36 others are suspected of receiving about \$76 million in bribes, “the highest amount prosecuted for acts of corruption” in Ecuador, according to the prosecutor’s office.

The alleged corruption network operated from 2009 to 2018 around the construction of the Coco Codo Sinclair hydroelectric plant, a \$2.3 million project granted to the Chinese company Sinohydro. — AFP



Africa follows Asia in giving Russians green light for Paris Olympics

AFRICA'S National Olympic Committees have followed their Asian counterparts in giving the green light on Saturday for Russian and Belarusian athletes to compete at the 2024 Paris Olympics. Russia and its ally Belarus have been sidelined from most Olympic sports since Russian forces invaded Ukraine last February.

However, in January the International Olympic Committee (IOC) said it was seeking a "pathway" for Russians to take part in the Games. Following that announcement, the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) offered athletes from both countries the chance to compete in this year's Asian Games. That was a significant move because they could gain qualifying marks in competition in Asia to allow them to



Security guards patrol at sunrise by the Olympic rings installed on the Esplanade du Trocadero near the Eiffel tower following the Paris' nomination as host for the 2024 Olympics, on 14 September 2017 in Paris. PHOTO: LUDOVIC MARIN / AFP/ FILE

compete in Paris. Africa has now followed suit. The motion — to allow Russians and Belarusians to compete under a neutral flag — was passed unanimously by

the executive committee of the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA) at their meeting in Nouakchott, Mauritania. — AFP

Messi, Garnacho in Argentina squad for March friendlies

LIONEL Messi is set to make his first appearance for Argentina since lifting the World Cup after he was called up by coach Lionel Scaloni on Friday for friendly matches later this month.

Scaloni named a 35-man squad that included all 26 players that won the World Cup in Qatar in December, beating France on penalties after a sensational final that ended 3-3 after extra-time.

Recent £100 million Chelsea signing Enzo Fernandez, Manchester United's combative centre-back Lisandro Martinez and Aston Villa's Emiliano Martinez, who was earlier this week

named the best goalkeeper for 2022 by FIFA, are also in the squad.

Villarreal's Giovanni Lo Celso returned to the squad after missing the World Cup through injury, while uncapped teenage Spanish-born Manchester United starlet Alejandro Garnacho is also included in a Scaloni squad for the second time. Garnacho has made a meteoric rise at United this season, making 27 appearances for Eric ten Hag's side, including 10 starts, and scoring four goals, the latest of which was the decisive strike in the Red Devils' 3-1 FA Cup last 16 victory over West Ham on Wednesday. — 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.

AFC Women's Football Day 2023 ceremony held in Yangon



Youths bring the FIFA flag to the pitch during the event of the AFC Women's Football Day 2023 at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on 4 March 2023. PHOTO: MFF

THE AFC Women's Football Day 2023 of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) was organized by the Myanmar Football Federation yesterday morning at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon. A total of 200 students and 40 teachers from Basic Education High Schools participated in the ceremony.

Myanmar Football Federation executive member U Ko Ko Htay, Myanmar Football Federation executive member Daw Myat Myat Oo (Vice-Chairman of the Women's Football Committee), Women's football committee members, Myanmar Football Federation technical director U Tin Myint Aung, and officials from the football federation also attended the football event.

Star players of the Myanmar national women's team were divided into two teams, the blue team and the white team, and played a demonstration match during the AFC Women's Football festival. The ceremony ended with souvenirs given to the players. — KZL