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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.

Only when the economic driving force improves will it support political and defence driving forces: Senior General



State Administration Council Chair Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the meeting with SAC members, Union ministers, region and state chief ministers, chairpersons of self-administered zone and division administration bodies in Nay Pyi Taw on 24 March 2023.

EXTENDED cultivation of sunflower can contribute to local sufficiency of oil, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting with SAC members, Union ministers, region and state chief ministers, and chairpersons of self-administered zone and division administration bodies at the SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said the State Administration Council faced intentional attacks aimed at causing the collapse of the government's administrative mechanism and

banking system committed by some internal and external organizations due to different political attitudes. But the country normalizes the circulation of money in mid-2022 with concerted efforts of the government amid difficulties to avoid the collapse of the banking system.

The Senior General recounted that the State economy gradually declined since the time when Covid-19 broke out in 2020. In the 2020-21 financial year, the GDP of the State plunged to -5.9 per cent due to the weakness of management of the previous government. During the period from October to March 2021-22 FY, the

country possessed 2.4 per cent of GDP, up from -5.9 per cent. Again, the GDP reached 3.4 per cent in 2022-23 FY, and further progress would be achieved in the country, according to financial officials.

In the agriculture sector, monsoon paddy is grown on 15 million acres of farmlands and summer paddy on some 3 million acres of land. A total of 13.2 million acres out of 15 million acres of monsoon paddy is placed on farmlands and the remaining cultivation is carried out on croplands and other lands. Among 13.2 acres of land, some 5 million acres of farmlands are placed under single crops. So, it

is necessary to cultivate crops on these lands as double cropping in addition to bean, oil crops and other crops.

Hybrid sunflowers can yield more than 50 baskets per acre, producing some 140 visses of sunflower oil. Extended cultivation of sunflowers can contribute to the local sufficiency of oil. Hence, region and state chief ministers need to emphasize increasing the cultivation and production of oil crops.

If paddy yields increase by five more baskets per acre, a total of 13.2 million acres of paddy plantations can produce some 66 more million baskets of paddy.

If so, K990 billion can be earned from paddy cultivation. Consequently, the GDP of the State will rise and the money circulation amount will increase in the nation.

In the previous year, cotton yielded 438.5 visses per acre, and it totalled 198.7 million visses of cotton. Now, the country needed 363 million visses of cotton. If the country can produce 700 visses per acre, the import volume of cotton can be reduced. Cotton growers, businesspersons and the government need to strive for the supply of quality cotton strains and the production of quality cotton wool.

SEE PAGE-3

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL
MoI basic English proficiency course concludes
PAGE-5

CURRENT AFFAIRS
Toll exemption allowed for EVs until 2025
PAGE-10



LOCAL BUSINESS
MRF to offer Rice Processing Technology Course in May
PAGE-11



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.

Application for registration, political party establishment rights ongoing

UNDER Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law, the following parties, which are desirous of organizing political parties, yesterday applied to the Union Election Commission for permission to establish political parties under the law and rules.

1. Shan State Kokang Democratic Party
2. Naga National Party (NNP)
3. The 88 Generation Student Youths (Union of Myanmar) Party
4. Wa National Party
5. Danu National Organization Party (DNOP)
6. The Union of Myanmar Federation of National Politics Party
7. People's Party

8. People's Party of Myanmar Farmers and Workers
9. Women's Party (Mon)
10. Mro National Party
11. Zomi Congress for Democracy Party
12. Danu National Democracy Party

To date, eight parties have applied under Section 3 of the Political Parties Registration Law, and 44 parties under Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law, totalling 52.

Among these 52 parties, 12 parties will organize the entire union and 40 parties only within a region or state. The Union Election Commission continues verifying the right to establish and register these parties. — MNA/KZL

Public Notice for Submitting Objection

1. KAREN National Democratic Party with its headquarters located at No 4/413, Thudanu Street, No 4 Ward, Hpa-an, Kayin State applied on 23-3-2023 to be allowed to continue to exist and register as a political party under Section 25 of the Political Parties Registration Law. It is reported that the party name, flag and emblem will be used as described below.

2. Under Rule 14 (d) of the Registration of Political Parties, it is hereby announced to the public that those who wish to object to the name of the party, the flag and the emblem to be used by that organization may submit their objection to the Union Election Commission with valid evidence within seven days from the date of this announcement.



The flag design of the Karen National Democratic Party



The emblem of the Karen National Democratic Party

Union Election Commission

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Union Election Commission Announcement No 4/2023

4th Waxing of Tagu 1384 ME
24 March 2023

Cancellation of registration as a political party, and dissolution of the party

1. The Union Election Commission approved the registration of the Inn National Development Party as a political party (Registration No 27, Announcement No 67/2010 dated 1-6-2010).
2. Regarding the submission for cancellation of registration as a political party (Letter No A/001 (Inn) dated 21-3-2023), the Inn National Development Party from being registered as a political party, was approved to cancel its registration as a political party and dissolve the party, according to the decision of the Union Election Commission Management Committee Meeting No 2/2023 held on 24-3-2023, under Section 19 (a) of the Political Parties Registration Law.
3. Therefore, the Inn National Development Party, which was registered as a political party at the Union Election Commission, has been cancelled from its registration as a political party from 24 March 2023 and the party has been dissolved.

Sd/ Thein Soe
Chairman

Union Election Commission

Public notice for transport on Armed Forces Day

THE parade of the 78th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day will be held on 27 March and the road from the Bawgathiri traffic light in Pyinmana township to the Thaikchaung junction traffic light on the Yangon-Mandalay highway will be closed to traffic from 12:05 am to 10 am.

On that day, drivers are reminded to drive along the Neikban Road from the Thaikchaung junction traffic light in the Zeyathiri township

of Nay Pyi Taw to the Khwanyopan roundabout, from there to the Kumudrakyapan roundabout along the Yazathingaha Road and from Pankhinn traffic light-Bawgathiri traffic light in Pyinmana township to Yangon-Mandalay Highway along the Yazahtani Road.

Nay Pyi Taw Traffic Control
Supervisory Committee

38 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 24 March, total figure records 634,059

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases recorded **634,059** after **38** new cases were reported on 24 March 2023 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **614,493**, including **four** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,490** on 24-3-2023 with no new death reported from the pandemic. — GNLM

Tatmadaw's responsibility to safeguard Constitution, Our Three Main National Causes and genuine disciplined democratic system

ACCORDING to the 2008 Constitution, Tatmadaw is mainly responsible for safeguarding the Constitution, Our Three Main National Causes, and the genuine and disciplined multiparty democratic system. Therefore, Tatmadaw's preventive measures in law against all misconducts leading to failing the constitution being referred to as the soul of the country and multiparty democratic system are the shouldering or obligatory responsibility.

(Excerpts from the speech delivered by State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Maha Thray Sithu Min Aung Hlaing at the Passing Out Parade of the 64th Intake of Defence Services Academy on 2 December 2022)

Only when the economic driving force improves will it support political and defence driving forces: Senior General

FROM PAGE-1

With regard to the cultivation of wheat, there are 132,500 acres of wheat plantations across the nation. Myanmar people primarily consume rice. If people consume wheat as a meal a day, it can contribute to body growth. It is necessary to efficiently utilize the allotted land resources.

Only when the country has production will it develop. So, the government is encouraging domestic production without fail. As of last year, the government has been encouraging the operations of MSME businesses. Industries need to use domestic raw materials so as to implement the firm businesses.

The government imports oil and oil products worth more than

US\$6 billion per year. Hence, it is necessary to restrict the use of fuel. The country operates two steel mills but requires some 3 million tonnes of steel per year. It is necessary to do the manufacturing of steel from iron ore. Gold mining and timber extraction must be done under the prescribed disciplines, rules and regulations.

The Senior General pointed out that only when the economic driving force improves will it contribute to political and defence driving forces. And, it will lead to the prosperity of the State and food security which are two national visions.

The region and state chief ministers and chairmen of self-administered zone and division ad-

ministration bodies reported on development undertakings in agriculture and livestock, regional development, education, health and transport sectors, tourism, use of electric vehicles, sports, disbursement of loans from State economic promotion fund to the MSME entrepreneurs, implementation of one region-one product scheme, the opening of universities and colleges.

The Union ministers and officials responded to their discussions.

The SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister explained the efficient use of funds and correctly paying back the loans in a set period.

In conclusion, the Senior General said that only when the

people are skilful in Myanmar literature and language without fail will they have a smooth process in learning education and working. All officials need to strive for ensuring the education promotion of students. During the summer holidays, cultural courses, English and computer science courses should be conducted for student youths. Region and state chief ministers need to safely hold the traditional Thingyan festival.

Unregistered vehicles and motorcycles can reduce the revenue amount of the State. On the other hand, these vehicles are used in destructive acts, harming the rule of law and the process of peace and stability. Hence, relevant regions and states should systematically supervise the use

of vehicles and motorcycles.

Capitals from the State economic promotion fund were allotted to MSME businesses for ensuring the prosperity of the majority as well as of the State, not for a single person or an organization. Officials need to systematically supervise the beautification of towns and villages and manage systematic layout plans of the towns.

After the meeting, the Senior General presented K10 billion each to Sagaing and Magway regions and K8 billion each to Bago, Mandalay, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions for the enhancement of MSME businesses through chief ministers. —MNA/TTA

Union Electric Power Minister on study tour of hydro, wind power projects in China

MYANMAR delegation led by Union Minister for Electric Power U Thaung Han visited Kunming and Beijing to study the power generation processes at the invitation of the People's Republic of China from 17 and 22 March.

During the visit, the Union minister held a coordination meeting on bilateral trade with Mr Wang Yubo, Governor of Yunnan Provincial Government and Joint Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party on 20 March.

At the meeting, the Union minister talked about the Pauk-Phaw relationship between the two countries, support of Myanmar in the projects of Chinese investors, invitations to further investors as the country processes resources for hydro, solar and wind power generation, discussions on small-scale and large-scale hydropower projects and China-Myanmar cross-border power connection in 2024.

Then, the governor of the Yunnan Provincial Government stressed the understanding of the



The Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister U Thaung Han holds talks with Chinese officials on power generation and cooperation.

challenges of Myanmar and bilateral cooperation in new energy sectors approved in principle by the Yunnan Provincial Government and other matters.

On 21 March, the Union minister met the deputy director of the National Energy Administration (NEA) Mr Ren Jing Dong at the office of NEA.

During the meeting, the Union minister said Myanmar

has drafted Master Plan for nationwide electrification in 2030. Despite the plan, there are still power needs in the country for uneven production and consumption rate. Therefore, the government makes efforts to generate power using coal in addition to hydropower, solar and wind to meet the power needs. The Chinese investors also provide assistance in such operations.

The proper measures are also being taken to meet the power needs in 2025 and the NEA should permit the investors more and conduct technological exchange and training courses to develop human resources.

Then, Mr Ren Jin Dong talked about the implementation of cross-border power connection and pledged to support the ongoing and further projects of

the two countries and to enhance the strategic relations as 2023 is the 73rd anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China-Myanmar and the 10th anniversary of Belt and Road between two countries.

On 18 March, the Union minister and party observed the 16,000-MW Baihetan hydropower plant equipped with sixteen 1,000-MW turbines in Yunnan Province and the 390 MW wind power project of Yunnan Provincial Energy Investment Group (YEIG) on 19 March.

On 22 March, the Union minister and party attended the China-Myanmar Power Cooperation Roundtable Talk held by the Foreign Relations Department of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. During the meeting, the Union minister discussed with Chinese partner companies of the ministry for the hydropower project, solar power project, wind power project and power transmission project. —MNA/KTZH

Military columns join full-dressed rehearsal for 78th Anniversary Armed Forces Day parade



State Administration Council Vice-Chair Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win inspects the full-dressed rehearsal of the 78th Anniversary Armed Forces Day parade yesterday.

THE military columns that will take part in the 78th Anniversary Armed Forces Day parade on 27 March participated in the full-dressed rehearsal at the Nay Pyi Taw parade ground yesterday.

During the military parade rehearsal, Anawrahta Column, Kyansittha Column, Bayintnaung Column, Aung Zeya Col-

umn, Hsinphyushin Column, Bandoola Column and Aung San Column marched from the Thittat parade ground to the Nay Pyi Taw Parade Ground to the accompaniment of the military band singing and marching in unison.

Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Commander-in-Chief of

Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Union Minister for Defence General Mya Tun Oo, Chairman of the Leading Committee for Organizing the Armed Forces Day Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye, Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Moe Aung,

Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung, senior military officers from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief, Chairman of the Armed Forces Day Organizing Management Committee Commander of Nay Pyi Taw Command Maj-Gen Zaw Hein, and officials inspected the rehearsal, and the Vice-Senior General attended to the needs.

The parade rehearsal comprised officers and other ranks from the Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air) and the Myanmar Police Force, female service personnel, members of the Tatmadaw (Army) mechanized troops, Tatmadaw (Navy) mechanized troops and aircraft and helicopters from the Tatmadaw (Air). — MNA/KTZH

Myanmar Technical Team conducts in-person interviews with extended family members of verified displaced persons in Bangladesh

A 17-member Myanmar Technical Team for in-person verification led by U Aung Myo, Director of the Department of Immigration and Population, Rakhine State visited Teknaf, Bangladesh, from 15 to 22 March 2023.

Myanmar dispatched the Technical Team for in-person verification in coordination with the Bangladesh government at the request of the verified displaced persons from Rakhine State who are to be repatriated under the pilot project to verify their extended family members so that they could return family-wise.

During their stay in Teknaf, the Myanmar Techni-

cal Team conducted in-person interviews with around 480 additional family members of the prospective returnees under the pilot project and collected and checked evidence of their past residency in Myanmar as well as documents of the children born in Bangladesh which will be submitted to the respective committees in Myanmar to continue the process whether they are eligible to return to Myanmar.—MNA

The Myanmar Technical Team is seen conducting in-person interviews with extended families of verified displaced persons in Teknaf, Bangladesh.



MoI basic English proficiency course concludes

THE closing ceremony of the basic English proficiency course took place at the assembly hall of the Ministry of Information in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

MoI Deputy Minister U Ye Tint, Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung, heads of departments, trainers and trainees were present at the ceremony.

First, the deputy minister said that possessing proficiency in all the languages mainly used in the media industry of the country would contribute to the performance of work and

that it is necessary to have a good command of English as it is the language used in communication with international organizations.

Then, the deputy minister gave a souvenir to trainer Daw Saw Hla Nandar from the Ministry of Education. And they had the documentary photo taken together.

It was the second batch and lasted from 6 to 24 March. The first batch was held from 27 April to 22 June 2021. The courses aim to improve the English proficiency of the staff. — MNA/KZW



The concluding event of the Ministry of Information basic English proficiency course in progress yesterday.

Battalion commander-level flag-raising meeting held between Myanmar-Bangladesh border guard forces



The documentary group photo of the meeting on 20 March 2023 in Rakhine State.

A battalion commander-level flag-raising meeting was held between the Myanmar-Bangladesh border guard forces on 20 March in Maungtaw, Rakhine State.

The meeting was attended by the Myanmar side led by Police Lt-Col Kyaw Naing Soe, Commanding Officer from No 2 Border Guard Force and 11 representatives from the Myanmar Police Force, and the Bangladesh delegation led by Lt-Col Muhammad Saiful Islam Chowdhury, Battalion Commander from No 34 Bangladesh Border Guard (Cox Bazaar) and 15 represent-

atives.

Both sides cordially and frankly discussed matters relating to current security in the Myanmar-Bangladesh border region, the prevention of illegal infiltration in the border area, trans-border criminal cases, joint patrolling between the border guards of the two countries, and the holding of the company commander-level and outpost commander-level flag-raising meetings in addition to the battalion commander level between the border guards of Myanmar and Bangladesh. The meeting ended in the afternoon. — MNA/TS

Construction of new Thanlwin Bridge (Tahsan) to be completed in 2025

THE new Thanlwin Bridge (Tahsan), a two-lane bridge that lies between Mongton in the eastern Shan State and Mongpan in the southern Shan State, is being constructed by the Department of Bridges under the Ministry of Construction and is expected to be completed in 2025, according to the MoC.

It is being built by 10 professional engineers from the bridge task force 4 of the Bridges Department under MoC and 150 skilled workers and is located between the 184th kilometre and 185th kilometre of mileposts on the Namsang-Mongnai-Mongton-Monghsat road section (NH-23) and 300 feet away from the 900 feet long old bailey suspension bridge.

The construction of onshore bridge piles on either side of Mongton and Mongpan townships,

the pile cap work on two main piers (T1 and T2) and the pier shaft works have been completed. The RC bored pile foundations have also been laid for piers (RC 1 and RC 2), and the remaining pile cap works are still being carried out. The construction of the new Thanlwin Bridge (Tahsan) was already completed by 35 per cent, the engineer in charge from Bridges Department stated.

The new Thanlwin Bridge (Tahsan) is 266.861 metres long and the main bridge is 200 metres long. It is a kind of Steel Truss + RC Bridge made of 1.5 metres diameter RC Bored Piles. The lower part of the bridge is RC and the upper part is Steel Truss + RC. The approach slab on the Mongpan side is 11 metres long and the other side is 54.861 metres long. One 11-meter bridge span on the Mongpan side, three



The photo shows the construction of the new Thanlwin Bridge (Tahsan) on the Namhsam-Mongnai-Mongton-Monghsat road. PHOTO: SOE MYINT AUNG

simply supported steel truss spans (24-m, 128-m, and 48-m) on the main bridge, and three 18.29-metre spans on the side of Mongton will be built and the bridge will have 8.5 metres wide motorway and one-metre wide pedestrian walk on each side. The water clearance will be 85.6 metres wide and 10.5 metres high and it is known that the bridge

load capacity is 60 tonnes.

The original bailey bridge has become old and can withstand only 16 tonnes of the weight limit of the vehicles passing through the bridge, making the trucks have to load and unload by small vehicles. Since there are delays in transporting goods by small vehicles, a new two-lane bridge with a load capacity of 60

tonnes is being constructed to make it easier for trucks carrying goods from the eastern and southern Shan States to pass through, according to the Bridge Special Task Force 4.

After the completion of the new bridge, it will also facilitate trade in local crops and other products across the border, making it a key essential road. In addition, Taunggyi can be reached through this bridge from Tachilek directly, without needing to go to Kengtung. Another border trade route is likely to emerge as a trade route to Taunggyi could be extended through the border trade point on the Mongton-Pungpahkyem road. The project work for the construction of the new bridge was started on 6 February 2019, according to the Ministry of Construction. — Pwint Thitsar/CT

Interview with a representative from the ASEAN Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on Myanmar's contribution in enhancing ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations

Question - Could you please introduce the Dialogue Partnership of ASEAN and how Myanmar plays the role of Dialogue Coordinator?

Answer - In accordance with Article (41) of the ASEAN Charter, ASEAN has developed friendly relations and mutually beneficial dialogue, cooperation and partnerships with countries and sub-regional, regional and international organizations and institutions. The external relations of ASEAN shall adhere to the purposes and principles set forth in the ASEAN Charter.

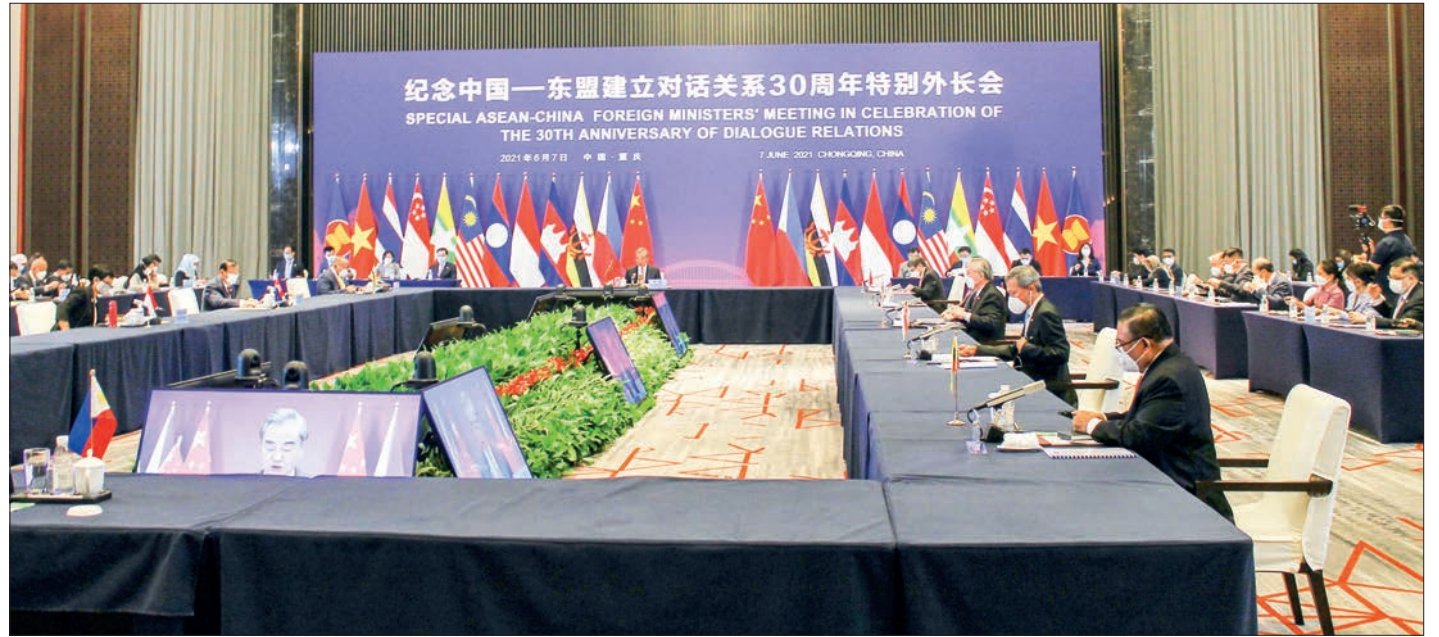
To date, ASEAN has established Dialogue Partnerships with 11 countries namely Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States, and Sectoral Dialogue Partnerships with 6 countries namely Brazil, Norway, Pakistan, Switzerland, Türkiye and United Arab Emirates, as well as Development Partnerships with 4 countries namely Chile, France, Germany and Italy. ASEAN has also established regional cooperation mechanisms such as ASEAN Plus Three and East Asia Summit.

ASEAN is the primary driving force in regional arrangements it maintains its centrality in regional cooperation and community building. In the conduct of external relations of ASEAN, Member States coordinate and endeavour to develop common positions and pursue joint actions on the basis of unity and solidarity. The ASEAN Member States, acting as Country Coordinators, take turns to take overall responsibility for coordinating and promoting the interests of ASEAN in its relations with the relevant Dialogue Partners. The Country Coordinators shall represent ASEAN and enhance relations on the basis of mutual respect and equality, in conformity with ASEAN's principles and have to co-chair relevant meetings between ASEAN and external partners.

Myanmar has taken over the Coordinatorship of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations from the Philippines at the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference with China for the term (2021-2024) and has been coordinating among ASEAN Member States and China for the development of Dialogue Relations.

Question - Could you please share your experience as Country Coordinator of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations?

Answer - Since the establishment of the relations in 1991, ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations have become one of ASEAN's most substantive and dynamic



The Special ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held on 7 June 2021 in Chongqing, China in celebration of the 30th Anniversary of Dialogue Relations.

partnerships. As ASEAN and China have established a full range of mechanisms in all Three Community Pillars and the three decades of friendship remain strong and deep which is contributing to our mutual benefit and to regional peace, security, stability and prosperity, ASEAN-China cooperation is one of the most important relations for ASEAN. The deeper and more comprehensive the cooperation between ASEAN and China is the more duties and obligations the country coordinator bears.

The Dialogue Partnership between ASEAN and China is guided by the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity (2021-2025) and Annual Work Plan on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC). Firstly, I would like to explain the Plan of Action. The Work Plan for the implementation of the DOC will be explained later. The Plan of Action includes projects and activities under three pillars of political security, and economic and socio-cultural cooperation and they are implemented by the relevant sectoral bodies. In the monitoring process, Myanmar, as the country coordinator, developed the annual progress report on the implementation of the Plan of Action in cooperation with the ASEAN Secretariat and it is yearly submitted to ASEAN-China Summit for Leader's notation.

ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership Vision 2030 which was adopted at the 21st ASEAN-China Summit to Commemorate the 15th Anniversary of the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership in 2018 and the Joint Statement of the ASEAN-China Special Summit to Commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations: Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for

Peace, Security, Prosperity and Sustainable Development are also important political documents which paved the way for future directions of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations. Therefore, Myanmar as the country coordinator takes the initiative to fully implement our Leader's Statements.

In order to set up the annual priorities, Myanmar as coordinator conveys China's proposals to the ASEAN Member States at the beginning of the year and further coordinates with China based on the consensus of ASEAN. In the same way, Myanmar consults with China to promote cooperation activities which are common interests of ASEAN Member States. In this regard, it is imperative that ASEAN shall be a driving force and maintain ASEAN Centrality in regional cooperation and community building.

ASEAN-China Senior Officials' Consultation (ACSOC) is regularly held in April or May to prepare the outcomes of the Post Ministerial Conference with China (PMC Plus China) and the annual ASEAN-China Summit. The ACSOC is co-chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China. Myanmar as the coordinator shall coordinate among ASEAN Member States and China to reach a consensus on the dates, venue and provisional agenda for the meeting.

By coordinating so, policy matters and concept papers for the Joint Statements to be released at the ASEAN-China Summit, are being coordinated and reached consensus first among the ASEAN Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the ASEAN Member States and China. The concept paper is the document which covers the back-

ground, objective, areas of cooperation and preliminary arrangements. After the concept paper has been agreed upon by ASEAN Member States and China, negotiations on the draft Joint Statements are being conducted by the Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) with the Chinese Mission in Jakarta. With regard to the Joint Statement related to the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), negotiations on the Structure of the Joint Statement are being conducted among Headquarters of the ASEAN Member States and China due to the sensitive and technical nature of the document, prior to the drafting of the Joint Statement by the CPR and the Chinese Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta.

The designation of the year of cooperation for every year is unique in ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations. ASEAN and China designated the year 2022 as the ASEAN-China Year of Sustainable Development and the year 2023 as the ASEAN-China Year of Agricultural Development and Food Security Cooperation. The next year 2024 is intended to designate the year of ASEAN-China People-to-People Exchanges and enhance possible cooperation.

Question - What are the obvious facts that Myanmar has taken full obligations of the country coordinator?

Answer - Since Myanmar joined ASEAN in 1997, Myanmar has taken the obligations of the Member State and is fully adhered to the basic principles and provisions enshrined in the ASEAN Charter. Furthermore, Myanmar brought initiatives which are beneficial for ASEAN and its region during its Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2014.

SEE PAGE-7

FROM PAGE-6

In the same way, since Myanmar has taken the Coordinatorship, ASEAN and China continued to make significant progress and have achieved many positive outcomes such as (i) ASEAN-China Joint Statement on Cooperation in Support of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework; (ii) ASEAN-China Joint Statement on Enhancing Green and Sustainable Development Cooperation; and (iii) Joint Statement of the ASEAN-China Special Summit to Commemorate the 30th Anniversary of the ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations: Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for Peace, Security, Prosperity and Sustainable Development, which were released at the 24th ASEAN-China Summit held in October 2021.

Under Myanmar's strong Coordinatorship between the ASEAN Member States and China, ASEAN and China jointly announced that the dialogue relations were elevated to another milestone with the establishment of the ASEAN-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) at the ASEAN-China Special Summit on 22 November 2021 to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations. To effectively implement the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP), ASEAN and China reached an agreement on an Annex to the existing ASEAN-China Plan of Action (2021-2025) which was successfully adopted at the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) with China held on 4 August 2022.

In addition, the Joint Statement on the 20th Anniversary of the DOC, the ASEAN-China Joint Statement on Strengthening Common and Sustainable Development and the ASEAN-China Joint Statement on Food Security Cooperation were adopted at the 25th ASEAN-China Summit held on 11 November 2022 under Myanmar's Coordinatorship.

For the negotiations of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC), Myanmar is closely working with the Heads of the Joint Working Group on DOC and co-chairing six meetings of the Joint Working Group on the implementation of the DOC with China during Myanmar's Coordinatorship and achieved progress of negotiations on Single Draft Negotiating Text of the COC.

Although Myanmar as a responsible member of ASEAN Member States, has fulfilled its obligations, some ASEAN Member States treated Myanmar with indignity and inequality by giving a pretext on Myanmar's internal political development.

As you are well aware, although Myanmar's Political Representative to ASEAN Ministerial Meetings and Summits was denied by some ASEAN Member States, Myanmar never failed in its responsibility as country coordinator to contribute to the success of the meetings, particularly in preparing the outcome documents including the distribution of the document kit for the meeting, as well as the ASEAN Common

Statement.

The above facts obviously prove that Myanmar has fulfilled its obligations as Country Coordinator for the ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations.

Question - we learnt that Myanmar is the Co-chair for the process of the Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the DOC through your answers. We would like to know how Myanmar coordinates among ASEAN Member States and China on matters related to the South China Sea which draws international interest and what achieved so far.

Answer - In maintaining peace and stability in the region, including the South China Sea, ASEAN and China signed the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) on 4 November 2002, which is a milestone, as the DOC is the first political document on the South China Sea issue jointly signed by ASEAN Member States and China, and embodied their political will to promote mutual trust and cooperation and maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea.

As Myanmar is the country coordinator for ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations, Myanmar is co-chairing the ASEAN-China Meeting of Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) with China. In the Implementation of the DOC, the ASEAN-China Meeting of Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the DOC and the ASEAN-China Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) on the Implementation of the DOC are established. For the SOM-DOC mechanism, U Chan Aye, Permanent Secretary and SOM Leader for ASEAN-Myanmar, Ministry of Foreign Affairs is co-chairing the meeting with China and U Mang Hau Thang, Deputy Director-General, ASEAN Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is co-chairing meeting with China.

Despite the pandemic, the ASEAN Member States and China have maintained good momentum in their efforts towards the early conclusion of an effective and substantive Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) that is in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) through the step-by-step resumption of COC negotiations. The six times of ASEAN-China Meetings of the Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the DOC (JWG-DOC) were co-chaired by Myanmar and achieved some progress in the Negotiation of the COC.

At the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) with China held on 4 August 2022, ASEAN and China reaffirmed the aspiration to expedite the COC negotiations and looked forward to the early completion of the second reading of the Single Draft Negotiating Text (SDNT). At present, we are negotiating the Basic

Undertakings and Final Clause section of the Single Draft Negotiating Text of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC).

In ensuring a more effective work process on the implementation of the DOC and the negotiation on the COC, the Annual Work Plan on the Implementation of the DOC is developed and circulated by Myanmar as Co-Chair. Under the Work Plan, the 1st Workshop on Marine Scientific Research, and the 1st and the 2nd Training Course on Marine Scientific Research in the South China Sea were successfully held in 2021 and 2022 respectively during Myanmar's Coordinatorship.

As the year 2022 marked the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), owing to Myanmar's concerted effort, ASEAN and China reached common ground on the negotiation of the Joint Statement on the 20th Anniversary of the DOC, which was finally adopted at the 25th ASEAN-China Summit held on 11 November 2022.

To celebrate the auspicious occasion of the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), the Workshops on the 20th Anniversary of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) were successfully organized by China on 25 July 2022 in Beijing and by Cambodia on 20 December 2022 in Siem Reap respectively. At the Workshops, Permanent Secretary U Chan Aye delivered the opening remarks and U Mang Hau Thang, Deputy Director-General of the ASEAN Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs discussed the sessions on Consultation of the COC and shared the views on how to proceed with the process of COC negotiations that led to mutually beneficial outcomes.

As I told you earlier, ASEAN and China have established the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership since 2021. Through the commencement of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, Myanmar as the country coordinator and Co-chair of the process of the Implementation of the DOC, remains committed to continuing constructive engagement, to keep the momentum of the progress of dialogue and consultation in moving forward towards early completion of the second reading of the single draft negotiating text (SDNT) of the COC. In coordinating between ASEAN Member States and China, flexibility, cooperation and compromise from ASEAN Member States and China are key ingredients to meet the expected outcomes.

Question - For the last question, how will you criticize the importance of China for ASEAN?

Answer - Not only China is an important partner of ASEAN but also ASEAN is an important organization for China. As I told you earlier, China is one of ASEAN's most substantive and dynamic

partnerships and the first dialogue partner which established the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with ASEAN. After China and Australia have become Comprehensive Strategic Partners with ASEAN in 2021, other dialogue partners proposed to elevate the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with ASEAN.

China prioritizes ASEAN in its foreign policy toward neighbouring countries. China was the first Dialogue Partner of ASEAN to accede to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in 2003. This year 2023 marks the 20th Anniversary of China's accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC). China's accession to the TAC has contributed to the stature of the TAC as the code of conduct for inter-state relations in the region. In addition, China was also the first Nuclear Weapon State (NWS) which expressed its intention to accede to the Protocol to the SEANWFZ without reservation.

On Economic cooperation, trade volume between ASEAN and China reached a new record of USD 669 billion in 2021, making ASEAN and China each other's largest trading partner since 2020; foreign direct investment (FDI) flows from China to ASEAN amounted to USD 13.6 billion in 2021, almost double the USD 7.0 billion in 2020. To promote business opportunities, China-ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO) is annually held in Nanning, China.

In addition, as ASEAN-China Centre was established in 2011 to undertake activities to help investors and businessmen from ASEAN member States in exploring trade and investment opportunities in China and vice versa; to increase people-to-people contacts public awareness, mutual understanding through cultural, educational and information exchanges, it facilitates business opportunities between ASEAN and China through mutual understanding and friendship. The economic growth of China benefits ASEAN which is geographically linked with China.

At the ASEAN-China Joint Statement on Strengthening Common and Sustainable Development which was released at the 25th ASEAN-China Summit last year, China committed to advance cooperation in the four priority areas identified in the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP).

Furthermore, with regard to the South China Sea issue, ASEAN and China continue to work closely towards the full and effective implementation of the DOC and the early conclusion of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea to maintain the South China Sea as a sea of peace, stability, and prosperity.

Therefore, as ASEAN and China have been closely cooperating in all areas of politics, economics and socio-culture and living side by side friendly for mutual benefit, I am saying that China is indeed important for ASEAN and ASEAN is as well important for China.



OPINION

Wipe off dangerously infectious TB from the world

TUBERCULOSIS (TB) is one of three major diseases which still pose threats to the world. As the TB virus has been killing millions of human beings on a yearly basis, global people wish to end the TB epidemic.

Health professionals and medical experts have been trying to comprehensively fight the TB epidemic but they can partially control infection of the epidemic till today. Although global people died of some infectious diseases, they did not entitle names of the killer diseases. Since then, TB has been a terrible disease to kill human beings. Even though they could find the TB virus a killer, they did not have the capacity to totally eliminate TB virus.

But, medical experts could partially control it today. Physicians could cure patients with TB disease to be healed. They could raise public awareness about the dreadful danger of TB disease and disseminate dos and don'ts for TB patients. Consequently, they could strive for declining in the infectious rate of TB disease among the global people.

As part of efforts to highlight the success in curing TB patients as well as the danger of the disease, World TB Day is held across the world every year. It aims to widen the scope of the people to know the devastating health, social and economic consequences of tuberculosis (TB) and to step up efforts to end the global TB epidemic.

The 2022 Report of the World Health Organization pointed out some gains in tackling tuberculosis. For example, in 2020, the first year of the Covid-19 pandemic, the quality of TB treatment was maintained, with an 86 per cent success rate, in 2021-22,

preventive TB treatment of individuals living with HIV has exceeded the global target of 6 million, and countries have been increasingly taking up new WHO recommendations and tools leading to improved outcomes.

The documents comprise data for estimates of TB burden, Universal Health Coverage and social protection, TB/HIV care in new and relapse TB patients, and drug-resistant TB care in Myanmar. Myanmar's Ministry of Health assigns the duties of the TB control project to fight against infectious diseases across the nation as much as possible by organizing the health staff.

Whatever it may be, all global people including Myanmar are responsible for comprehensively fighting against the dangerous infectious disease TB. The World TB Day 2023, with the theme 'Yes! We can end TB!', aims to inspire hope and encourage high-level leadership, increased investments, faster uptake of new WHO recommendations, adoption of innovations, accelerated action, and multi-sectoral collaboration to combat the TB epidemic.

Professor Melford Spiro: A Belated, Personal Reminiscence and Tribute

By Dr Myint Zan

MARCH 2023 is the 101st-month death anniversary of anthropologist Melford Spiro (26 April 1920-18 October 2014). I have never met Professor Melford Spiro who died at the age of 94 on 18 October 2014. But for over 30 years starting from early 1984 I have communicated with him intermittently and at times continually by phone and (later) through e-mails.

Only in 2019 nearly five years after Professor Spiro passed away while browsing old newspapers in the library of the University of Mandalay, I came across a review article by the late U Aye Maung (Sarpay Beikman) (2 February 1914-10 May 2002) of Melford Spiro's book *Buddhism and Society: A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes* (first published 1970, revised edition 1982). U Aye Maung's review article was published in two instalments in the then monthly *The Guardian* magazine sometime in 1974. U Aye Maung's article reviewed the 1970 edition of Melford Spiro's book.

I have had the chance to send U Aye Maung's perceptive article 'Buddhism and Science' published in *The Guardian* (Rangoon) newspaper on 4 September 1970 to Melford Spiro. In a letter dated 28 March 2012, Mel wrote me:

QUOTE

U Aye Maung was clearly a very learned intellectual, equally at home in Buddhist and Western thought. Though he accepted (Western) science as an essential institution for learning about the world (including man), he was also profoundly aware of the limitations of science as a way of knowing. Similarly, while he honours the Buddha for his insights regarding the nature of man, he also recognizes that the Western science of psychology has discovered human characteristics that are absent from the teachings of the Buddha. In short, U Aye Maung was precisely the type of academic that formerly was honoured in the West, but who—because of the cult of political correctness—is now viewed as an intellectual lightweight.

UNQUOTE

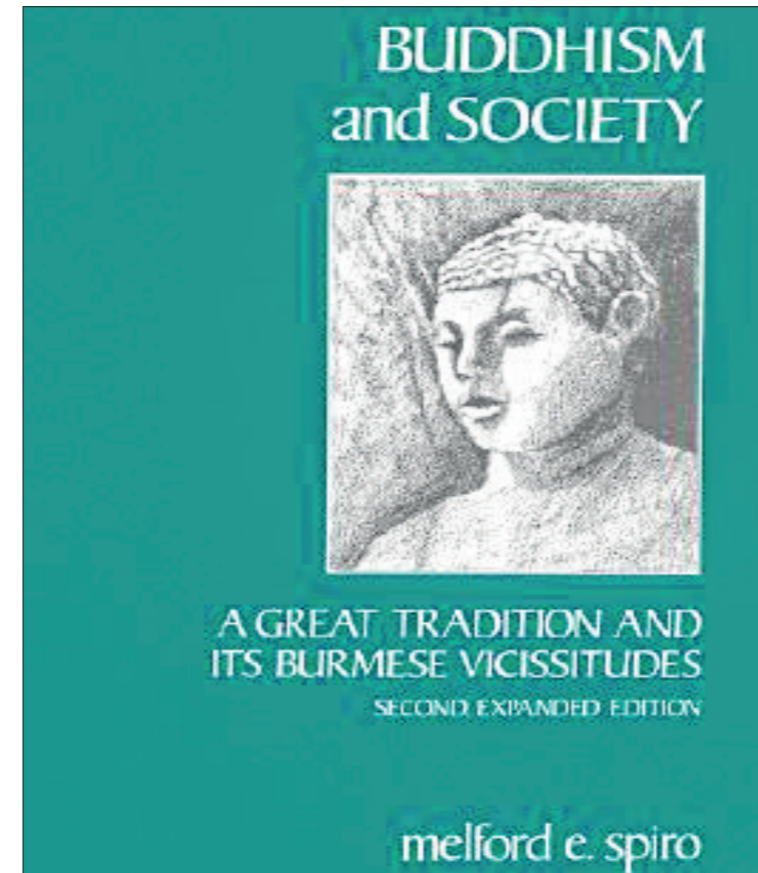
One supposes that Melford Spiro didn't have the chance to read U Aye Maung's review of one of his books but I am pleased to have communicated to Mel a brief article of U Aye Maung.

The rest of the tribute is personal (one could say personalized) as it is not intended to be even the briefest survey of Mel's academic and research achievements. As a

non-anthropologist, I am aware that roughly his research covered at least three geographic areas: the South Seas or Pacific Islands, Israeli kibbutz and Burma where he conducted fieldwork research in an 18-month stint from about late 1960 to May 1962.

That fieldwork and research led to the publications of at least four books on Burma the first one being *Burmese Supernaturalism* (first published in 1967), the second being *Buddhism and Society* (mentioned above) and the third *Marriage and Kinship in Burma a Cultural and Psychodynamic Analysis* (first published 1977) and the fourth *Anthropological Other or Burmese Brother* (first published in 1992).

Most of his fieldwork research in Burma was conducted in the village of Yekyi a town several miles out of Mandalay where at least one fellow anthropologist (according to Spiro, personal communications by e-mail) 'charged' was a figment of his imagination. A fellow and much junior American anthropologist (in that she was born about four years after Spiro left Burma in May 1962) stated to me that she did not think that Yekyi was shall we say a 'construct' of Mel's imagination though she had assumed that perhaps Yekyi was a 'composite'



rather than an actual village.

I am glad that I personally was able to see for myself that Yekyi actually exists and to 'disabuse' such misconceptions.

On a visit to Yekyi in July 2014 I met Mel's landlady where Mel stayed for several months in 1961. The landlady and her children called Mel *Bogyee* ('the big white man') and informed me

that my visit to the Yekyi village to enquire about Melford Spiro's sojourn there was the first ever by any Burmese in more than five decades! (A year later in 2015 Dr Seinenu Thein-Lemelson, based in the United States, became the second person of Burmese descent to visit Yekyi for the specific purpose of enquiring about Mel's stay there over 50 years earlier.)

In 2001 Mel revisited what he called 'my village' for about half a day and he said some of the children (in the early 1960s) remembered him.

During my less than an hour conversation with Mel's landlady, she mentioned twice how Mel requested that her third son, a boy (born in September 1960) be allowed to be adopted and to take him to America with him since she already then had three kids.

Mel said he would bring the kid back to the village on a yearly visit. It was his intention to revisit Yekyi yearly for further research. Alas, that was not the case since soon after Mel left Burma in May 1962 the then regime banned almost all foreigners' fieldwork research in Burma. Mel sans (without) his (might-have-been) 'adopted child' revisited Yekyi for the first time in nearly fifty years and indeed for the last time, in 'this life' in 2001 (see below vis-à-vis the 'next life').

I wrote 'sans his adopted child' since Mel's landlady Daw Sein Than of Yekyi declined to give away her child but more than fifty years later in July 2014, she expressed her regret to me that she did not accede to Mel's requests.

She said her son, married with children and grandchildren

in 2014, did not finish the sixth grade in the village school and worked in the village fields. Daw Sein Than was whimsical – almost pensive – as to what would have happened if she had allowed her son to be adopted by Mel and if he had grown up in America instead of in Yekyi.

Sadly, Mel's never to be adopted son died in a motorcycle accident near Mandalay in December 2015 – his younger sister informed me through social media. Is it *Karma*, or variegated factors of (metaphysical) chance or necessity that led to this happenstance so to speak?

What would this noted anthropologist have said to 'the future that never was'? I pose this query, as Mel in a personal communication wrote me that though he did not believe in 'Karma or Nirvana' if forced to 'reveal' his religion he stated that he was a 'Theravada Buddhist'.

When I conveyed to my late mother Professor Dr Myint Myint Khin of Mel's (eventually) lost battle with cancer, my mother out of her own volition *cetana* donated a robe to a Buddhist monk for his recovery. Mel wrote to me about how touched he was by my late

mother's gesture. And in one of his last e-mails, he expressed sorrow and offered his condolences to me regarding my mother's demise.

His second last e-mail to me dated 22 September 2014 stated:

QUOTE

I have been informed by my doctors that I have inoperable cancer, and will most likely die within the year. I had been making plans to travel to Burma this autumn, but unhappily those plans must be cancelled.

UNQUOTE.

In less than a month of his writing to me, Melford Spiro died on 18 October 2014. A revisit to his village of Yekyi is not possible in the life of Melford Spiro which ended in 2014.

Perhaps Mel would have been amused if I were to write – as I do now – that in 'his village' of Yekyi, in the year 2023, an eight-year-old child's *karma* or destiny is such that she (or he) may grow up to a good anthropologist, scholar and a good person that Mel was.

WHO warns of 'fake news' after Musk pandemic treaty tweet

THE World Health Organization on Thursday warned against "fake news" after Twitter boss Elon Musk tweeted that countries should not "cede authority to WHO" amid negotiations over a new pandemic treaty.

"The claim that the accord will cede power to WHO is quite simply false. It's fake news. Countries will decide what the accord says," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a press conference.

Tedros did not mention Musk by name, but earlier Thursday he had also tweeted a response at the Twitter chief,



insisting "countries aren't ceding sovereignty to WHO".

"The Pandemic Accord won't change that. The accord will help countries better guard against pandemics. It will help us to better protect people regardless of whether they live in countries that are rich or poor," he tweeted.

The exchange came as negotiations proceed towards a global accord aimed at helping prevent and swiftly respond to

future pandemics, with a final text expected to go to a vote among WHO member states in May 2024.

The deal could address the need for swift information exchange between countries when faced with a global health emergency like the Covid-19 pandemic, and could aim to prevent the rampant inequity seen in the access to vaccines during that crisis.

The agreement should

also call for countries to boost national, regional and global preparedness and detection systems to spot pandemic risks.

Even before the discussions began though, the WHO was battling a barrage of disinformation and conspiracy theories surrounding the negotiations and future agreement, including allegations that the organization is scheming to take over health policies in sovereign nations.

With the agreement under discussion, "no country will cede any sovereignty to WHO," Tedros insisted to journalists Thursday.

"Countries will decide what the accord says, and countries alone. And countries will implement the accord in line with their own national laws.

"If any politician, businessperson, or anyone at all is confused about what the pandemic accord is or isn't, we would be more than happy to discuss it and explain it."

SOURCE: AFP

Elon Musk's Twitter profile is seen on a smartphone placed on printed Twitter logo in this picture illustration.
PHOTO: AFP/FILE

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Central Women's Hospital Mandalay successfully operates conjoined male twins



The photo shows conjoined twin brothers.

CONJOINED male twins were successfully delivered at Mandalay Central Women's Hospital on 20 March, according to the Public Health Department of Yamethin Township.

The twins were the first pregnancy of a woman aged 23

who lives in the Wartoe (West) Ward of Yamethin Township. The woman received prenatal care at the Maternal and Child Health Centre and from an obstetrician and gynaecologist at the district public hospital.

As the baby's position was not normal, the obstetrician from the Yamethin District Public Hospital transferred the pregnant woman to the Mandalay Central Women's Hospital.

Both the mother and children are in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) of Mandalay Central Women's Hospital and in good health. Specialists from the Mandalay Central Women's Hospital and the 550-bed Children's Hospital are closely providing necessary health care. —TWA/CT

Lancang city mayor hopes for Lancang-Chinshwehaw railway construction next year



The picture shows a meeting of China (Lancang)-Myanmar bilateral promotion on trade, commerce and investments at the UMFCCI.

LANCANG city mayor Mr Du Jianhui said during the meeting held at the Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry on 23 March that the construction of the railway networks linking Lancang city with Chinshwehaw city is expected to start next year.

That meeting highlighted the promotion of trade, commerce and investment between China (Lancang) and Myanmar. He has requested the ministry concerned in Yunnan provincial government regarding the railway construction to facilitate trade with Myanmar. Hopefully, that project will commence next year, he added.

There is a high trade vol-

ume between Myanmar and Lancang district. Additionally, upgrading infrastructure and buildings at the border points is underway. An international trade zone project is also expected to be implemented. The Free Trade Zone in the Chinshwehaw border has just started upon the completion of basic infrastructure. He invited the officials to visit there.

Lancang city is situated in the south-west part of Yunnan Province, covering 0.24 million kilometre areas. The GDP of the city was estimated at 1,000 million Yuan last year. It was ranked eighth in development of the Yunnan.

China is the most important trade partner with Myanmar.

Myanmar conducts trade with China through the sea route and border channels.

The border trade drastically fell amid the negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, it is time to step up the border trade. President U Aye Win of the UMFCCI elaborated on ensuring smooth trade flow and easy banking transactions for direct Yuan-Kyat payment.

Matters concerning the free trade zone's ongoing condition, 4th Lancang-Myanmar Expo, transit trade, direct use of Yuan-Kyat payment, issuing border passes and further procedures are discussed at the meeting. —TWA/EM

Public rental housing project to be completed in end-March

PEOPLE will be accommodated at 121 buildings of the public rental housing project in the Yangon region that will be completed by the end of this month, according to the public rental housing construction project coordinating meeting.

There are 3,104 apartments in 194 buildings to be completed in the first phase of the public rental housing project in the Yangon region and 121 buildings will be completed at the end of this month, it is learnt.

At the end of this month, MCEF company will have completed 74 buildings, MLCA company 47 buildings and measures are taken to complete the remaining 73 buildings as soon as possible. —TWA/MKKS



Toll exemption allowed for EVs until 2025

EVs will be exempted from tolls from 1 April 2023 until 31 March 2025, according to the Ministry of Construction.

EVs do not need to pay tolls on all roads and bridges across the country, including the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway, operated by the BOT system. Fees for the use of roads and bridges

will be exempted on all regional and state roads and bridges for all EVs.

Battery electric vehicles (BEVs) are also exempted from registration fees imposed on imported vehicles, according to the Department of Road Transport Administration. —TWA/KZW

Officials view the charging process of the battery electric vehicle (BEV).

LOCAL BUSINESS

MRF to offer Rice Processing Technology Course in May

MYANMAR Rice Federation (MRF) will offer a Rice Processing Technology Course with certificates in the upcoming May, including technical and practical approaches.

The Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Industry, MRF and the Myanmar Rice Millers Association arranged this program.

The course is a two-month course offering drying rice crops, storing, milling and possessing post-harvest technologies by experts under the public-private partnership.

The trainees must hold at least a bachelor's degree or diploma or AGTI Diploma, B Tech degree, or BE degree.

Education criteria will be eased for those engaged in rice mills and paddy companies depending on job experiences.

Those who successfully pass the tests with active attendance will receive a certificate. The trainees will also have job opportunities to work for the rice mills.

Those enthusiastic can enrol by 28 April, presenting a registration form, a copy of the citizenship scrutiny card and household registration certificate, a recommendation letter from the ward administrator, education certificates, a referee from the supervisor or employer and three passport-sized photos. For further



Rice bags are pictured being unloaded at the Myanmar Rice Federation.

details, people can send emails to admin@mrf.com.mm, mrf.manmar@gmail.com and contact the phone number of the federation (01 218266-68, 01 2301128-29). – NN/EM

Seeking import licences before port arrival of goods mandatory



Loading and unloading containers are seen at Yangon Port.

SEEKING import licence for all types of goods including ones stored under customs warehousing before the goods arrive at the port is obligatory, according to the notification released by the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce.

The department apprised the importers of the rules and regulations for imports that need import licences as per the Export/Import Notification 7/2023 dated 22 March.

Earlier, the Trade Department under the Ministry of Commerce released Notification

50/2020 stating that all import items except goods stored in the Customs warehouse that need import licences were not allowed to arrive at the port before the port arrival processing permit to comply with the customs regulation stipulated in Notification 68/2019 of the Ministry Planning and Finance.

Additionally, importers were notified to face legal actions in line with the Export and Import Law if early arrival of the goods without import licence or permit of the departments concerned was found, as per export/import

news letter 6/2022.

Therefore, an import licence is required for all items including goods to be stored at the Customs warehouse before arrival, intending to steer trading activities and maintain the quality of the goods due to failure to claim the goods from the Customs bonded warehouse for a long period.

Thus, the statements in Notification 50/2020 will cease to be in effect for six months from 1 April 2023 and suspension might extend, if necessary, the Trade Department notified. – NN/EM

Prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 24 March 2023

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K2,100
Octane 95	K2,195
Diesel	K2,100
Premium Diesel	K2,180

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,343,300 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,942,000 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.

The Global New Light of Myanmar

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Dated: **25 March 2023**

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Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (084N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **25-3-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Skyrocketing inflation in Argentina fuelled by US monetary policy, says economist

Internal and external factors like US monetary policy are responsible for skyrocketing inflation in Argentina, economist Hernan Bergstein has said recently in an interview with Xinhua.

US price hikes, a jump in international raw material prices and US Federal Reserve interest rate increases generate turbulence in the balance of payments of peripheral

economies, including Argentina, which significantly impact debt conditions, said the economics professor at the National University of Quilmes, an Argentine university. He explained that the jump in commodity prices has negatively impacted Argentina through imports of primary goods such as energy with a consequent increase in finished products.—Xinhua

TRADEMARK CAUTION

Juventus Football Club S.p.A. (Italian corporation), a company incorporated in Italy and having its registered office at **Via Druento 175, 10151 Turin, Italy** is the owner and proprietor of the following Trademark:



Reg. No. 4/1829/2017 (27 February 2017)

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The above mark has been filed in Italy as application no. 302016000096097, on July 12, 2016.

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Dated 25 March 2023

Japan consumer inflation slows to 3.1% in Feb, food prices jump

JAPAN'S core consumer prices rose 3.1 percent in February from a year earlier, slowing from

a four-decade high as government subsidies on utility bills curbed inflationary pressure while surging food prices threaten to dampen household sentiment, government data showed Friday.

The resource-scarce nation saw the pace of gain in the key gauge of inflation slow for the first time in 13 months, providing relief to Prime Minister Fumio Kishida ahead of nationwide local elections this spring.—Kyodo



Japanese households are increasingly feeling the pain of rising prices of everyday goods, as companies continue to pass on higher raw material costs to consumers. Women make sushi rolls at Tokyo Sushi Academy. **PHOTO: KYODO**

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Dated: 25 March 2023

China's telecom industry expands steadily in Jan-Feb



People visit the exhibition booth of China Telecom at the 2022 World 5G Convention in Harbin, capital of northeast China's Heilongjiang Province, 10 August 2022. **PHOTO: ZHANG TAO / XINHUA**

CHINA'S telecommunication industry logged a steady expansion in the first two months of this year, with a strong expansion of emerging businesses and new infrastructure, official data shows.

The combined business revenues of firms in the sector totaled 280.3 billion yuan (about 40.8 billion

US dollars), up 7.9 per cent year on year, according to data from the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology.

Of the total, emerging sectors such as internet data centers, cloud computing and the Internet of Things saw their revenues rise 25.7 per cent year on year, enabling telecom

business revenues to increase by 5 percentage points, the ministry said.

The data also reveals the steady progress China has made in advancing new infrastructure construction. The country had 2.38 million 5G base stations by the end of February, 72,100 more than at the end of last year.—Xinhua

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exhausts and exhaust fittings; exhausts for motors and engines; power transmission systems; power transmissions [except for land vehicles]; compressors (superchargers); ignition devices, fuelling devices and controlling devices for internal combustion engines; hydraulic and pneumatic controls for internal combustion engines; lubricating apparatus and cooling apparatus (radiators) all included in this class; filters [parts of machines or engines]; filters for cleaning cooling air, for engines; bearings [parts of machines]; cylinders for motors and engines; cylinder heads for engines; camshafts for vehicle engines; connecting rods for machines, motors and engines; crank shafts; gaskets for internal combustion engines; sealing joints [parts of engines]; gears, other than for land vehicles; gears for machines; automotive engine blocks; exhaust manifold for engines; pistons [parts of machines or engines]; pistons for engines; piston rings; rocker arms for engines; pumps [parts of machines, engines or motors]; timing belt pulleys [parts of engines]; valves [parts of machines]; injectors for engines; control mechanisms for machines, engines or motors; crankcases for machines, motors and engines; fuel economisers for motors and engines; igniting devices for internal combustion engines; silencers for motors and engines; petrol pumps; welding apparatus; control mechanisms for engines; electric generators; transmissions; replacement parts for earth moving machinery and diesel engines; valves; sparks plugs; air filters; water regulators; oils filters; couplings; machine tools; assembly presses; starters; pumps; diggers; excavators; bulldozers; loaders; cranes; fellers; bunchers; scrapers; pavers; agricultural machines; cutting machines; compactors; filters; belts; alleviators; blades; earth moving machines; agricultural apparatus and instruments; steam rollers; forestry machines; pipe laying machines; compacting machines; buckets for earth moving machines; hydraulic jacks; welding machines and apparatus; 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starting devices for engines and motors; power transmission systems; power transmissions for land vehicles; transmissions for land vehicles; gear boxes for land vehicles; gears for land vehicles; propulsion mechanisms for land vehicles; sun-blinds adapted for automobiles and windscreens (including tinted windscreens); transmissions and axles; transmissions and axles for construction trucks; axles for land vehicles; brakes for land vehicles; cardan shafts for vehicles; clutches for land vehicles; couplings for land vehicles; drive shafts for land vehicles; shaft couplings for land vehicles; steering units for land vehicles; suspension systems for land vehicles; universal joints for land vehicles; earthmoving vehicles and off-highway vehicles; replacement parts for off-highway trucks for loading and hauling; attachments for vehicles for earth and material hauling and handling including trucks and tractors; land vehicles; construction vehicles; mining vehicles; farming vehicles and material handling vehicles; undercarriage components and tracks for tractors and other track-type vehicles; tyres, inner tube and wheels for vehicles; skidders; undercarriage structural parts; undercarriage components; parts, fittings and components for all the aforesaid goods; engines of all types." in **Class 12**.

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Dated: **25 March 2023**

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Dated: **25 March 2023**


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Seeking a reset, Brazil's Lula heads to China



Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, shown here in Brasilia on 20 March 2023, is seeking to refresh his country's ties with China.

PHOTO: AFP

BRAZIL'S leftist leader Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva will meet Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing next week, where he hopes to reinforce trade, discuss international mediation in Ukraine, and reclaim his coun-

try's role in global geopolitics.

After a period of isolation under his far-right predecessor, Jair Bolsonaro, Lula is wasting no time in renewing ties with allies.

Just three months into his

latest term as president, he has already visited Argentina and the United States — and the six-day trip to China, Brazil's largest trading partner, is key to his ambitions.

"Lula's visit is a very clear signal that he wants a high level bilateral dialogue and a deepening of this relationship," Evandro Menezes de Carvalho, a China expert at the Getulio Vargas Foundation, told AFP.

Analysts say Chinese hopes are also high, as officials in Beijing see Brazil — a leader in the global south — as a linchpin in their strategic and economic plans. Ukraine will be a main topic of discussion during the visit, which officially begins Tuesday, with Lula hoping to promote his proposal for mediated talks to end Russia's invasion of the country.— AFP

Tanzania pilots failed to heed warnings before crash: govt

TANZANIAN authorities said that the pilots who flew a Precision Air plane which crashed into Lake Victoria last November failed to heed warnings from an automatic "pull up" alarm system.

Nineteen people died when the plane plunged into Africa's largest lake on 6 November last year, with police blaming bad weather for Tanzania's worst aviation accident in decades.

President Samia Suluhu

Hassan promised a formal investigation into the disaster as anger erupted over the government's handling of the rescue effort.

In the second preliminary report to be published since the accident, the transport ministry said Thursday that an enhanced ground proximity warning system (EGPWS) issued three alerts "about the excessively high descent rate".

"The warning was not fol-

lowed by corrective action of the flight crew," the ministry's aircraft accident and incident investigation branch said.

"Instead, the flight crew pushed the control column into a nose down position."

The EGPWS alerts the cockpit if a plane is in danger of flying into the ground or hitting something.

The report said the pilots were flying in bad weather and in conditions marked by poor visibility, which "may have contributed to the failure to react to terrain warnings during the final approach."

"This type of weather is common around the Bukoba airport and is well known to pilots," it said, adding that the aircraft circled for about 20 minutes before its descent.

An earlier report published by the ministry soon after the accident said the rescue effort was too slow, and that more passengers would likely have survived had emergency workers been better prepared and equipped to carry out their duties.— AFP



Nineteen people died when the plane plunged into Africa's largest lake on 6 November last year. PHOTO: SITIDE PROTASE/AFP

'Sea change': disruptive Saudi prince shows new pragmatism with Iran

SAUDI Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman once compared Iran's supreme leader to Hitler, but has now green-lit a reconciliation deal intended to usher in a new era of regional prosperity.

As a 29-year-old defence minister, he launched a ferocious assault on Huthi rebels in neighbouring Yemen, but is now pursuing back-channel talks that could ultimately remove Saudi forces from the conflict.

He has also worked to mend bitter rifts with regional rivals like Qatar and Türkiye, and even offered up the Gulf kingdom as a possible mediator for the war in Ukraine.

Analysts say it points to

an evolution of Prince Mohammed, now 37, from erratic disruptor to pragmatic power player.

The deal with Iran in particular "marks a sea change in his political approach", signalling "maturity and a more realistic understanding of regional power politics", said Umar Karim, an expert on Saudi foreign policy at the University of Birmingham.

Yet it's too soon to know whether such de-escalatory measures will succeed — and how far they will go. The Iran deal still needs to be implemented, with embassies due to reopen by the second week of May after seven years of severed bilateral ties.—AFP



Saudi officials recognize how security threats, especially from Iran, endanger Prince Mohammed's reform drive. PHOTO: FAYEZ NURELDINE/AFP

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

457 arrested, 441 security forces injured in France unrest

PROTESTERS clashed with French security forces Thursday in the most serious violence yet of a three-month revolt against President Emmanuel Macron's hugely controversial pension reform.

A total of 457 people were arrested and 441 security forces were injured on Thursday during nationwide protests against French President Emmanuel Macron's pensions reform, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said.

Speaking to the CNews channel on Friday morning, Darmanin also said that there had been 903 fires lit in the streets of Paris during by far the most violent day of protests since they began in January.

The uproar over the imposition of the reform — which the government chose to push through without a parliamentary vote — has turned into the biggest domestic crisis of Macron's second term in office. It also threatens to cast a shadow over King Charles III's visit to France next week, his first foreign state visit as British monarch.—AFP



MNL Referee Workshop 2023 for domestic league-2 tourney to be held on 31 March

IN order to successfully hold the Myanmar National League II 2023 football tournament, the MNL Educational Workshops are being held in the pre-match period before the tournament starts.

Likewise, the MNL Referee Workshop ceremony will be held on 31 March on the first floor of the meeting hall of Thuwunna Stadium to supplement and clarify the contents of the currently

applied football laws, as it will be mandatory for clubs to know and respect the football laws published by the World Football Federation (FIFA).

The MNL Referee Workshop, which will be led by the Myanmar Football Federation Referee Director and Senior Referee Instructor, will be attended by all the players, managers, and coaches registered with the MNL from every participating

club.

The 2023 Myanmar National League-2 tournament, which will be organized by the Myanmar National League Committee, and Myanmar Football Federation will start on 24 April.

This will be an Educational Workshop which is very important for the successful holding of the tournament and all participating clubs, officials said. — KZL

Messi goal tops off Argentina's homecoming celebration

LIONEL Messi capped a night of unbridled joy with the 800th goal of his career as world champions Argentina celebrated their homecoming with a 2-0 friendly victory over stubborn Panama in Buenos Aires on Thursday.

The 35-year-old seven-time Ballon d'Or winner's stunning free-kick in the dying minutes came after 21-year-old MLS sensation Thiago Almada gave a glimpse of what the future holds with his first goal for the national team in only his third appearance.

It was an emotional night as fireworks crackled overhead before kick-off at the impressive Monumental stadium where the 83,000 lucky fans that managed to get tickets among the more



Lionel Messi (centre) and his world champion Argentina team-mates celebrate his goal against Panama on a night of festivities in Buenos Aires. PHOTO: AFP

than 1.5 million people who tried, created an electric atmosphere.

Messi, coach Lionel Scaloni and numerous players came onto the pitch with their children

and several seemed on the brink of tears as fans in unison sung "Muchachos", the anthem of Argentina's victorious World Cup campaign in Qatar.—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.

Man City's Robertson becomes third generation of family to play for Australia



Alex Robertson (left) is protected by teammate Harry Souttar during a scuffle against Ecuador. PHOTO: AFP

MANCHESTER City's Alex Robertson became the third generation of his family to play for Australia Friday as the Socceroos ensured new Ecuador coach Felix Sanchez got his reign off to a losing start.

The Sydney-raised 19-year-old has played junior football for England, but looks set to commit himself to Graham Arnold's side.

His father Mark played for Australia in 2001, as did his grandfather in 1984, with both in the Sydney crowd watching.

The midfielder, who has yet to make his senior debut for Pep Guardiola's side, came on with 15 minutes left. He played a part in Australia's final goal of a 3-1 win, but was also involved in a late scuffle.

Germany-based Jackson Irvine, Sparta Prague striker Awer Mabil and Hearts' Garang Kuol all got on the score-sheet, in Australia's first match on home

soil since their run to the last 16 at the 2022 World Cup.

In a game seen as the beginning of a new cycle with qualification for the 2026 World Cup later this year and the Asian Cup looming in 2024, Arnold also handed a debut to Melbourne City's Aiden O'Neill, who played the entire game and impressed.

"I'm so pleased for the boys, some of the young guys have played and were unbelievable," said Australia's Leicester City defender Harry Souttar.

"Aiden O'Neill making his debut, you're not going to get many better debuts than that. Robbo (Robertson) coming on, Garang. The future is really bright for us."

"Robertson's got that bit of bite and we love that, it's what we're all about," he added.—AFP