SET SIGHT ON THE PRODUCTION OF SAFE FOOD FOR CONSUMERS PAGE-8 (OPINION)

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted and its mandated tasks, including the scrutiny of voter lists, shall be implemented in accordance with the law.
2. Effective measures will be taken with added momentum to prevent and manage the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Actions will be taken to ensure the speedy recovery of businesses from the impact of COVID-19.
4. Emphasis will be placed on achieving enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.
5. Upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution, and further work will be undertaken to hand over State duties to the winning party in accordance with democratic standards.

Service personnel and their efforts should be recognized through a carrot and stick system depending on their performances, says Senior General

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the meeting 3/2021 of the Union government in Nay Pyi Taw on 3 December 2021.

DURING the surging of COVID-19, Myanmar implemented the five-point consensus of the ASEAN amid various difficulties, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting 3/2021 of the Union government at the office of the SAC Chairman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Myanmar emphasizes agriculture and livestock production. Policies were adopted to implement the rural-based development tasks as 70 per cent of the total population reside in the rural areas.

The country gains deserved development due to the government's encouragement to increase manufacturing of products in the outbreak of COVID-19. It was reviewed that the economic status of the country started a decline in the term of the previous government as of 2018 in addition to impacts of COVID-19. Emphasis was placed on the reduction of the infection rate of the pandemic, so the government could not turn to some sectors.

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Myanmar emphasizes agriculture and livestock production. Policies were adopted to implement the rural-based development tasks as 70 per cent of the total population reside in the rural areas.

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Myanmar National Human Rights Commission joins Regional Conference on Prison Reform, 18th annual meeting of Southeast Asia National Human Rights Institutions Forum (SEANF)

THE Malaysian Human Rights Commission organized the Regional Conference on Prison Reform with the support of the British High Commission in Kuala Lumpur from 29 and 30 November and the 18th annual meeting of Southeast Asia National Human Rights Institutions Forum (SEANF) on 1 and 2 December in a hybrid format.

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Chairman U Hla Myint joined the Regional Conference on Prison Reform together with other representatives of forum member countries, prison officials of the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand, delegates of UNODC, legal and law officials of Malaysia, Indonesia and Timor-Leste and parliament representatives and civilian organizations of Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

During the Penal Discussion format, the leaders focused on the prison condition in Asian countries, international norms for prisons, judicial matters, the role of human right commissions in establishing a better prison system, supports of parliament in prison reforms and cooperation works with the civilian organizations.

Then, Director U Thura Kyaw of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Office reported on the activities and challenges of MNHRC during the penal discussion for the role of human rights commissions in establishing a better prison system.

A total of 48 officials from respective forum member countries including Myanmar National Human Rights Commission Chairman U Hla Myint and Vice-Chairperson Dr Nandar Hmun joined the 18th annual meeting of Southeast Asia National Human Rights Institutions Forum (SEANF).

The annual meeting discussed the activities, progresses and challenges of member countries in 2021, approving of the forum Logo, launching of a new website, approving of forum's torture prevention guidelines, proper ways and challenges in promoting and providing human rights of member states and establishment of permanent secretary office of the forum.

Then, the Office of the Children's Commissioner of Malaysian Human Rights Commission reported on the child rights and the Philippines Human Rights Commission about "Digital Rights".

During that event, MNHRC member U Paw Lwin Sein presented the activities, challenges and progress of commission in 2021 and Deputy Director-General of MNHRC office Dr Khine Khine Win clarified the proper ways and challenges in promoting and educating of human rights.

After the meeting, Malaysian Human Rights Commission handed over the 2022 Chairmanship to the Philippines Human Rights Commission. —MNA

Business representatives from CLMVT meet officials from IBERD

OFFICIALS from the Institute of Business Economics Research and Development (IBERD) met business representatives from CLMVT countries, including Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Viet Nam and Thailand, yesterday at UMFCCI in Lanmadaw Township, Yangon.

Professor Dr Aung Tun Thet, president of the federation U Zaw Min Win, joint general secretary Daw Khine Khine Nwe, and chief executive officer U Tint Swe attended the meeting.

Approval of the Annual Business Economics Conference on CLMVT, the New Economy for 2022, negotiation for the programme were discussed during the meeting.

The CLMVT countries exchanged views and focused on economic benefits, and pre-negotiated the signing of an MoU.

The Institute of Business Economics Research and Development (IBERD) was established in Thailand as a non-profit organization.

It was set up to conduct policy research focusing on investment and economic development. — Kyaw San Myint/GNLM

Notification of COVID Vaccination Fund Management Subcommittee

FROM 30-11-2021 to 3-12-2021, local/foreign donors contributed 6.000 million Kyats to the COVID-19 Vaccination Fund Myanmar currency account OA 013733 and foreign currency account EDC 600012 opened at the Myanma Economic Bank (Nay Pyi Taw). The status of the fund account as of 3-12-2021 is as follows:

COVID-19 Vaccination Fund OA-013733 List

	Kyat
Account opening balance on 26-11-2021	169,929,835,142.53
Received amount of money from (+) 30-11-2021 to 3-12-2021	6,000,000.00
Closed balance on 3-12-2021	169,935,835,142.53

COVID-19 Vaccination Fund EDC 600012 List

	USD
Account opening balance on 26-11-2021	25,862,349.53
Received amount of money from (+) 30-11-2021 to 3-12-2021	-
Closed balance on 3-12-2021	25,862,349.53

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Cementing the Union Spirit

EVERYBODY needs to notice a saying that **"If one does not know the past, one may commit mistakes again. Likewise if one is too eager to embrace the past, one may lose the road to the future"**. The government has decided to further promote the process of cementing the Union Spirit and peace process before the forthcoming Diamond Jubilee Union Day and Independence Day.

(Excerpt from Message sent by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Chairman of the National Unity and Peacemaking Central Committee Senior General Min Aung Hlaing to mark the Sixth Anniversary of signing the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement-NCA on 15 October 2021)

Service personnel and their efforts should be recognized through a carrot and stick system depending on their performances, says Senior General

FROM PAGE-1

During the surging of COVID-19, Myanmar implemented the five-point consensus of the ASEAN amid various difficulties. As prices of goods are still high, the government restricts the high prices of imported goods. According to the report of the 2020-2021 financial year, the import volume was less than that of 2019-2020FY. Import goods were oil products, palm oil, auto parts, medicines, mobile handsets and communication devices, fertilizers and tractors.

It is necessary to resurge manufacturing at home to be able to substitute the imported products. If the country saves the use of fuel oil, the amount for spending the foreign exchange will decline and the trade surplus will increase. The Senior General highlighted the salient points of reduction of fuel consumption, use of electricity, generating hydropower, and implementation of public transport projects. He urged relevant ministries to adequately irrigate the farmlands.

Encouragement must be given to industries to manufacture domestic products and electric automobiles at home for the State interests.

It is necessary to promote the health standard of the citizens. Efforts must be made to adequately manufacture the medicines based on traditional medicines and antibiotic medicines. There are 1,177 hospitals across the nation. Medical universities have turned out more than 57,000 medical professionals from 1995 to 2020. But, some of them only serve the duty of the State. It can be seen some station hospitals do not have medical doctors. As health staff only provide healthcare services to the citizens, it is necessary to arrange public healthcare services with full strength.

Teachers, students, parents and relevant administration organs need to join hands for ensuring the secure learning of the students. A plan is underway to reopen the universities in the near future.

As regards infection of the COVID-19 and learning of students, the Senior General said, "The latest information shows 523,346 infected persons in our country. A total of 498,748 persons were recovered and 19,121 persons were dead. The infection rate hits about two per cent. The infection rate stays between 300 and 500 patients. Whatever it may be, it is acceptable per cent of infection in our country. But, we should not be satisfied with it. I saw breaking news that the Omicron variant emerges and two patients were found with such virus in India yesterday.

> Not only relevant administrative bodies but the region and state governments need to supervise the State-owned and private banks for their services. State-owned enterprises are being operated through PPP and BOT systems for serving the State interests.

Omicron spreads in Asian countries. Its infection rate is very high and severe. So, we should not be careless. We open the schools where children are attending. We cannot accept the infection to harm their learning. We have to arrange for them to attend the schools healthily until they completed the examinations in March. They have to attend the schools healthily and safely and education staff should be healthy as well. So, we have to take special care of their conditions. Learning will not be complete immediately. It is a situation to take care of them for the long term. Hence, relevant ministries and region and state governments should emphasize the healthcare measures for the education sector."

So far, 29,214,980 doses of vaccines have received till 2 December. Among them, 12,048,005 people were vaccinated two times and 5,118,970 once. One million units of vaccines donated by and purchased from Russia will arrive in Myanmar this month. A plan was set to inoculate 50 per cent of the total population this year. Now, vaccines were given to some 300,000 people per day. Efforts should be made for increasing the vaccinated numbers.

The Senior General urged all to develop agriculture and livestock tasks and to prevent flooding in coming years. Efforts should be made for shaping the cities of regions and states to be green cities and clean cities.

Officials need to supervise systematic levying of commercial tax at the border areas. Relevant departments need to eye on the full collection of taxes and expose those who commit malpractice in the tax collection. And, relevant ministries need to help the Immigration and Population Ministry for the soonest issuance of citizenship scrutiny cards to the people.

Union ministers sought approvals from the Senior General for reports of their respective sectors.

In his concluding remarks, the Senior General stressed the need to set restricted policies for easing some measures for appointment of service personnel under the long term plan so as to enhance human resources for the improvement of their capacity. Service personnel and their efforts should be recognized through a carrot and stick system depending on their performances.

Not only relevant administrative bodies but the region and state governments need to supervise the State-owned and private banks for their services. State-owned enterprises are being operated through PPP and BOT systems for serving the State interests.— MNA

402 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 3 December, total figure rises to 523,748

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 523,748 after 402 new cases were reported on 3 December 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 499,264 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 19,127 after 7 died.—MNA

Vulnerable groups, including the persons with disabilities, prioritized vaccination of COVID-19 starting from September 2021, says Vice-Senior General

State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win speaks on the event to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2021 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

A national committee and a working committee were formed for effectively implementing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law 2015 and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules 2017 in Myanmar by adopting the decisions at their meetings to fulfil the education, employment, healthcare, social and legal needs of the persons with disabilities in the projects and work procedures, said Chairman of National Committee for Rights of Persons with Disabilities Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win.

The Vice-Senior General poses for the group documentary photo at the event.

The Vice-Senior General views the books and documentary photos at the event.

COVID-19. A national committee and a working committee were formed for effectively implementing the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law, 2015 and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Rules 2017 in Myanmar with adopting the decisions at their meetings to fulfil the education, employment, healthcare, social and legal needs of the persons with disabilities in the projects and work procedures.

Depending on the experiences of the persons with disabilities in the COVID-19 crisis, the project of the sustainable development goals including the persons with disabilities for 2030 will be implemented and placed under assessment.

Myanmar has been annually holding the ceremony to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities 28 times as of 1994. Myanmar signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 7 December 2011.

Being a member of the convention, Myanmar is striving for fulfilling the requirements of the persons with disabilities based on justice, advantages and ability to keep abreast of other persons in the society.

The State Administration Council provided K30,000 each to the persons with disabilities not to be left in healthcare but provided humanitarian aid under the UN 2030 programme while the people are facing the

The Vice-Senior General urged all to join hands with the organizations implementing the issues of the persons with disabilities for shaping the better future of the world.

Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Thet Thet Khine spoke words of honour. Then, winners in the competitions to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities were announced.

The Vice-Senior General viewed the books and documentary photos related to persons with disabilities. —MNA

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MoALI strives to produce healthy human resources: Union minister

UNION minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Tin Htut Oo said at the opening ceremony of the Union Minister's Cup Futsal Football Tournament at the Ministry Futsal Stadium yesterday that the ministry will strive to implement the social goal of national health and higher education, which is one of the goals of the State, and to establish the Ministry as a civil service organization for the development of healthy human resources.

The Union minister gave an opening speech during the ceremony.

The Union Minister's Cup is awarded at the Ministry Futsal Stadium yesterday.

"We are encouraging professional training in various sports to develop good teamwork habits. At the same time, it is necessary to make efforts to produce excellent athletes who can bring honour to their ministry and the country.

The Futsal Stadium, which will be opened near the Union minister's Office, will be able to accommodate the staff and families of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation," the Union minister said.

The Union minister also urged the athletes to train up to the level of outstanding athletes and strive to develop other sports skill as well.

Next, the Union minister, deputy minister and permanent secretary cut the ribbon to open the Futsal Stadium.

Then, the Union Minister's Cup Futsal Tournament was held for the first time and the Union minister deputy minister and officials presented awards to the winning teams. — MNA

Myanmar national mapping system (OneMap Myanmar) implementation working committee holds its first meeting

The Myanmar National Mapping System Implementation Working Committee holds the first meeting virtually.

THE Department of Forest held the first meeting of the National Land Use, Myanmar National Mapping System (OneMap Myanmar) Implementation Working Committee yesterday afternoon through videoconferencing.

At the meeting, Deputy Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Min Min Oo said that the OneMap Myanmar project has been underway for more than six years, with the main objective to develop a standardized mapping system in Myanmar, to ensure accurate ground data for land resources and land management, and to make the mapping system uniform.

With the fund assistance from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation-SDC, the Centre for Development and Environment-CDE, University of Bern, provided technical support, and the Department of Forest, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, acted as the focal department in implementing the OneMap Myanmar, he said.

The deputy minister continued that the members of the working committee will discuss the achievements of their departments in collaboration with the OneMap Myanmar project. He called on the committee members to openly give suggestions on the discussion of the respective departments and to address the difficulties and needs in implementing the project. He said that he believed that good ideas and results would emerge to continue to implement the OneMap Myanmar project activities.

The meeting was attended by the permanent secretaries, who are the members of the working committee, from the respective departments, directors-general, deputy directors-general, officials from the Ministry of Defence, representatives of the ethnic nationalities, professors from universities, directors, the chief officer of Geophysics and geological officers, and invitees. — MNA

Prices list of medicines commonly used against COVID-19 till 3-12-2021

No	Product Name	Pack Size	Price in Kyats (Retail)	Company Name
Antiviral				
1	P.O Omeprazole	10X10's / Box	1,650	Shwe Htay Min
2	Injection Pantocid	1g/Vial	1,500	Aorta
3	Injection Omeprazole	1g/Vial	1,050	Aorta
Antibiotics				
4	PO - Azithromycin 500 mg	5x3's	4,000	Rammawaddy
5	P.O - Cefalexin 500 mg	Box of 10x10's	6,100	Aorta
6	P.O - Levofloxacin 500 mg	Box of 10x10's	7,000	Shwe Htay Min
7	P.O.Cefixime	Box of 3x10's	3,600	Aorta
8	P.O Amoxicillin+ Clavulanic Acid	Box of 1x6's	1,800	Aorta
9	Injection - Levofloxacin 500 mg	1x1	3,000	Yadanar
10	Injection - Ceftriazone 1G	1's	700	KCL

Please visit the Website (www.mccpmd.org) and Facebook Page https://www.facebook.com/ 32330252139 2189/posts/ 1720802588308835/ ?d=n to know the prices of other medicines. —MNA

Daily imports of anti-COVID-19 equipment continue

Myawady

THE Ministry of Commerce is making efforts to ensure people have access to the essential medical supplies that are critical to the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities, including liquid oxygen and oxygen cylinders, by arranging continuous importation through border trading zones, international airports and seaports with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Anti-COVID-19 products were imported by three companies and transported by two vehicles yesterday.

A total of 20 tonnes of liquid oxygen carried by one bowser, one oxygen plant and 150 empty oxygen cylinders were transported via the Muse 105th mile Trading Zone, Myawady trading zone, and Yangon international seaports, officials said.

One bowser transported liquid oxygen to Yangon via the Myawady trading zone, and one oxygen plant was transported to Mandalay via the Muse 105th mile Trading Zone, officials added.

Officials from the relevant departments are cooperating to facilitate and expedite the Standard Operating Procedures, including online registration for the import process.

It is reported that the Ministry of Commerce is coordinating with relevant departments, treatment of COVID-19, as well as contact persons for inquiries can be reached through the Ministry's Website —www.commerce.gov.mm. — MNA

COVID-19 patients systematically admitted at COVID centres

MILITARY hospitals and clinics, transit centres and military training depots in various areas of the Military Command Headquarters are working together to provide healthcare services for COVID-19 confirmed patients.

As of 7 pm yesterday, a total of 24 people — 11 men and 13 women — were under special surveillance at the Nay Pyi Taw Transit Centre.

Local medical teams and officials at the respective Military Command Headquarters are assisting with the accommodation, health and medical care of the patients and laboratory-confirmed patients, officials added. — MNA

Myanmar border camps welcome returnees

THE border camps receive the Myanmar returnees from foreign countries. On 2 December, 48 Myanmar citizens — 29males and 19 females — returned to Chinshwehaw Town of Shan State (North) and 62 people – 37 males and 37 females – to Laukkai Township.

Moreover, 46 people — 29 males and 17 females — arrived at Tachilek Township in Shan State (East) yesterday and 465 people — 267 males and 198 females — to Myawady Township of Kayin State.

The health officials, Tatmadaw medics and other officials provided the health-related matters for quarantine.

Then, the township administration officials sent them to their respective towns by vehicle and those who tested for positive are isolated at the designated places. — MNA

Returnees check in at the reception desk.

Workers in Pakokku receive first dose of COVID-19 vaccines

Inoculation drive for workers in Pakokku Township, Magway Region. **PHOTO : SALAI KO KEE (MA)**

OFFICIALS gave COVID-19 vaccines (1st dose) to insured workers who are covered by the social security system under the social security programme at Myanmar Efforts Garment Factory Company, Pantaingchyon Village, Pakokku Township, Magway Region on 2 December.

Deputy staff officer of Pakokku Township General Administration Department Daw Mya Nwe Khaing, Township Social Welfare Branch Officer Daw Yin Yin Htwe, staff and factory workers cooperated in the vaccination programme.

Vaccination activities were documented by officials followed by measuring body temperatures, blood pressure, and monitoring oxygen levels.

Staff from the Township Public Health Department vaccinated COVID-19 (first time) against 880 people – 41 males and 839 females.

Myanmar Efforts Garment Company is a Hong Kong branch and a total of 1,074 workers: 19 garment factory workers and 1,055 insured workers are working for the company, and 206 people have been vaccinated in the vicinity.

Daw Yin Yin Htwe, in charge of the township social welfare office, said that the project will be carried out in collaboration with the members of the township Covid committee under the social security programme to prevent the spread of the virus in factories, workplaces and companies. — Salai Ko Kee (MA)/ GNLM

Terrorists target schools with bombs, fire in Kanpatlet, Kawlin

AS the funds provided from the instigators, terrorists have been targeting roads, government offices, and public places with homemade bombs and mines with the purpose of attacking administration officials who are working for the rule of law, and the people living in peace.

In doing such acts, they set fire on the Border Area Ethnic Youth Development Training School in Kanpatlet Township, Chin State, at around 4 am on 2 December. While inspecting the area, security forces found a building destroyed by fire at the scene.

Similarly, terrorists attacked the security forces on duty near the bridge in front of the No (1) Basic Education High School in Myokone Myoma ward, Kawlin Township, Sagaing Region, yesterday morning. A homemade time bomb was exploded and terrorists fired at the District Administration Office and the Township Public Hospital from the park on the other side. During the clash, two security personnel and the school guard were wounded and were transported to the Kawlin Township Hospital for medical treatment.

It is reported that security forces are investigating to identify the perpetrators and take action against them under the law. — MNA

Terrorists attack with grenades, homemade bombs and mines, and destroy schools and training schools.

Forest Dept seizes over 107 tonnes of timber

THE Forest Department under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation adopts Community Monitoring and Reporting System (CMRS) to curb the illegal timber and forest products.

According to the data collected between 22 and 28 November, the department seized a total of 107.5482 tonnes of illegal timber – 48.10 tonnes of teak, 30.9278 tonnes of hardwood and 28.5204 tonnes of others in regions/states, including the Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and arrested seven suspects with seven vehicles, according to the department. —Nyi Nyi Than (Nay Pyi Taw)/GNLM

Confiscated timber is seen due to the efforts of the Forest Department. **PHOTO : NYI NYI THAN (NAY PYI TAW)**

Public Notice

1. The Anti-Corruption Commission has established corruption prevention units within ministries to effectively curb corruption.
2. The ACC used SMS on the mobile phone to ask the public who seek services at an office of the department of the relevant ministries via Short Code No "1111" for feedbacks, including the Public Feedback Programme-PFP.
3. According to the PFP, the right replies of the citizens via Short Code No "1111" will provide the quality of services of each department and the requirements for corruption prevention to be fixed.
4. Therefore, the public should make a reply to the questions of the ACC and corruption prevention units of the ministries via SMS at Short Code No "1111" and such doing is a supportive measure for PFP, and the people are urged to cooperate in the operations.

Anti-Corruption Commission

Answer "1111" to fight against corruption
Answer "1111" to improve services
Let's work together to eliminate corruption towards prosperity

Five arrested for trafficking, prostitution of girls in Bago, Yangon

BAGO District Court sentenced a man and a woman to 10 years with labour in prison for trafficking and prostitution of four girls on 1 December.

Four girls from Waw Township, Bago Region, were sold to U Htin Kyaw, owner of "Bayinma" beer pub in Ye Township by Daw Than Than Win who lives in the same town after they told that the girls would make a lot of money if they worked in Yay Township.

A case was filed against U Htin Kyaw and Daw Than Than Win under Section 24/32 of the Prevention of Trafficking in Person Law at Waw Myoma Police Station and the Bago District Court sentenced both of them to 10 years with labour in prison under Section 24 of the Prevention of Trafficking in Person Law.

Similarly, one man and two women were sentenced to 20 years with labour in prison on 26 November after they forced a 15-year-old girl into prostitution. Aung Zaw, 21, wife Ma Maw Maw Than, 21, told the girl that she would make much money if she worked in a KTV and sold her to the prostitution house through Ma Kyi Kyi Khine (a) Ma Khine. The East District Court of Yangon Region sentenced them to 20 years with labour in prison under Section 28 (a) of the Prevention of Trafficking in Person Law. — MNA

Daily newspapers available online

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

4 DECEMBER 2021
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Set sight on the production of safe food for consumers

Everybody needs to scrutinize their daily foods including snacks, rice and meals, soft and hard drinks. They should remove the uncertainty of unsafe foods from the daily consumption list for improving health conditions.

Various kinds of meals, meat, vegetables and marine products can be seen in markets. Surely, these items cannot be conformed to the health guidelines. These products are made of residues of chemicals, pesticides, fertilizers and dyes which are unsuitable for public health and low-quality ingredients in addition to some kinds of poisons such as aflatoxin.

Moreover, the residue of pesticides from the vegetables may affect the consumers to face some health problems. In addition, an unhealthy process in the production of consumer goods is dangerous for the people. Hence, all the people need to carefully choose the products for their daily consumption.

Officials from the Department of Consumer Affairs, the Department of Food and Drug Administration and those from relevant development committees and responsible departments are focusing on inspection of consumer products whether chemicals, dyes, low-quality ingredients, and chemical and pesticide residues should be used or not.

It is not to dare think about the health consequences of those who consume low-quality consumer products. Those suffering from diseases due to unhealthy consumer products may bring difficulties and problems to their families. If so, terrible challenges may wait for them. If they fail to overcome them, those families may be in trouble.

Everybody needs cultural sympathy. If one sells low-quality products, another one who buys them may face troubles. Hence, all the people need to help each other with sympathy in the sale and consumption of meals with quality, healthy products for shaping their brighter future. Consequently, the Myanmar people will have the chance to join a healthy society.

Everybody needs to take care of avoiding the acts harming others. If they commit the troublemaking to others, they may face similar problems in a short time. So, everybody needs to trade quality and healthy products and try hard to culture the practice and knowledge of how to scrutinize all eatable things for daily safe consumption. Only when they have safe foods, will they be healthy and nurture the healthy new generations. If so, the motherland Myanmar will be healthy in the future.

Everybody needs to take care of avoiding the acts harming others. If they commit the troublemaking to others, they may face similar problems in a short time. So, everybody needs to trade quality and healthy products and try hard to culture the practice and knowledge of how to scrutinize all eatable things for daily safe consumption. Only when they have safe foods, will they be healthy and nurture the healthy new generations. If so, the motherland Myanmar will be healthy in the future.

■ ■ ■

Despite Omicron surge, S.Africa so far sees mild symptoms

Omicron is fuelling a steep surge in infections in South Africa but relatively few people are being hospitalized, experts said Thursday, as patients so far reported mild symptoms.

THE country recorded 11,535 new cases Thursday, mostly in the epicentre Gauteng, the province home to the biggest city Johannesburg and the capital Pretoria.

That's five times as many cases as were reported just one week ago, when South African scientists alerted the world to the new variant.

Three quarters of new cases in South Africa are now Omicron.

But deaths and hospitalizations so far are rising at a much lower rate.

Experts caution that there is still much to learn, but credit vaccinations with preventing more cases of severe illness.

"There is an increase in Covid-19 admissions, but not to the point we have seen" in previous outbreaks, said Mary Kawonga, a doctor who heads a provincial Covid advisory council.

"Hospitalisations are increasing by a much lower rate than the cases and at much lower rate than we saw in the third wave," she told a news conference.

That's partly because many of the infected people are young, and younger people have generally shown milder symptoms throughout the pandemic.

The first confirmed case of the Omicron variant was in South Africa on 9 November, with infections spreading rapidly in the country. **PHOTO: AFP**

While only about one in four South Africans are fully vaccinated, the rates are higher among older people who are mostly prone to suffer serious illness if they become infected.

"We believe the number of cases will increase exponentially in all provinces of the country," said Anne von Gottberg, an expert at the National Institute for Communicable Diseases.

"We believe that vaccines will still however protect against severe disease," she added.

But so far, many cases only suffer a headache or runny nose — and sometimes nothing at all.

Mild symptoms

Jessica Willmore, 38, developed a sore throat and a cough on Thursday.

The following day she had a headache, was fatigued and lost her appetite.

By the end of the weekend, she "felt washed out", had a runny nose and stomach cramps, although her appetite was back.

The only reason she took a Covid test was because she was due to attend a family member's 40th birthday party this week. They'd planned to top it off with safari to the Kruger National Park.

Two weeks back, her nine-year-old daughter returned from school with a sore throat and runny nose, but the symptoms cleared overnight.

"We don't know if it is Omicron or not," said Willmore.

Donovan Rothner, 42, was asymptomatic until he took a pre-surgery test which turned out positive.

"If it wasn't for that procedure, I wouldn't even know that I have that virus, and that would put a lot of people at risk," said Rothner.

A 44-year-old advertising practitioner had to get tested after her eight-year-old daughter suddenly developed a high fever, followed by another of her daughters.

Then it was her turn, a slightly scratchy throat, accompanied by dizziness.

"Then I knew I had it," she said. But the vaccinated mother is relieved that the symptoms are "incredibly mild, like a head cold. I have all my sense of smell, my taste."

Rush for tests

Omicron fears have created a rush on clinics and laboratories.

On Thursday, dozens of people lined up under the midday sun outside shipping containers converted into specimen collection sites in front of a private hospital in Johannesburg's lofty suburb of Sandton.

Others sat on the pavement waiting their turn.

"The numbers are growing this week," said a nurse collecting samples.

Many people queueing said they had no symptoms but had been in contact with people that later tested positive.

Darienne Hallas, a data scientist, 40, sought a test after work colleagues were diagnosed with Covid and she became "extremely tired" in recent days.

SOURCE: AFP

US, Australia see community transmission as Omicron spreads worldwide

THE United States and Australia announced their first locally transmitted cases of the Omicron variant as authorities worldwide rushed Friday to stem the spread of the heavily mutated strain of Covid-19.

The World Health Organization has said it could take weeks to determine whether Omicron is more transmissible and whether it causes more severe infections — as well as how effective current treatments and vaccines are against it.

But the new variant, first reported by South Africa, has already cast the world's recovery into doubt, with the EU health agency warning it could cause more than half of Europe's Covid cases in the next few months.

More than two dozen governments have now detected cases of the variant — including India, one of the countries hardest-hit by the coronavirus pandemic since it first emerged nearly two years ago.

A preliminary study by South African researchers suggests the strain is three times more likely to cause reinfections compared to the Delta or Beta strains.

The research, which has not yet been peer reviewed, was described as "very concerning" by Michael Head, a scientist at the University of Southampton.

Ten cases have so far been confirmed in the United States, including five in New York announced Thursday, one in Los Angeles county, and one in Hawaii.

The Hawaii case and one in Minnesota both involved residents with no recent international travel history — signalling the strain is already circulating inside the country.

"This is a case of community spread," the Hawaii Health Department said.

The cases were reported as US President Joe Biden outlined his plans to battle Covid-19 during the winter, with new testing requirements for travelers and a surge in vaccination efforts.

"It's a plan that I think should unite us," he said.

All incoming travelers will need to test negative within a day before their flights, and rapid tests that currently cost $25 will be covered by insurance and distributed free to the uninsured.

Australia on Friday, too, reported a student with no history of foreign travel had tested positive for the variant.

The case, detected in the country's largest city of Sydney, comes despite a sweeping ban on non-citizens entering the country and restrictions on flights from southern Africa. And just a day after Singapore reported two cases of the strain, neighbouring Malaysia on Friday reported its first infections with the variant.

The case was detected in a foreign student travelling from South Africa, who had arrived in Malaysia on November 19, Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said.

The case was only confirmed on 2 December, after officials conducted genome sequencing on some samples taken from recent arrivals at Kuala Lumpur airport, he said. Sri Lanka also announced its first Omicron case, a citizen who returned from South Africa.

Restrictions reimposed

The variant's detection and spread represent a major challenge to efforts to end the pandemic, with several nations already reimposing restrictions many had hoped were a thing of the past.

An appointment desk for a COVID-19 test. **PHOTO: AFP/Kenzo Tribouillard**

In Germany, outgoing Chancellor Angela Merkel said large parts of public life would be "open only to those who have been vaccinated or recovered" from Covid-19 ahead of a vote by the country's parliament on mandatory immunizations.

It is not yet clear when the latest measures will go into effect, but the plans include a blanket ban on entering bars, restaurants and cinemas for anyone who is unvaccinated or not recovered from Covid, according to a document signed off by the leaders of the country's 16 states.

SOURCE: AFP

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 3 December, 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30) hrs M.S.T today, the Cyclonic Storm "JAWAD" has moved North-Northwestwards and centered at about (485) Nautical miles West-Northwest of Coco-Island, (540) Nautical miles West of Hainggyigyun (Myanmar), (195) Nautical miles Southeast of Vishakhapatnam, (255)Nautical miles South of Gopalpur and (330)Nautical miles South- Southwest of Paradip (India).Weather is partly cloudy over the North Andaman Sea and Southwest Bay of Bengal and cloudy over the South Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 4 December, 2021: Rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Sagaing, Mandalay, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin, Chin, Rakhine States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Squalls with moderate to rough seas are likely at times off and along Myanmar Coasts. Surface wind speed in squalls may reach (35) m.p.h. Wave height will be about (7-9) feet in off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway Regions and Kachin, Chin, Rakhine States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4 December, 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4 December, 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 4 December,2021: Partly cloudy.

WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND: Weather will be generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw and Mandalay Region and partly cloudy in Yangon Region.

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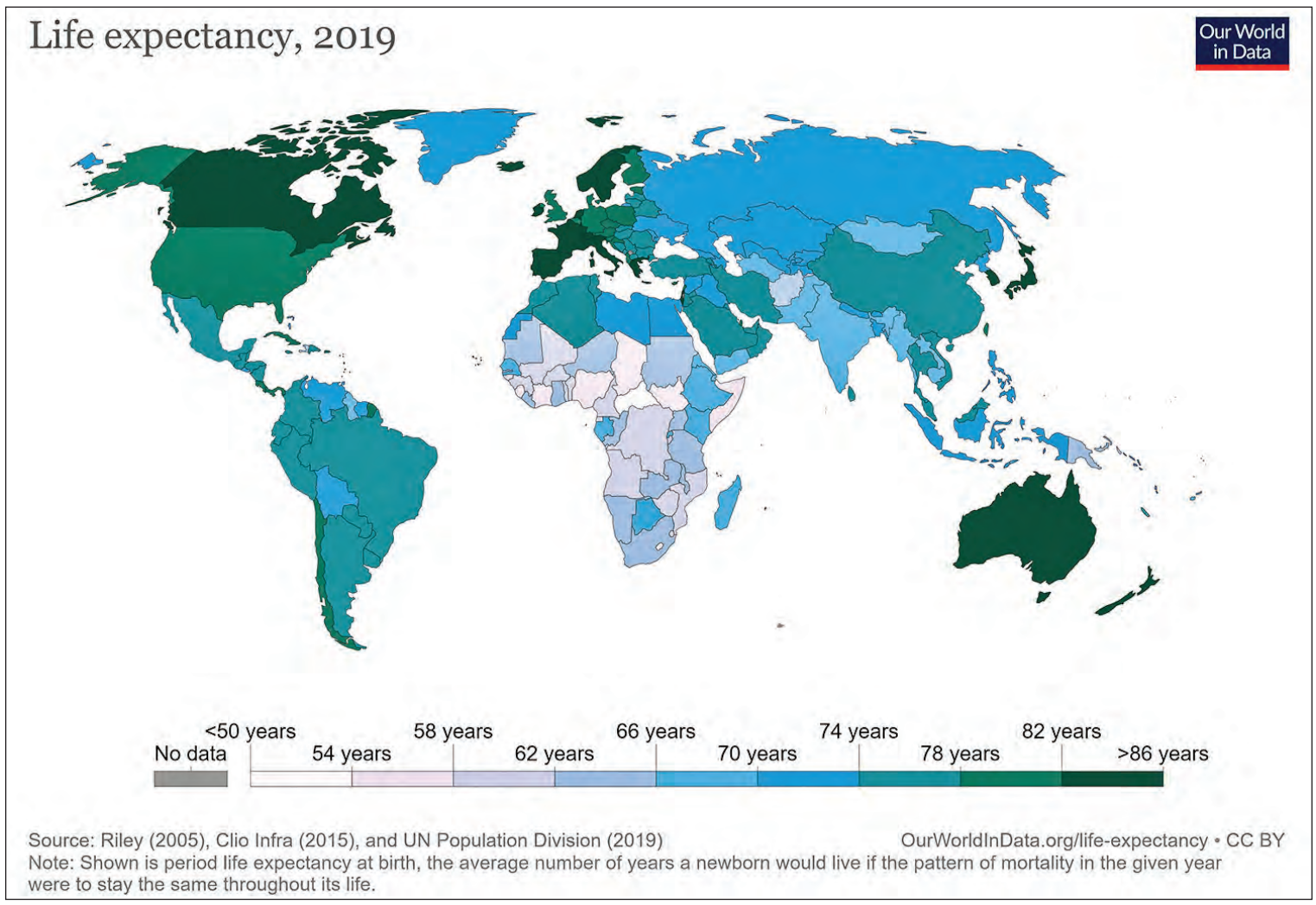
Life Expectancy at Birth and influential factors in Myanmar

THE international organizations including the World Health Organization and health organizations in the country are constantly monitoring the improvements of the health status of the respective countries.

Such a monitoring process is a must for any government. In doing so, the Health Indicators are mainly used in measuring. These indicators are usually divided into eight major sections. They are Mortality Indicators, Morbidity Indicators, Health Status Indicators, Disability Indicators, Nutrition Indicators, Social and Mental Indicators, Health System Indicators and Health Determinants. One of the most important indicators to take into account in calculating these is the Life Expectancy at Birth, the morality index of a country.



What is Life Expectancy at Birth?

According to WHO, life Expectancy at Birth reflects the overall mortality level of a population. It summarizes the mortality pattern that prevails across all age groups — children and adolescents, adults and the elderly. The average number of years that a newborn is expected to live if current mortality rates continue to apply.

When we talk about Life Expectancy at Birth, the countries usually refer to the life expectancy of the entire population, as well as men and women separately. Normally, the life expectancy of women is higher than the men.

> When describing the longevity and health of citizens, one often refers to the life expectancy of a country. Therefore, it is important for policymakers to accurately calculate and know the life expectancy of a country. Only then can the right policies be put in place to manage the country's health sector.

How do we calculate life expectancy at birth?

There were various Formulas to calculate the life expectancy at birth. The different formulas bring different results. Therefore, we need to highlight the results calculated with the same formulas for life expectancy.

Every country needs Life Table to calculate life expectancy at birth. The table carries data the mortality rates, survival rates and probabilities of dying at each age group. These data can be collated from the data of those who give birth or die across the nation in one year. These lists can be received from hospitals, clinics and the certificates of birth or death from the cemeteries. If so, we can calculate life expectancy based on these facts. The life expectancy at birth for Myanmar today is 67.8 years. It means that it is not related to those who were born in the past and the life expectancy at birth of a child born in 2021 will be 67.8 years. To be clearer, the life expectancy at birth of a child born in this country, land with this healthcare system and lifestyle will be 67.8 years.

The nature of the expected life expectancy

If we look at the life expectancy of the people of the world in the Bronze Age or the Iron Age, it was only 26 years. Today, on a global scale, the average life expectancy has risen to 67 years. The life expectancy of the world's countries over the years shows that there was no significant change from the Bronze Age to the 1859s. However, after 1850, the life expectancy of countries increased rapidly, especially it was growing faster in Western Europe than in any other country. This was because of the emergence of economies after the Industrial Revolution, higher education, and the improvement of the healthcare system and the advancement of medical science.

A study of world life expectancy in 2021 shows that Japan has a life expectancy of 83 years, compared to Swaziland's 49-year life expectancy.

According to Swaziland's under-five mortality rate in 2021, there are 494 under-five deaths per 1,000 live births, and in Japan only 2.3 per 1,000 live births.

What this proves is that among the many mortality rates that affect a country's life expectancy, the under-five mortality rate in the country is the most significant. It should be noted that the under-five mortality rate in Myanmar is 44.7 per 1,000 live births, according to UNICEF. In addition, higher maternal and infant mortality rates also lower life expectancy.

It is also important to measure the life expectancy of countries by measuring their Human Development Index. The Human Development Index is usually based on three factors. These are long and healthy life of citizens, education and standard of living.

When describing the longevity and health of citizens, one often refers to the life expectancy of a country. Therefore, it is important for policymakers to accurately calculate and know the life expectancy of a country. Only then can the right policies be put in place to manage the country's health sector.

There are many factors that influence the life expectancy of countries. These include the country's socio-economic status, healthcare system, health behaviours of people in the country, health behaviours, genetic factors and environmental factors.

Among the socio-economic status, it will include employment rate, per capita income, access to electricity, education and economic conditions. Health behaviours include smoking, liquor consumption and conditions such as malnutrition and physical inactivity. Environmental factors include climate change, population density, access to clean drinking water, air quality and sanitation conditions.

TO BE CONTINUED

Market situation still unknown despite watermelon export to China

ALTHOUGH Myanmar exported the watermelon to China, the market situation is still unknown, according to the fruit commodity depot.

Currently, about 21 fruit loaded trucks reached in Wamding haven't yet arrived at the fruit market. Consequently, the actual cost and price in China side are not identified yet.

During the COVID-19 period, although the trucks were reached on the Chinese side through the border checkpoints, they should be stopped in the red zone for 24-hour quarantine, customs clearance in the yellow zone and re-tested and obtained COVID-19-free certificate in the F zone.

Sino-Myanmar border trade expects revival as lorries full of watermelon are exporting them to China.

Besides, the Chinese's customs system has been transformed from a border trade system to a normal trade system. It has been also reported that the export tax will be levied on the overseas shipping system which has been delayed due to the pending changes in China's customs system, according to the Khwanyo Fruit Warehouse.

"We head that cost of customs duty will be around 800-1,000 yuan per tonne. The required documents and banking system need to be updated even with the normal trading system. Now, we are negotiating with the Chinese authorities. It will take time," said U Sai Khin Maung from the Khwanyo Fruit Warehouse.

Therefore, the watermelon growers and traders should only harvest after receiving and observation the information.

Currently, there are about 500 fruit loaded trucks in Shwe Lwin Inn ground in Kyinsankyawt border checkpoints. Thus, the fruits trucks reached in Muse 105th mile are temporally stopped to transport Kyinsankyawt checkpoint, according to the fruit traders.

The truck's load of watermelon will be brought to China via Chinese trucks after they unload their goods in Myanmar.

Last 26 September, the Kyinsankyawt border post between Myanmar and China has reopened on a trial run. Myanmar's goods weighing five containers can be delivered to China then.

On 27 November, two truckloads of watermelon were put into a container and sent to China.

During the COVID-19 period, the transport charges are over one time higher than the previous rate, it is learnt.

Transport charges were around K800,000 to one million, whereas it costs approximately K2 million for now.

Traders cannot expect trade facilitation according to the changes in China's policy during the COVID-19 pandemic. If the restrictions are eased and negotiation goes smooth, the trade will go back to normality.
— NN/GNLM

Myanmar ships over 500,000 MT of rice in past two months

Myanmar exported rice to 13 foreign markets so far. China is the primary buyer of Myanmar rice, followed by Cameroon, Spain, Ivory Coast and the Philippines. Meanwhile, Myanmar shipped broken rice primarily to China, followed by the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, France and three other countries.

MYANMAR shipped more than 501,590 metric tons of rice and broken rice in the past two months of the current mini-budget period (October 2021-March 2022), according to the Myanmar Rice Federation (MRF).

In November 2021, a total of 34 companies delivered over 262,662 MT of rice to foreign trade partners through maritime trade, whereas 22,561 MT were sent to neighbouring countries via land borders, totalling over 285,223 MT. The export volume in cross-border trade significantly plunged owing to the closure of border posts.

Last month, the export prices of white rice varieties stood at US$325-348 per MT depending on the different varieties and quality. The export price of Myanmar's rice was relatively lower than the rates of Thailand and Viet Nam. Yet, the prices were higher than those market prices of India and Pakistan, MRF's data showed.

Myanmar exported rice to 13 foreign markets so far. China is the primary buyer of Myanmar rice, followed by Cameroon, Spain, Ivory Coast and the Philippines.

Meanwhile, Myanmar shipped broken rice primarily to China, followed by the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, France and three other countries.

More than 216,375 metric tons of rice and broken rice were conveyed to the external market in October 2021.

Myanmar generated over $800 million from rice exports in the financial year 2019-2020 ended 30 September, with an estimated volume of over 2.5 million tonnes. Myanmar generated US$700.13 million income from exports of rice and broken rice in the financial year 2020-2021 (October 2020-September 2021) amidst the border trade disruption triggered by the COVID-19 negative consequences as per the statistics released by the Ministry of Commerce. — KK/GNLM

Peanut market sees gradual price increase on steady demand

THE price of peanuts is gradually rising on the strong domestic demand, according to the Mandalay wholesale market.

Following the high demand of the local millers, the prices of peanut moved in the range of K2,900-K3,075 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes), Mandalay market's price statistics indicated.

At present, it is highly demanded in the domestic market rather than the Chinese market.

The price of imported palm oil edged up to above K6,500 per viss in October, following Kyat depreciation, whereas the price of palm oil was around K4,500 per viss. Consumers' behaviour has changed and the demand for peanut oil has risen after that.

Myanmar oil body has been planning to export peanut oil produced in line with Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).

There are about 300 oil millers in Mandalay, of whom only 50 hold FDA certification, while the rest have been unable to meet the FDA criteria.

The Myanmar Oil Millers Association plans to help millers in the entire supply chain get approved by the Food and Drug Administration, to eradicate illegal sales in the market and ensure a firm market for producers.

It also helps millers earn the trust of consumers and place them in a better position to compete with other oil brands being sold in the domestic market, said Mandalay oil millers.

Myanmar has exported US$190.7 million worth more than 160,776 tonnes of peanuts to the foreign trade partners last financial year 2020-2021, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar's peanuts are mostly exported to China.
— KK/GNLM

Japan's farm exports in 2021 to top 1 tril. yen for 1st time

The export value of Japanese agriculture, forestry and seafood products this year is certain to surpass 1 trillion yen ($8.8 billion) for the first time, the agricultural ministry said Friday. **PHOTO: KYODO**

THE export value of Japanese agriculture, forestry and seafood products this year is certain to surpass 1 trillion yen ($8.8 billion) for the first time, the agricultural ministry said Friday.

Already achieving a 28% increase from last year, the value of exports between January and October totaled 973.4 billion yen ($86 million), bolstered by sales of beef and sake, according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

Sales in October alone saw the largest ever single-month increase from a year earlier of 14.9 per cent boosted by the robust shipment to the United States and China of scallops among other products, totalling 105.4 billion yen.

"Exports continue to be strong," agriculture minister Genjiro Kaneko said at a press conference.

The Japanese government has set goals for achieving 2 trillion yen in exports in 2025 and 5 trillion yen in 2030.

Japan's export of agricultural products have grown steadily, but the 1 trillion yen goal initially set for 2020 could not be met as the growth slowed due to the coronavirus pandemic. The value of exports in 2020 was 986.0 billion yen.—Kyodo ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

China-Russia trade in goods hit record high in first 10 months

TRADE between China and Russia saw robust growth this year, with bilateral trade in goods reaching a record of 115.6 billion US dollars during the first 10 months, the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) said Thursday.

China's direct investment in Russia grew 39.1 per cent year on year during the period, MOC spokesperson Shu Jueting told a press briefing.

China and Russia are actively negotiating an intergovernmental agreement on international lunar research station cooperation, Shu said, adding that the two sides have also made progress in deepening cooperation on industrial and supply chains, advancing cooperation in emerging areas, and strengthening multilateral cooperation in an all-round way. Talking about the 26th regular meeting between Premier Li Keqiang and his Russian counterpart Mikhail Mishustin held via video link, Shu said the meeting injected new impetus into the development of China-Russia comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership in the new era.—AFP ■

IMF says chief economist taking top leadership role

THE IMF's high-profile chief economist Gita Gopinath next month will become the number two official at the Washington-based crisis lender, the fund announced Thursday.

Gopinath will succeed Geoffrey Okamoto as first deputy managing director, serving under IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva -- the first time two women have held the top leadership roles.

Georgieva call Gopinath "the right person at the right time" to take the leadership role.

"Especially given that the pandemic has led to an increase in the scale and scope of the macroeconomic challenges facing our member countries, I believe that Gita -- universally recognized as one of the world's leading macroeconomists -- has precisely the expertise that we need for the FDMD role at this point," Georgieva said in the statement.— AFP ■

French concern about Chinese Alibaba cloud for Paris 2024

Any data held by Alibaba can be accessed by the Chinese government. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

CHINESE e-commerce leader Alibaba Group's role as a "worldwide partner" of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games has sparked a behind-the-scenes battle to prevent it from hosting and accessing sensitive data.

"There is a fight," Guillaume Poupard, director-general of the National Agency for the Security of Information Systems (ANSSI) said earlier, before adding that it was "complicated".

"We are battling away and explaining that for security reasons, including personal data, this is not possible," he added, declining to give more details.

Alibaba, a symbol of China's success in the digital economy but now in the sights of the Chinese authorities, is one of the IOC's 13 "worldwide partners".

The partnership dates back to the PyeongChang Winter Olympics in 2018. The prospect that the company will host several critical applications in its cloud is raising eyebrows in the secretive world of French IT security, which clings to digital sovereignty as a standard. — AFP ■

Brazil's economy enters recession

BRAZIL'S economy, the largest in Latin America, slid into recession in the third quarter of 2021 as agricultural production dropped, official data showed Thursday.

GDP declined 0.1 per cent for the second straight quarterly fall, the government statistics agency IBGE said.

The second-quarter drop was revised to a larger 0.4 percent from an initial estimate of 0.1 per cent compared to the previous three months.

Brazil's second-quarter GDP slowdown ended the recovery that started late 2020 after the collapse caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In comparison to the same period a year ago, the economy grew four percent in the third quarter, said the IBGE.

Agricultural production fell 8.0 per cent, while manufacturing was flat and the services sector grew 1.1 per cent. Brazil's services industry was boosted by an improvement in the health situation in a country hard hit by the global pandemic.

Shoppers buy TV sets at a megastore during a Black Friday sale in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on 25 November 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

After its immunization campaign got off to a rocky start, the South American country has now managed to fully vaccinate 60 per cent of its population against coronavirus, although there are fears the emergence of the new Omicron variant — with three cases confirmed in Brazil — could at least partly undo progress.

Drought, inflation

The third-quarter drop in farming production was partly a function of the end of the soybean harvest, which happens mainly in the first quarter, but also drops in coffee (-22.4 per cent), cotton (-17.5 per cent) and maize (-16 per cent) output compared to 2020.

"The drop is attributable to the drought, the water crisis, because there were crop losses and grain production declined," according to Alex Agostini of consulting firm Austin Rating.— AFP ■

Nissan unveils lunar rover prototype developed with JAXA

NISSAN Motor Co. unveiled Thursday a prototype of a lunar rover co-developed with Japan's space exploration agency that will employ the automaker's motor control technology to manoeuvre across the Moon's loose terrain.

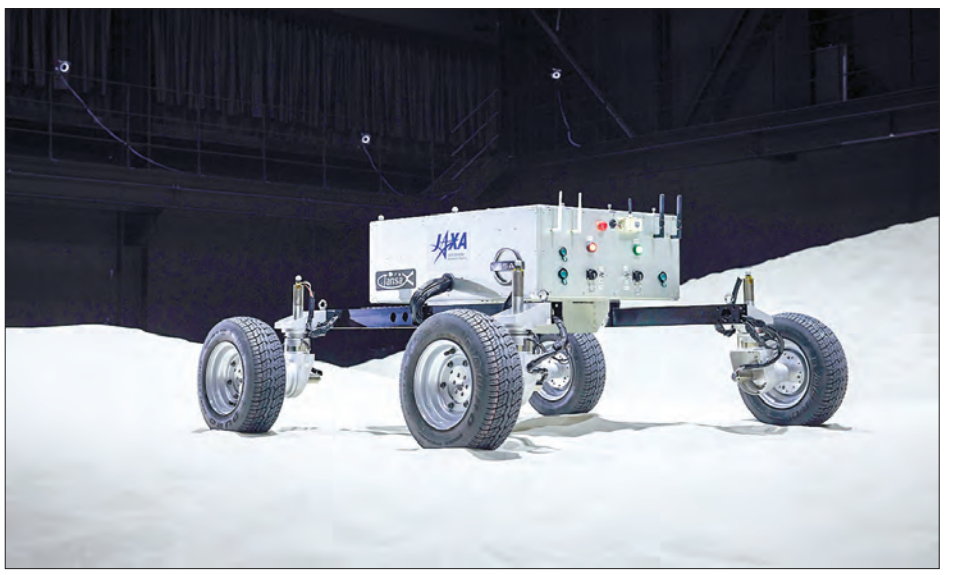
The automaker said it aims to make the rover capable of traversing the undulating Moon surface smoothly by applying technology developed for use in its roadgoing electric vehicles such as the Leaf and Ariya.

The rover, which is expected to be driverless and run on solar power, will likely have specially developed wheels to overcome the challenge of traversing the lunar surface. The timing of the rover's launch has yet to be decided, Nissan said.

Toshiyuki Nakajima, general manager of Nissan's Advanced Vehicle Engineering Department, said the company and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency plan to continue joint research on the project for another year, though they still do not know when development will be completed.

Among other automakers collaborating with JAXA, Toyota Motor Corp. has been conducting joint research on a rover to be sent to the Moon in 2029.

Honda Motor Co. has been studying a circulative renewable energy system to provide oxygen, hydrogen and electricity for use in long-term extraterrestrial exploration projects.—Kyodo ■



A prototype of a lunar rover developed by Nissan Motor Co. and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency. **PHOTO: KYODO**

US pharma Merck unit seeks Japan's approval of oral COVID drug

The pharmaceutical giant is making its oral antiviral drug widely available for all the world. **PHOTO: TOM MIHALEK/AFP**

THE Japanese arm of US pharmaceutical giant Merck & Co. said Friday it has applied for state approval for the production and sale of an oral COVID-19 drug, which if granted could be the first such pill to be used in Japan.

MSD K.K. said in a press release that it is seeking the green light from the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare under a fast-track process for the Merck-developed molnupiravir, which prevents the virus from entering or multiplying in the body.

The Japanese government has already agreed with Merck on the procurement of 1.6 million doses and plans to make the orally-administered pill available by the end of the year. The drug, which can be taken at home, is regarded by Japan as vital to fighting the pandemic.

Clinical trial data show that patients given the drug within five days of developing coronavirus symptoms were 30 per cent less likely to be hospitalized or die compared to those who were given a placebo, according to the Japanese subsidiary.—Kyodo ■

UAE signs deal for 80 French Rafale fighter jets: officials

THE United Arab Emirates has agreed to buy 80 French-made Rafale fighter jets, the biggest international order ever made for the warplanes, officials said on Friday during a visit by French President Emmanuel Macron.

The UAE, one of the French defence industry's biggest customers, also agreed to buy 12 Caracal military transport helicopters, the French presidency said in a statement.

"This is an outcome of the strategic partnership between the two countries, consolidating their capacity to act together for their autonomy and security," the statement said.

The Rafale order is the biggest made internationally for the aircraft since it entered into service in 2004.

The agreement was signed by Dassault Aviation director-general Eric Trapier as Macron held talks with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed on the first day of a visit to the Gulf.

By snapping up Rafale planes, built by Dassault Aviation, the UAE is following the lead of Gulf rival Qatar, which has bought 36 of the craft, and Egypt which ordered 24 in 2015 and 30 earlier this year.—AFP ■

China gives long-awaited green light to Boeing 737 MAX after crashes

CHINESE authorities cleared the Boeing 737 MAX to resume service on Thursday, according to a government directive seen by AFP, a long-awaited step in the aircraft's comeback following two fatal crashes.

The move by the Civil Aviation Administration of China sets the stage for the jet to return to airline schedules in the country in 2022 and follows months of back and forth between Beijing and Boeing.

China is the last key travel market to bring the plane back into use after it was grounded globally in March 2019 following the second of two crashes that together claimed 346 lives.

Boeing won approval from Washington in November 2020 and from most other leading aviation authorities soon thereafter to resume service.

"After conducting sufficient assessment, CAAC consider the corrective actions are adequate to address this unsafe condition," said a CAAC document dated 2 December and seen by AFP.

The directive means there are no remaining regulatory obstacles for the MAX to return to the skies in China, although it was not clear exactly when flights would resume.

Aviation insiders expect it will be another four to six weeks before the jets actually see service from Chinese carriers.

Chinese authorities cleared the way for the 737 MAX to resume after a lengthy grounding . **PHOTO: AFP/ BERTHA WANG**

The additional time will be needed to provide pilot training and ensure the jets are ready for service after the lengthy time in storage.

"In Beijing, the conditions are not great for storing jets. The weather varies and can be cold, hot, humid," said Michel Merluzeau, an analyst at AIR consultancy, who expects most jets will not see service for at least another four or five weeks.—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V SINAR POMALAA VOY.NO. (072N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SINAR POMALAA VOY.NO. (072N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **4-12-2021** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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NEWS IN BRIEF

43 French boats obtain licences to continue fishing in British waters

THE government of Guernsey, the second largest of the Channel Islands, has granted fishing licences to 43 out 58 French boats that applied for the permit, allowing them to continue fishing in the English Channel after 1 Feb 2022, French newspaper Le Monde reported on Wednesday.

The French boats will be able to operate in the zone of 6-12 nautical miles off the island, just as it was before Brexit, Le Monde said.

The local authorities said that "additional data will be examined" concerning the other 15 boats.

Jonathan Le Tocq, the minister of foreign affairs of the island, saluted this "important milestone", hoping this announcement will help bring "certainty and stability" to French fishing boat operators.—Xinhua ■

67 tonnes of smuggled cosmetics seized in China's Shenzhen

CUSTOMS authorities in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen have busted a major smuggling ring with 17 suspects caught and 67 tonnes of cosmetics worth more than 200 million yuan (about 31.4 million U.S. dollars) seized.

The criminal gang is suspected of using cross-bo der e-commerce channels to smuggle imported cosmetics, milk powder and other goods into China, said the Shenzhen Customs on Wednesday. At the end of last year, local customs found that the total declared price of a batch of imported cosmetics was significantly underestimated, and the express receipts and the buyer's identity information were forged during a routine check on cross-border e-commerce goods.

According to the preliminary investigation, the ring deliberately declared goods that should have been imported via general trade as goods imported through cross-border e-commerce channels. They then arranged for buyers in Shenzhen to sell the goods nationwide. In April, 34 task forces with about 220 people launched operations to arrest the ring members. Six containers full of cosmetics, including cleansing foams, facial creams and makeup foundations of renowned brands such as Lancome, Burberry and Calvin Klein, were seized on the spot, weighing about 67 tonnes. – Xinhua ■

Pope Francis to give open-air mass on Cyprus visit

POPE Francis was set to speak to thousands of Catholics at an open-air mass in Cyprus on Friday, the second day of a visit to the divided island that has focused heavily on the plight of migrants.

As a gesture of solidarity to those fleeing poverty and conflict, the 84-year-old pontiff was expected to offer 50 migrants now in Cyprus a chance for a new life in Italy, the president of the host country said.

Many of the 7,000 faithful expected at Nicosia's main football stadium will be overseas workers from the Philippines and South Asia who make up a large proportion of the 25,000 Catholics in mainly Greek-Orthodox Cyprus.

Ahead of the mass, the pope visited the Holy Archbishopric of the Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus in Nicosia, seeking to improve historically difficult relations between the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches.

The pope is seeking to improve historically difficult relations between the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches. **PHOTO: AFP**

"Where our relations are concerned, history has opened broad furrows between us, but the Holy Spirit desires that with humility and respect we once more draw close to one another," he said in an address to Orthodox clerics, including Archbishop Chrysostomos II of Cyprus.

Elena Shentsova, an Orthodox Christian originally from Ukraine, said she woke up early to see the pope.

"I'm Orthodox and I hope he will spread a message of dialogue between the different religions, to be all more close," the 42-year-old told AFP.—AFP ■

Facebook whistleblower warns US lawmakers of regulation deadlock

Former Facebook employee Frances Haugen (C) talks with Rashad Robinson (L), President of the Colour of Change, and Kara Frederick (R), Technology Policy Research Fellow at the Heritage Foundation, before a hearing on Capitol Hill. **PHOTO: BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/ AFP**

FACEBOOK whistleblower Frances Haugen urged a US Congress panel Wednesday not to get mired in drawn out debate amid a new push to set social media regulations, which have long been blocked by partisan combat.

Haugen's leaks of internal company documents sparked outrage, damning press reports and pledges from elected officials to finally take action against the platforms — but so far, no new rules have been enacted. "Facebook wants you to have analysis paralysis, to get stuck on false choices and not act here," Haugen told a US House of Representatives panel on Big Tech accountability.

"Facebook wants you to get caught up in a long, drawn out debate over the minutiae of different legislative approaches. Please don't fall into that trap," she added in written testimony.

A series of articles underpinned by the leaked documents argued Facebook, which changed its name to Meta in October, knew its sites could harm some of their billions of users — but executives chose growth over safety. The social media giant has pushed fiercely back against the press reports as selectively using its research to paint a dark vision of the company's work. "What we need is a set of updated rules for the internet set by Congress that companies should follow, which is why we've been asking for this for nearly three years," Meta said in a statement.—AFP ■

Russia says it has detained three Ukrainian spies

RUSSIA said on Thursday (2 Dec) that it had detained three Ukrainian spies, including one who had allegedly been planning an attack with explosives, as tensions spike around Ukraine's conflict with pro-Russia separatists.

The FSB domestic intelligence agency did not say where or when it had detained the Ukrainians.

It said two of the alleged spies - a father and son - were agents of Ukraine's SBU security service who had "travelled to Russia to collect information and take photographs and videos of strategically important enterprises and objects of transport infrastructure".

The pair confessed to having been recruited by the Ukrainian SBU, the Russian FSB said, which offered them a fee of US$10,000 (S$13,663).

The third Ukrainian, who planned to carry out an attack, "was recruited and acted on the instructions" of a top Ukrainian intelligence officer, the FSB said.

"The attack was planned to be carried out by detonating two improvised explosive devices with a total mass of 1.5kg in a TNT equivalent," the Russian FSB said in a statement.

He "was detained red-ha- nded with weapons of destruction on his way to the scene of the crime", the agency added.

It did not specify where or when the attack was to take place.—AFP ■

Russian police and National Guard servicemen patrol Red Square in Moscow on 20 October 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

China's top diplomat voices support for formal end of Korean War

Pro-peace activists attend a rally calling for a formal end to the Korean War in central Seoul on 26 February 2019. - US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un will meet for dinner in Hanoi before their previously announced talks the next day, the White House said. **PHOTO: ED JONES / AFP/FILE**

CHINA'S top diplomat, Yang Jiechi, has expressed support for Seoul's push for the declaration of a formal end to the 1950-1953 Korean War, Yonhap News Agency reported Friday, citing South Korea's Embassy in Beijing.

During his talks with South Korea's National Security Director Suh Hoon in Tianjin on Thursday, Yang said China believes "the end-of-war declaration will contribute to promoting peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula," according to Yonhap.

Their meeting took place after South Korean President Moon Jae In said in his speech at the UN General Assembly in September that he would seek to declare a formal end to the war, naming China as a potential partner along with the two Koreas and the United States.

The Korean War — in which US-led UN forces fought alongside the South against the North backed by China and the Soviet Union — ended in a cease-fire, not a peace treaty.

Moon, whose tenure as president ends in May, has emphasized that an end-of-war declaration could help revive the stalled inter-Korean peace talks.

North Korea, however, said it would reject any proposal by the South unless the United States withdraws its "hostile policy" toward Pyongyang. China is known as North Korea's most influential political ally, while Seoul has formed a security alliance with Washington.—Kyodo ■

US averts government shutdown one day ahead of deadline

Avoiding a government shutdown is one of a number of urgent priorities Congress must deal with before Christmas. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE US Congress approved a stopgap funding bill Thursday in a rare show of cross-party unity to keep federal agencies running into 2022 and avert a costly holiday season government shutdown.

With the clock ticking down to the 11:59 pm Friday deadline, the Senate voted by 69 to 28 to keep the lights on until February 18 with a resolution that had already advanced from the House.

The "continuing resolution" avoids millions of public workers being sent home unpaid with Christmas approaching, as parks, museums and other federal properties and services closed.

"I am glad that, in the end, cooler heads prevailed -- the government will stay open," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said.

"And I thank the members of this chamber for walking us back from the brink of an avoidable, needless and costly shutdown."

Congress watchers had expected to see the resolution getting a rough ride in the Senate, where a small group of hardline Republicans threatened to tank the measure in protest over the White House's pandemic response.

But Democrats agreed to allow a straight majority vote on defunding President Joe Biden's vaccine-or-testing mandate for large companies, which promptly failed as expected.

The right-wing Republican group, led by Utah's senior senator Mike Lee, argues that the mandate is an assault on personal liberty.—AFP ■

Stuck in limbo, Syrians in Denmark suffer unbearable wait

BILAL Alkale's family is among the hundred or so Syrian refugees in Denmark whose lives are on hold amid an insufferable legal limbo — their temporary residency permits have been revoked but they can't be deported. Now, they have no rights.

Alkale, who until recently ran his own small transportation company in Denmark, found out in March he wasn't allowed to stay in the Scandinavian country where he has lived as a refugee since 2014, as Copenhagen now considers it safe for Syrians to return to Damascus.

His wife and three of his four children were also affected by the decision taken by Danish authorities. Once the ruling was confirmed on appeal in late September — like 40 per cent of some 200 other cases examined so far — Alkale and his family were ordered to leave.

They were told that if they didn't go voluntarily, they would be placed in a detention centre.

The family has refused to leave. Normally they would have been deported by now, but since Copenhagen has no diplomatic relations with Damascus, they can't be. And so they wait.— AFP ■

Bilal Alkale and his wife Sawsan Doungham joined a Copenhagen protest against deportations as they are among the hundreds of Syrian refugees whose temporary residency permits have been revoked – though they can't be deported. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Austria chancellor ready to quit after predecessor Kurz leaves politics

AUSTRIAN Chancellor Alexander Schallenberg said on Thursday that he was ready to quit after his predecessor Sebastian Kurz announced that he was leaving politics, prompting fresh upheaval within their conservative People's Party (OeVP).

Kurz's announcement came just two months after he resigned as national leader following his implication in a corruption scandal and caps a spectacular career, which saw him become the world's youngest democratically elected head of government in 2017 at just 31.

He said he would hand over all his political functions, including the leadership of the OeVP.

Just hours after Kurz spoke, his close ally and replacement as chancellor, Alexander Schallenberg, released a statement in which he said he was "of the firm opinion that the posts of chancellor and head of the party... should quickly be taken on by the same person".–AFP ■

France rejects joint Channel border patrols with UK

FRENCH Prime Minister Jean Castex told his British counterpart Boris Johnson that the UK held "a large part of the solution" to the Channel migrant crisis and rejected the idea of joint border patrols, according to letter seen by AFP on Thursday.

Castex wrote to Johnson on late Wednesday setting out France's suggestions to stop migrants crossing the Channel in small boats following a tragedy last week in which at least 27 people drowned.

He formally rejected an idea proposed by Johnson of British security forces patrolling on the French coast to prevent dinghies taking to the water. –AFP ■

Hein Si Thu records hole-in-one at Laguna Phuket Championship 2021

Hein Si Thu celebrates the victory after shooting the hole-in-one at the Asian Tour in Laguna Golf Phuket, Thailand. **PHOTO: ASIAN TOUR**

HEIN SI THU a Myanmar professional golfer, scored a hole-in-one record in the Laguna Phuket Championship 2021 Golf Tournament organized by Asian Tour in Laguna Golf Phuket, Thailand.

Hein Si Thu competed on the first round of the tourney and hit the hole-in-one into the 205-yard hole with 16 Srixon iron rods.

Hein Si Thu won a total of 69 shots on the first round of the competition (2 December).

On the second round of the competition, on 3 December, a total of 73 strokes were scored.

A total of 144 golfers from more than 20 countries are competing in the tournament, which will run until 5 December with a total prize pool of USD1 million. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

(a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.

(b) To emphasize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).

(c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy.

2. Economic affairs

(a) To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern techniques and strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.

(b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.

(c) To promote and support local businesses to create employment opportunities and increase domestic production.

3. Social affairs

(a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.

(b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National peoples and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national characteristics.

(c) To enhance the health, fitness and education quality of the entire nation.

Golovkin world title bout in Japan postponed over border ban

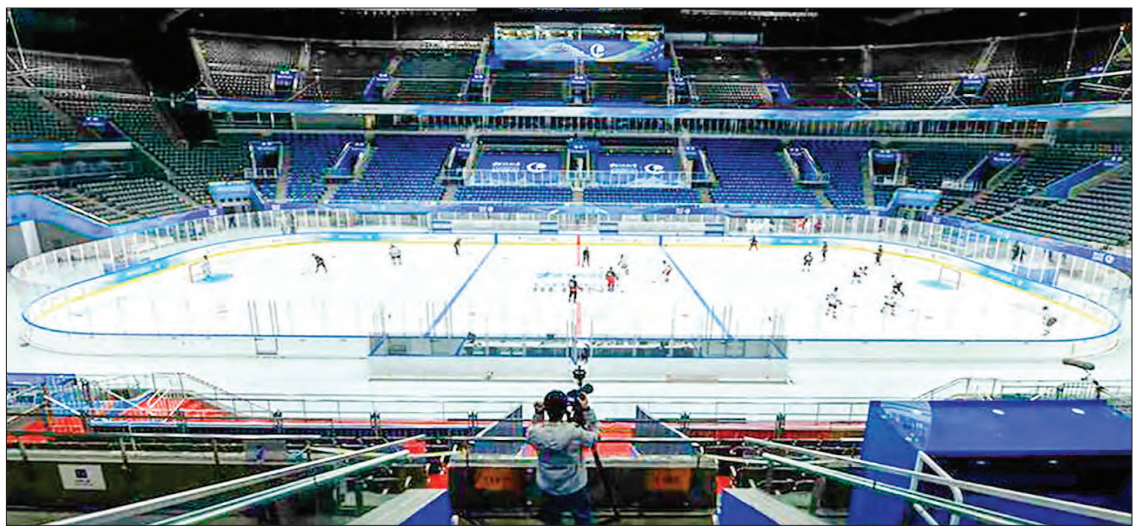
GENNADY Golovkin's world title fight against Ryota Murata in Japan was Friday postponed "to next spring", over a ban on new foreign arrivals to the country prompted by the Omicron variant. The hard-hitting Kazakh boxer was set to return to the ring after a year's absence with a unification bout against Japanese WBA super-titlist Murata on 29 December in Saitama, north of Tokyo.

But promoters Teiken announced Friday that the fight would be moved to a yet-to-be-decided date next spring, with Golovkin and his team unable to enter Japan because of immigration rules.

IBF middleweight champion Golovkin, also known as "GGG", tweeted that he was "deeply disappointed", but "the health and safety of the public must always be the priority". "I look forward to returning to the ring against Ryota as soon as possible," added the 39-year-old.— AFP ■

Gennady Golovkin's world title fight against Ryota Murata has been postponed. **PHOTO: AFP**

Beijing Olympic venue could bar spectators over Covid: state media



The National Indoor Stadium in Beijing will host men's hockey at the Games. **PHOTO: AFP**

SPECTATORS attending a major venue for the Beijing Olympics must be vaccinated but fans could be barred from the arena entirely if the coronavirus worsens in China, state media says.

Unlike the pandemic-delayed Tokyo Olympics, which took place last summer in mostly empty stadiums, organizers of February's Winter Games have vowed to allow spectators, although only people living in China. There has been no official announcement about how full venues will be so the rules at the 18,000-capacity National Indoor Stadium — which will host ice hockey — hint at what could lie ahead for the Games.

Spectators at the arena will have to be vaccinated and show a negative Covid test, the Global Times said, quoting a venue manager.

Some 6,000 seats have been earmarked for the public but some or even all could be closed off, depending on "the epidemic situation in Beijing and nationwide at the time of the event", arena operations official Lei Ming told the state tabloid.

China -- where the coronavirus was first detected in late 2019 — has maintained strict disease controls even as the rest of the world tries to find ways to live with the virus.—AFP ■