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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.

Training must be given to graduates from the school to have skill in respective subjects of mechanical works in the Tatmadaw, says Senior General

TRAINEES must be capable of thoroughly studying the lessons, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, yesterday afternoon in the inspection of local mechanical engineering school in PyinOoLwin Station.

At the meeting hall, Director of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Brig-Gen Nay Myo Oo reported to the Senior General on a brief history of the school, conducting of training courses, upgrade of teaching aid and improvement of the training school.

In his response, the Senior General said that the mechanical training schools of the Tatmadaw must have the same curriculum.

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State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views the practical works of the trainees with the use of teaching aids at the local mechanical engineering school in PyinOoLwin yesterday.

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Judgements given to 4 special civil appeals; 2 special criminal appeals, 3 special civil appeals heard

A total of four special civil appeals were given judgements and two special criminal appeals plus three special civil appeals heard at Office No (1) of Supreme Court of the Union yesterday morning.

Special appeals tribunal was led by Chief Justice of the Union U Htun Htun Oo and Judges of the Supreme Court of the Union U Myo Tint, U Kyi Thein, U Tin Hone, and Daw Khin May Yi.

A total of four special civil appeals – 3/2020 (Mandalay), 6/2020 (Mandalay), 9/2020 (Kayin) and 12/2020 (Yangon) were given judgements.

In addition, two special criminal appeals – 5/2021 (Mon) and 6/2021 (Taninthayi) and three special civil appeals – 13/2020 (Ayeyawady), 22/2020 (Yangon) and 24/2020 (Bago) were heard keeping in line with the COVID-19 prevention measures. —MNA

Healthcare centres give medical service to Covid-19 confirmed patients

MILITARY hospitals and clinics, interrogation and accommodation camps and military training schools in various areas of the Regional Military Headquarters are being set up to provide healthcare for COVID-19 confirmed patients, officials said.

In addition, quarantine centers are also being set up in the relevant townships in collaboration with responsible person, officials from the Ministry of Health and other departments and

charity groups.

As of 7 pm yesterday, a total of 16 people: 8 men and 8 women were under special surveillance at the Nay Pyi Taw Interrogation and Accommodation Center.

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

State Administration Council Chairman grants pardon to reduce sentences of U Win Myint, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

THE special court of Zabuthiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area sentenced U Win Myint to two years in prison after being found guilty of violating the Natural Disaster Management Law Section 25 and another two

years in prison on the charge of breaking the Penal Code Section 505 (b) yesterday.

Similarly, the court sentenced Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to two years in prison after being found guilty of breaching the Natural Disas-

ter Management Law Section 25 and two years in prison on the charge of violating the Penal Code Section 505 (b) on the same day.

All the citizens must respect the right and fair judgment exercised under

the existing law to ensure the rule of law. However, the Chairman of the State Administration Council released a statement of pardon reducing the sentences of U Win Myint and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi by two years out of four years

according to sub-section (1) of the Penal Code Section 401 keeping them detained in the current location for remaining two years of imprisonment according to Subsection (1) of the Penal Code Section 541. — MNA

New special postage stamp to feature traditional costume during Inwa era



New postage stamps.

IN a bid to portray Myanmar's cultural heritage, rediscover the traditional costume of men and women from generation to generation and draw the attention of the youth, Myanmar Post under the Ministry of Transport and Communications will issue two new postage stamps (worth K200 each) at 9:30 am on 8 December 2021 (5th Waxing of Nadaw 1383 ME), depicting the costumes of men and women in Inwa era. The new series will be sold at Central Post Office in Nay Pyi Taw, General Post

office in Yangon and other post offices in each region and state.

To mark a special event, the postage stamps which will be purchased at Central Post Office in Nay Pyi Taw and General Post offices in Yangon and Mandalay on 8 December will have date marking.

Myanmar Post will constantly issue the new series of stamps showing traditional clothing of men and women in the Konbaung dynasty, Yadanapon Era and Amarapura Era. — MNA

Anti-COVID-19 equipment imported daily

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 trading posts, international airports and seaports.

Anti-COVID-19 equipment was imported by 6 companies using 16 vehicles. A total of 19 tonnes of liquid oxygen carried by one bowser and 93 tonnes of masks were imported via the Chinshwehaw trade camp, Kengtung export/import office and Myawady trading zone. One bowser carrying liquid oxygen arrived at Yangon from the Myawady trading zone yesterday.

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

It is reported that the

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



231 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 6 December, total figure rises to 524,638

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **524,638** after **231** new cases were reported on 6 December 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **500,701** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **19,146** after **5** died. —MNA

Training must be given to graduates from the school to have skill in respective subjects of mechanical works in the Tatmadaw ...

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This training school is an institution to conduct the basic mechanical subjects. Training must be given to graduates from the school to have skill in respective subjects of mechanical works in the Tatmadaw. It is necessary to provide food and accommodation to the trainees meeting the standards. Trainees must be capable of thoroughly studying the lessons. The Senior General pledged to fully provide necessary teaching aid for the respective lessons and left necessary instructions.

The Senior General visited the training school and viewed the learning of trainees in the

respective subjects in the training halls, and practical works of trainees with the use of teaching aid. The Senior General instructed officials to deploy the correct selection for the trainees to be able to apply their experiences from the training in the practical fields and to give training to the trainees to have initiatives for solving the mechanical problems with the use of the least number of tools.

Next, the Senior General cordially conversed with the trainees in the training process and inspected progress in extending the buildings to upgrade the training school. — MNA



The Senior General inspects the mechanical engineering school yesterday.



The Senior General looks into the teaching aids.



The Senior General views the practical works of trainees with the use of teaching aids.

MIFER Union minister inspects production, sales of various batteries, accessories in Shwepyitha

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations U Aung Naing Oo accompanied by departmental officials visited Proven Polyworld Company's factory in Shwepyitha Township, Yangon Region, which manufactures and sells various imported replacement batteries and accessories.

Officials explained the operating conditions, manufacturing process of batteries and accessories in line with international standards, availability of raw materials locally, distribution of battery and related products not only to the domestic market but also to neighbouring countries, and challenges and investment expansion issues.

The Union minister coordinated necessary matters on the submissions.

The Union minister also discussed business expansion, to be able to upgrade the production process technology, to expand markets and increase import substitution production and opportunities for further assistance in job creation.

After the discussion, the Union minister inspected the production of batteries inside the factory.

The company mainly uses local raw materials and manufactures various batteries and accessories in one place, and exports international-standard Toyo brand car batteries not only domestically but also abroad. — MNA



MoI Union minister inspects state-run newspaper houses in Yangon

UNION minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn inspected Myanmar Alinn and The Global New Light of Myanmar dailies in Yangon yesterday.

First, the Managing Director of News and Periodicals Enterprise reported on the publishing of The Myanmar Alinn, The Mirror and The Global New Light of Myanmar in Yangon and the operating system of Nay Pyi Taw and Sub-Printing Houses at the meeting hall of The Myanmar Alinn. Then, the Union minister coordinated the discussion and inspected the printing factory and staff housing after he cordially greeted the staff.

Then, he arrived at The Global New Light of Myanmar and the officials clarified the op-

eration of The Global New Light of Myanmar, which is running as a joint venture.

During the meeting, the Union minister stressed the necessary things to officials and the editorial teams of the News and Periodicals Enterprise (head office), The Myanmar Alinn, The Mirror and The Global New Light of Myanmar.

During the meeting, he said the ministry gives priority to the modern news presentation in the form of the public service media. The Prime Minister also emphasizes the role of media, including the print media. The media sector plays a key role in a democratic system and in building a modern nation.

He also highlighted the ef-



The MoI Union minister provides guidance to the staff of The Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper yesterday.

forts of MRTV for broadcasting modern, active and interesting

programmes in line with the trend and stressed the need to cover true information in real-time, editorial and articles, including the technology and sports sectors to lure the interest of youths in the newspapers published by the News and Periodicals Enterprise.

He then talked about the important sector of the public in establishing a democratic system, a media role to provide true and correct thoughts and knowledge to lead new generations to the right path and efforts of state-owned media to create a relationship between the government and people, in addition, to express the right information and condition to the foreign countries.

Moreover, the Union min-

ister urged The Global New Light of Myanmar to present the proper image of Myanmar to the world impartially and try hard to grab the interest of international countries and the public.

He finally said that the ministry communicates with the ones from different levels and fields and so it should offer proper public services to achieve the recognition of the people and it also should adopt any possible media-related ways to promote the dignity of the country, State peace and development.

The News and Periodicals Enterprise runs state-owned daily newspapers The Myanmar Alinn and The Mirror and The Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper, a joint venture with a private company. —MNA



The MoI Union minister inspects the newspaper printing machine of The Global New Light of Myanmar.

Central bank governor attends BOG meeting, governors' conference of SEACEN Centre

THE 41st SEACEN (South-East Asian Central Banks (SEACEN) Research and Training Centre) Board of Governors – BOG meeting co-organized by the SEACEN Centre and the Central Bank of Viet Nam was held yesterday morning and the 57th SEACEN Governors' Conference/High-Level Seminar yesterday afternoon through videoconferencing.

Governor of the Central Bank of Myanmar U Than Nyein, the deputy governors, and senior officials of the Central Bank of Myanmar, together with the Governors of the SEACEN Member Central Banks, attended the meeting and the conference.

At the meeting, Executive

Director of SEACEN Dr Mangal Goswami presented the training, workshops, seminars and meetings that were held online in 2021, attendance status of trainees, sector budget situation, update status on SEACEN staffing issues and situation of SEACEN Additional Scholarships (SAS) in 2021. Governors of the SEACEN Member Central Banks instructed further activities regarding the implementation of ICT strategic projects under the auspices of SEACEN Centre for the financial year 2020-2022, priorities and budget for the year 2022, implementation of ICT strategic projects for the 2022-2023 FY, organization scorecard of the centre in 2021, appointment of the senior advisor to the centre,



and governance and leadership matters.

At the conference, current Chair of the SEACEN Centre Governor of the Central Bank of Viet Nam Madam Nguyen Thi Hong discussed the “Digitalization of the Financial System-

Implications for Central Banks” and the Governors of the respective central banks exchanged views on the discussion.

The conference also discussed topics such as “Blockchain Technology Redefining Banking and Digitalization of

Money and Payments”, “the Future of Money: How the Digital Revolution is Transforming Currencies and Finance.” The 42nd meeting of the SEACEN Centre and the 58th SEACEN Governors Conference will be held in Cambodia in 2022. — MNA

Union Tourism minister makes field visit to Shan state

UNION minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Htay Aung met Shan state Economic Minister U Khun Thein Maung, the chairman of Hoteliers Association (Kalaw Zone), managers and officials at Hill Top Villa Hotel, Kalaw, Shan State on 5 December.

At the meeting, the Union minister said that there is an outbreak of Omicron in some countries of the world and it is necessary to maintain it with individual health awareness.

“Under the health and safety protocol, we are working to apply for national certifications to enhance the image of Myanmar’s tourism industry through the provision of health and safety services.

“It is necessary to apply as soon as possible on the website organized by the Ministry”, the Union minister said.

The Union minister called on the people to conserve the natural beauty and greenery and the Ministry will support them.

Next, the Union minister arrived in Nyaungshwe and inspected the clearance of water hyacinths and wracks in hotels adjacent to Inlay Lake and compost production in Ngaphchaung village.

Afterwards, the Union minister attended the Enchanting Myanmar Health and Safety Protocol (HSP) National Level Accreditation Ceremony at Aureum Palace Hotel.

The Union minister said that Inlay Lake has become a litter-free and attractive place to visit and urged officials to keep a close eye on the area around the hotel grounds and along the waterways to prevent the re-emergence of water hyacinths and to



systematically collect and re-use water hyacinth as fertilizer.

After that, the Shan state director from the Department of Hotels and Tourism explained the

status of the Enchanting Myanmar Health and Safety Protocol (HSP) National-Level certification process.

Afterwards, the Union min-

ister awarded officials from Aureum Palace Resort and Myanmar Treasure Resort with the National Level Certificate for Health and Safety (HSP). —MNA

Naval vessel (Kyansittha) returns from ASEAN-Russia Naval Exercise



Warship Kyansittha arrives back in Yangon.

A naval vessel led by Commodore Zaw Zaw Latt of the Tatmadaw (Navy) returned to Yangon yesterday evening after attending the ASEAN-Russia Naval Exercise (ARNEX-2021) which was held off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia from 1 to 3

December.

The Commander of the Central Naval Command Headquarters and officers from the Tatmadaw (Navy) welcomed back the naval vessel.

The warship (Kyansittha) left Yangon

on 26 November to attend the ASEAN-Russia Naval Exercise and arrived near Belawan port, Indonesia on the morning of 30 November.

The opening ceremony of the ASEAN-Russia Naval Exercise (ARNEX-2021) was held on 1 December.

Russian Ambassador to ASEAN Mr Alexander Ivanov, Russian Ambassador to Indonesia Mr Lyudmila Vorobyeva, Commander of the 1st Fleet of the Indonesian Navy Rear-Admiral Arsyad Abdullah, and officials from ASEAN countries and military attaches attended the ceremony.

Naval vessel (Kyansittha) took part in the maritime security exercise together with warships and aircraft from ASEAN member countries and Russia.

The exercise included joint tactical manoeuvring drills by ship, conducting signals training, communications, and manoeuvring drills, as well as interviewing and screening tasks of a suspicious vessel.

It also covered training in search and

rescue at sea. A closing ceremony was held at sea on the afternoon of 3 December, and the warships greeted each other.

Eight warships, three helicopters and one maritime reconnaissance aircraft, including naval vessel (Kyansittha) from Myanmar, Russian destroyer (Admiral Panteleyev) and ships from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Viet Nam, and Brunei as well as observers from the participant states, took part in the naval exercise.

The exercise is a testament to the stability of regional peace and stability between Russia and ASEAN countries for 30 years.

It marks the beginning of a new chapter in history between Russia and its strategic ASEAN partners, and the first joint ASEAN-Russia Naval Exercise.

The naval ship (Kyansittha) sailed a total of 3,000 nautical miles during the voyage and successfully participated in the ASEAN-Russia Naval Exercise for maritime security. — MNA

COVID-19 vaccines continue to be delivered across Myanmar

COVID-19 vaccines have been delivered to respective regions and state across Myanmar by Tatmadaw aircraft and Cold Chain Delivery Logistic Trucks at the quality control standards.

Yesterday, 9,500 doses of Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines were transported to Sittway and 6,500 doses of Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines to Thandwe, Rakhine State; 6,000 doses of Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine to Lashio and 14,000 doses of Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine

to Kengtung, Shan State (North); 791 doses of Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine and 14,160 doses of Sinopharm to Dawei and 3,636 Sinovac and 28,000 doses of Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine to Myeik, and 971 doses of Sinovac and 5,840 doses of Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine to Kawthoung, Taninthayi Region respectively.

Officials from the respective townships received the vaccines and will distribute them to respective townships, it is reported.—MNA



Terrorists, suspects transporting arms, ammunition arrested in Pathein, Ayeyawady region

A total of 14 men and 2 women were arrested with four types of weapon, eight magazines, 203 rounds of ammunition, three mines, 55 detonators, five bags of gunpowder, three pipes prepared to make homemade guns, one laptop, two compasses, and related explosives between 2 and 5 December in Pathein Township, Ayeyawady Region.

A combined security task force arrested Soe Paing Oo and Aung Kyaw who were linked to terrorists in Pathein Township at the dockyard in Pathein on 2 December 2021. According to the Soe Paing Oo's statement, Chaw Su Hlaing, Su Hlaing Moe, Tin Hla and Phyto Lay (a) Ko Phyto, were arrested with five detonators, three pipes, three gas guns, one laptop and three compasses on the same day.

Following the statement of Phyto Lay (a) Ko Phyto, Zaw Min Tun (a) Kalar was arrested in Titegyigon village in Pathein on the same day. Their statements led to the arrest of Ni Ni (a) Babulay and Aung Phyto Min (a) Phyto Gyi and Soe Yu Kyaw (a) Dewa on 3 December.

Khin Than was arrested on 4 December in Kwatpyingyi village, Pathein Township and according to her statement, one pistol, 19 rounds of .380 ammunition and two magazines were confiscated at the house of Aye

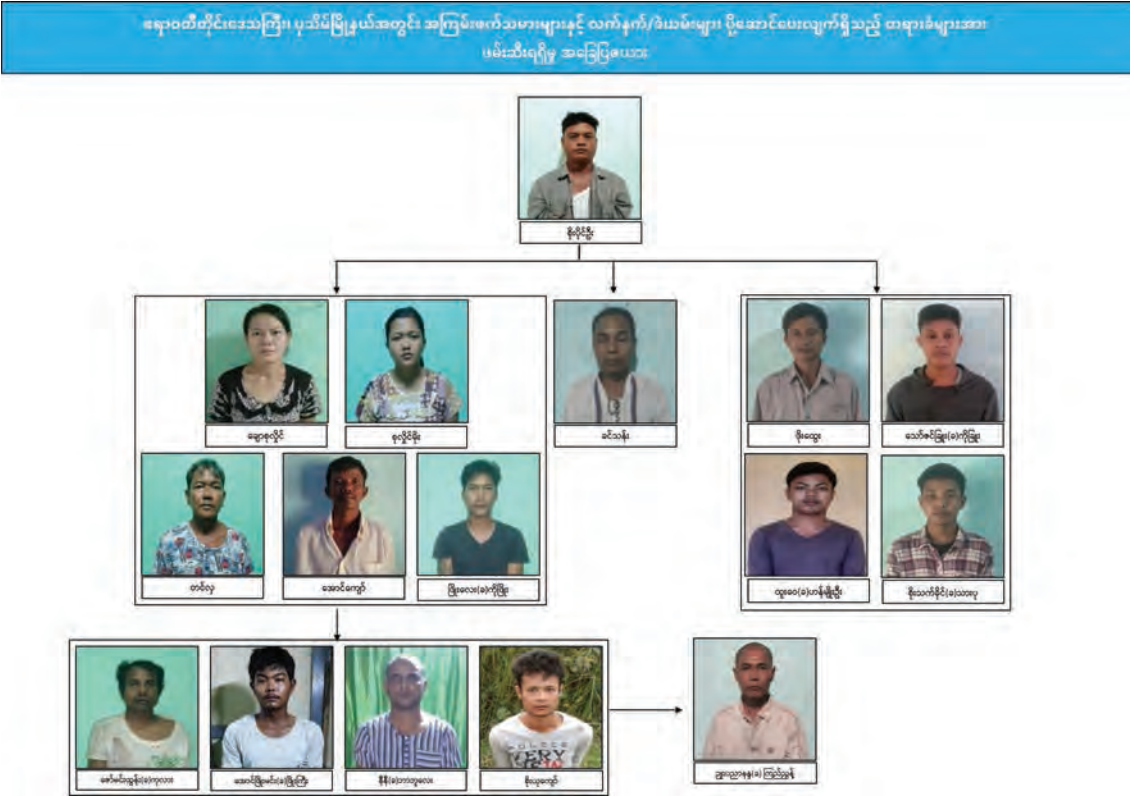
Thaung who still remained to be arrested in Padaukchaunggon village.

According to the statement of Phyto Lay (a) Ko Phyto, 5 bags of gunpowder, 10 clocks used in time bombs, 50 detonators and related explosives were confiscated at the house of Daw Mya Hnit who still remained to be arrested on 4 December.

According to the statement of perpetrator Soe Yu Kyaw, security forces arrested U Pyinnya Nanda (a) Kyi Nyunt together with one pistol, two magazines, 20 rounds of 9mm ammunition, one M16, four magazines, 96 rounds of 5.56 bullets, three mines, five backpacks, eight keypads and related explosives at Chaytawya monastery near Lelaung village in Ngaputaw Township on 5 December.

According to the statement of perpetrator Soe Paing Oo, Pho Htwe was arrested with one .22 firearm, 68 rounds of ammunition, and Thaw Zin Choo (a) Ko Choo, Htoo Wai (a) Han Myo Oo, and Soe Thet Khaing (a) Tharpu, who worked together to hide weapons and ammunition, in Pathein on the same day.

According to the statement of the arrested suspects, Japan Gyi who has been on the run in the KNLA Brigade (6) area loaded weapons/ammunition into gas cylinders and transported to Soe



Paing Oo by Yangon-Pathein buses through the connection with Pho La Pyae (a) La Pyae, who still remained to be arrested. Soe Paing Oo then distributed them to Bae Kyaw, Khin Than through Chit Paing Soe (to be arrested), Phoe Htwe through Sayar Zaw (to be arrested), U Pyinnya Nanda (a) Kyi Nyunt through Ye Khaung (to be arrested), Tite Gar (to be arrested), Seikkyi (to be arrested), Kaung Kaung (to be arrested) who would transport them.

In addition, detonators and explosives delivered by Japan Gyi were sent to Kyar Gyi (to be

arrested) who lives in Maubin and Ma Tin Nyunt in Kyangin Township through Ko Phyto (a) Phyto Lay by passenger buses. Soe Yu Kyaw (a) Dewa distributed explosives delivered from Ye Khaung to Aye Myint in Lelaung village in Ngaputaw Township and Aye Myint, Ye Khaung, Titegar, Seikkyi and Kaung Kaung, who remained to be arrested, made homemade mines which were delivered to Tu Ke (to be arrested) in Lelaung village in Ngaputaw Township by Min Min Oo (to be arrested).

Arrested suspects confessed that they delivered weap-

ons and ammunition to terrorists who would explode publics, kill innocent civilians and civil servants by accusing them of traitors, and disrupt the governance of the government, under the instruction of Pathein PDF terrorist Nanda.

It is reported that actions will be taken against them under the law, and the people are requested to work together for the peace and stability of the country by secretly reporting any movement or information of the terrorists and that they will be rewarded, according to the MPF. — MNA



Seized explosives and related items in Pathein Township on 2 December 2021.



Confiscated explosives in Pathein on 4 December 2021.



Seized weapons and ammunition in Ngaputaw Township on 5 December 2021.



Seized weapons and ammunition in Pathein Township on 4 December 2021.



Confiscated items in Ngaputaw Township on 5 December 2021.



Seized firearms and ammunition in Pathein on 5 December 2021.

Press release on circulating misinformation about crowd dispersal of security forces in Kyimyindine Township

THE security forces dispersed a crowd as the people who do not want unrest reported to them that a crowd of people staged an unlawful riot yesterday on Panbingyi Road in Makyeetan (South/West) Ward in Kyimyindine Township of Yangon Region on 5 December.

The police arrested Bo Bo San, Maung Kaung, Kyaw Zin Khant, Arkar Kyaw, Ko Ko Naing, Min Min Oo, Min Hein Khant, Sithu, Krazen (aka) Hmu Yadana, Mya Kyu Kyu Thin and Yin May Aung.

It has already been announced that among these detainees, Bo Bo San, Maung Kaung and Krazen (aka) Hmu Yadana got injuries on their heads, arms and legs respectively and they were taken to the nearest military hospital for medical treatment.

The State of Emergency was declared currently and the government is working hard for the peace and development of the country. Meanwhile, unlawful intense protests occur due to the incitement of certain persons and organizations.

Such unlawful riots block the road, attack using bombs and attempt to destroy the lives and prosperity of the people intentionally.

To stop such doings, security forces conducted the crowd dispersal operation in line with the regulations and it was reported there was no casualty but three injured.

Regarding the incident, some embassies and media outlets release statements with false news and spread misinformation via social networks to make people feel worried seriously.

It is here announced that the people should not follow the incitement of some people and organizations which try to perpetrate acts of terrorism from unlawful riots.

— MNA

Prices list of medicines commonly used against COVID-19 till 6-12-2021

No	Product Name	Pack Size	Price in Kyats (Retail)	Company Name
Antibiotics				
1	PO - Azithromycin 500 mg	5x3's	4,000	Rammawaddy
2	PO - Cefalexin 500 mg	Box of 10x10's	6,100	Aorta
3	PO - Levofloxacin 500 mg	Box of 10x10's	7,000	Shwe Htay Min
4	PO.Cefixime	Box of 3x10's	3,600	Aorta
5	PO Amoxicillin+ Clavulanic Acid	Box of 1x6's	1,800	Aorta
6	Injection - Levofloxacin 500 mg	1x1	3,000	Yadanar
7	Injection - Ceftriazone 1G	1's	700	KCL
8	Injection - Cefoperazone and Sulbactam 1G	Vial	4,900	Ready Medicine
9	Injection - Cefoperazone and Sulbactam 2G	Vial	9,300	Ready Medicine
10	Injection - Meropenam	1g/Vial	10,000	AA Medical

Please visit the Website (www.mccpmd.org) and Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/323302521392189/posts/1720802588308835/?d=n> to know the prices of other medicines.

79 killed, 142 injured in fire outbreaks across Myanmar in 10 months

FIRE outbreaks killed 79 people and injured 142 others nationwide in Myanmar in 10 months, according to the news report from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Besides, about 8,210 animals were killed from the outbreak of fire.

Within 10 months period from January to October, about 172 cases were caused by the kitchen fire, 366 by negligence fire, 26 by itself, 390 by electric short-circuiting, 712 by arson and 131 by the forest fire.

The fires destroyed 4,167 houses, 34 factories, and 68 warehouses, with a loss of K32,064,332,800 in property damage.

In addition, the country has a lot of fire outbreaks, which killed 79 people and left 6,352 others homeless, Myanmar Fire Services Department stated.

Most of the fires were caused by carelessness, such as forgetting to put out cigarette butts, turn off ovens, or extinguish cooking fires.

People are urged to take fire safety precautions in order to perform control initiatives.

— Aye Maung/GNLM

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Public Notice

- The Anti-Corruption Commission has established corruption prevention units within ministries to effectively curb corruption.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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

Enhance the capacity of service personnel for raising their role

ALL government departments, service organizations and boards are formed with civil service personnel including officers, staff and workers at different levels to operate the management mechanism of these bodies.

The government set necessarily up the service organizations under relevant ministries for managing the servant affairs. Some organizations extended work establishment with a larger volume of staff but some organizational setups reduced their staff for various reasons.

Sometimes, staff members drop out from relevant organizations depending on various reasons. As such, new personnel such as

officers and staff are recruited for regularly running the organizations. In this regard, newcomers need to have the capacity in order to actually benefit the relevant societies.

Moreover, some outstanding staff members are actively serving their tasks but they are not qualified for one-step promotion. As such, it is necessary to adopt the exact policies for easing the education qualification of outstanding staff members as a token of their excellent performances for rank promotion. If officials set aside those staff in considering the rank promotion measures, the outstanding staff will be downhearted for their works and will misunderstand the appointment process.

Hence, it is necessary to systematically consider the long term plans for civil servant affairs. In this regard, all service organizations need to enhance the human resources and capacity of staff. If so, their work capability will improve. Encouragement to responsible persons will be a tool for subordinates to beef up their efforts in workplaces.

As such, officials of relevant departments and service organizations should exercise the carrot and stick

system for the accomplishment of the assignments of the service personnel. Officials need to recognize the mission accomplishment of the personnel in the assigned duties and praise them for their performances. It will be an encouragement for the personnel's endeavours in work procedures.

In fact, each service personnel are part of the working mechanism. If one of them is absent in the mechanism, the operation of such a mechanism will cease. It is because they all are the most important ones in functioning the service organizations. They need to know their roles in relevant workplaces.

Service personnel have talent and qualifications. Officials need to deploy their skills in respective corners. If so, the role of personnel will raise and benefit their working society. So, it is necessary to polish the personnel on time.

Research develops rapid test to identify effectiveness of antibodies against Covid-19 variants

Biomedical engineers of Duke University have developed a test to quickly and easily assess how well a person's neutralizing antibodies fight multiple variants of COVID-19 like Delta and the new Omicron variant.

THE research has been published in the 'Science Advances Journal'. This test could potentially tell doctors how protected a patient is from new variants and those currently circulating in a community or, conversely, which monoclonal antibodies to treat a COVID-19 patient.

"We currently really have no rapid way of assessing variants, neither their presence in an individual nor the ability of antibodies we possess to make a difference," said Cameron Wolfe, associate professor of medicine at the Duke University School of Medicine.

"It's one of the lingering fears that, as we successfully vaccinate more and more people, a variant may emerge that more radically evades vaccine-induced antibody neutralization. And if that fear came true - if Omicron turned out to be a worst-case scenario - how would we know quickly enough?" Wolfe added.

"While developing a point-of-care test for COVID-19 antibodies and biomarkers, we realized there could be some benefit to being able to detect the ability of antibodies to neutralize specific variants, so we built a test around that idea," said Ashutosh Chilkoti, the Alan L. Kaganov

Distinguished Professor and Chair of Biomedical Engineering at Duke.

"It only took us a week or two to incorporate the Delta variant in our test, and it could easily be expanded to also include the Omicron variant. All we need is the spike protein of this variant, which many groups across the world — including our group at Duke — are feverishly working to produce," Chilkoti added.

The researchers have dubbed their test the COVID-19 Variant Spike-ACE2-Competitive Antibody Neutralization assay, or CoVariant-SCAN for short. The test's technology hinged on a pol-

ymers brush coating that acted as a sort of non-stick coating to stop anything but the desired biomarkers from attaching to the test slide when wet. The high effectiveness of this non-stick shield made the test incredibly sensitive to even low levels of its targets. The approach allowed the researchers to print different molecular traps on different areas of the slide to catch multiple biomarkers at once.

In this application, researchers printed fluorescent human ACE2 proteins — the cellular targets of the virus's infamous spike protein — on a slide. They also printed spike proteins specific



Scientists are able to target certain variants for detection, researchers said. **PHOTO: ISTOCKPHOTO/ANI**

to each variant of COVID-19 at different specific locations. When the test was run, the ACE2 proteins detached from the slide and

were caught by the spike proteins still attached to the slide, causing the slide to glow.

SOURCE: ANI

COVID-19 doesn't harm baby's brain during pregnancy: Study

Two years into the pandemic, there is evidence that pregnant women are more vulnerable to the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19. However, little is known about the possible consequences for an unborn child if the mother is infected during pregnancy.



This file photo shows a pregnant woman with a face mask walking on a street in Singapore. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE study was presented at the annual meeting of the Radiological Society of North America (RSNA). COVID-19 of mild to moderate severity in pregnant women

appears to have no effect on the brain of the developing fetus, according to a recent study.

The likelihood and impact of vertical transmission, meaning the passage of the virus

from the mother to the fetus, remains unclear.

"Women infected with SARS-CoV-2 during pregnancy are concerned that the virus may affect the development

of their unborn child, as is the case with some other viral infections," said study senior author Sophia Stocklein, M.D., from the Department of Radiology at Ludwig Maximilian University

of Munich, in Germany. "So far, although there are a few reports of vertical transmission to the fetus, the exact risk and impact remain largely unclear. The aim of our study was to fill this gap in knowledge regarding the impact of maternal SARS-CoV-2 infection on fetal brain development."

Dr Stocklein and colleagues used fetal MRI to study 33 patients with COVID-19 infection during pregnancy. The patients were roughly 28 weeks into their pregnancies, on average, with symptom onset occurring at a mean of just over 18 weeks into the pregnancy.

The most common maternal symptoms were loss or a reduced sense of smell and taste, dry cough, fever and shortness of breath.

Two board-certified radiologists with several years of experience in fetal MRI evaluated the scans. They found that the brain development in the assessed areas was age-appropriate in all fetuses. There were no findings indicative of

infection of the fetal brain.

"In our study, there was no evidence that a maternal SARS-CoV-2 infection has any effect on the brain development of the unborn child," Dr Stocklein said. "This fact should help to reassure affected parents." Dr Stocklein cautioned that only mothers with mild to moderate symptoms and without hospitalization were included in the study.

"Since the impact of severe infection on brain development in the fetus has not been conclusively determined, active protection against SARS-CoV-2 infection during pregnancy remains important," she said.

As part of that protection, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends vaccination for all people ages 12 and older, including women who are pregnant or thinking about getting pregnant. The CDC notes that the vaccine can protect against severe illness.

Source : ANI



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Monday 6 December 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (18:30) hrs M.S.T today, the Low Pressure Area over Northwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining West Bengal, India and Bangladesh coasts still persists and it is forecast weaken gradually. Weather is a few cloud over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 7 DECEMBER 2021: Rain or thundershowers will be wide spread in Upper Sagaing Region and Chin State, fairly widespread in Lower Sagaing Region and Kachin State, scattered in Mandalay Region and Northern Shan and isolated in Magway Region and Rakhine State. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be generally fair in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady Regions and Kayin, Mon States and partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4 -7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

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

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 7 December 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 7 December 2021: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 7 December 2021: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

The Global New Light of Myanmar

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Myanmar maritime trade up by \$201.69 mln as of 19 Nov

THE value of Myanmar's maritime trade between 1 October and 19 November of the current mini-budget period 2021-2022 jumped to US\$2.88 billion, which reflected an increase of \$201.69 million as against last FY.

The figures soared from \$2.679 billion during the year-ago period, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

While maritime exports were valued at \$1.3 billion, imports were registered at \$1.56 billion. Compared to the same period in the 2020-2021 financial year, imports fell by \$94.768 million, while exports registered an increase of \$296 million.

Meanwhile, the value of trade through the border this FY was estimated at \$667.6 million, which plunged drastically from



The country currently has nine ports involved in sea trade. Yangon Port is the main gateway for Myanmar's maritime trade and includes the Yangon inner terminals and the outer Thilawa Port.

\$1.34 billion registered last FY. The country's sea trade generated \$19.8 billion out of an overall trade value of \$29.5 billion in the FY2020-2021, the Ministry of Commerce's statistics indicated.

Myanmar exports agricultural products, fishery products, minerals, livestock, forest products, finished industrial goods, and other products, while it imports capital goods, consumer goods, and raw industrial materials.

The country currently has nine ports involved in sea trade. Yangon Port is the main gateway for Myanmar's maritime trade and includes the Yangon inner terminals and the outer Thilawa Port. Yangon inner terminal and the outer Thilawa Port received more than 150 larger ships of above 30,000 DWT (deadweight tonnage) this year after the draft limit is extended up to 10 metres with the new navigation channel accessing to inner Yangon River. — KK/GNLM

CBM sells \$15 mln on 3 December

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold US\$15 million on 3 December at an auction market rate of K1,780 per dollar, according to a statement from the CBM.

Based on monthly sales of US dollars in 2021, the CBM sold \$63 million in September, \$28 million in August, \$39 million in July, \$12 million in June, \$24 million in May, \$12 million in April and \$6.8 million in February. But, there was no sale in March.

The CBM is conducting an auction for foreign exchange to reduce the fluctuation of foreign exchange rates in a short-term period and fulfilling the needs of foreign exchange reserves.

Rules and directives have been set out for the CBM's auctions. Following these rules and directives, the CBM is trading the foreign currency with three State-owned banks, 19 local private banks and 13 foreign banks, which are holding authorized dealer-AD licences.

The local foreign exchange market's data in 2021, the highest

and the lowest exchange rate is currently fixed around K1,327-1,345 in January, K1,335-1,465 in February, K1,420-1,550 in March, K1,550-1,610 in April and K1,585-1,730 in May, K1,595-1,620 in June, K1,626-1,670 in July, 1,660-1,682 in August and K1,696-3,200 in September.

In 2020, the exchange rate moved in the range of K1,465-1,493 in January, K1,436-1,465 in February, K1,320-1,445 in March, K1,395-1,440 in April, K1,406-1,426 in May, K1,385-1,412 in June, K1,367-1,410 in July, K1,335-1,390 in August, K1,310-1,355 in September, K1,282-1,315 in October, K1,303-1,330 in November and K1,324-1,403 in December.

In 2019, the rates are pegged at K1,508-1,517 in July, K1,510-1,526 in August, K1,527-1,565 in September, K1,528-1,537 in October, K1,510-1,524 in November and K1,485-1,513 in December.

On 20 September 2018, the dollar exchange rate hit an all-time high of K1,650 in the local currency market. — ACM/GNLM



The Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM).

US\$12 million worth of over 9,000 tonnes of palm oil sold at fairer prices



Under the plan of the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association, palm oil was early sold at K3,800 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) with the mobile market trucks. Then, the price has slightly risen to K4,350 per viss starting from 9 November.

THE Consumer Affairs Department under the Ministry of Commerce stated that more than 9,000 tonnes of palm oil, with an estimated value of US\$12 million, have been sold at the subsidized price, in coordination with Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association.

More than 8,000 tonnes of palm oil have been distributed to the wholesalers in Yangon Region, while over 200 tonnes each in Mandalay and Magway, over 180 tonnes in Sagaing, over 100 tonnes in the Bago region, over 70 tonnes in Nay Pyi Taw, over 50 tonnes each in Shan and Mon states and Taninthayi Region have been sold. The wholesalers and retailers must also resell them to the consumers with a gross profit of less than 2 per cent.

Under the plan of the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association, palm oil was early sold at K3,800 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) with the mobile market trucks. Then, the price has slightly risen to K4,350 per viss starting from 9 November.

The Ministry of Commerce, in coordination with Myanmar Edible Oil dealers' Association, purchased \$19 million at the reference rate of the Central Bank of Myanmar for the edible oil sector and distributed 16,000 tonnes (7.87 million visses) at the wholesale price of K3,700 per viss in September.

Over the past two months, over 25,000 tonnes of palm oil were sold, which is equivalent to \$31 million that the oil importers directly purchased at the reference rate from the CBM.

The association is also making concerted efforts with the organizations concerned and the related departments to secure the edible oil sufficiency and offer a reasonable price to the consumers, as per the statement.

The association is trying not to occur unnecessary issues regarding edible oil amid the global pandemic impacts.

Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association is attempting to maintain price stability, prevent market manipulation, import palm oil from foreign countries sustainably for self-sufficiency and distribute the edible oil at a fair price to the consumers.

The domestic consumption of edible oil is estimated at 1 million tonnes per year. The local cooking oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. To meet the self-sufficiency in the domestic market, about 700,000 tonnes of cooking oil are yearly imported. — NN/GNLM

Vaccine developer warns of ‘more lethal’ pandemic

THE lead developer of the Oxford/AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccine warned the next pandemic could be “more lethal”, urging better preparedness in a speech set to be aired Monday.

Sarah Gilbert, who is credited with saving millions of lives through her role in designing the jab, said the world must build on key lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic.

“This will not be the last time a virus threatens our lives

and our livelihoods. The truth is, the next one could be worse. It could be more contagious, or more lethal, or both,” Gilbert said in her draft Richard Dimbleby Lecture, to be broadcast Monday evening.

“We cannot allow a situation where we have gone through all we have gone through, and then find that the enormous economic losses we have sustained mean that there is still no funding for pandemic preparedness.

“The advances we have made, and the knowledge we have gained, must not be lost,” Gilbert will say.

The Oxford/AstraZeneca jab, which was the first coronavirus vaccine to be approved for use in the UK, is used in more than 170 countries globally.

It is significantly cheaper and easier to deliver than others, and is credited with increasing vaccine access in poorer countries. — AFP ■



A health worker prepares a dose of the AstraZeneca/Oxford Covid-19 vaccine in Santa Cruz, Bolivia on 18 October 2021, as the country began giving third doses to all health workers, adults over 60 and people with underlying diseases. PHOTO: AFP

S Africa urges vaccines ‘without delay’ as cases surge



People queue for a PCR Covid-19 test at the Lancet laboratory in Johannesburg on 30 November 2021. PHOTO: AFP

SOUTH African President Cyril Ramaphosa on Monday urged citizens to get vaccinated as the country battles an unprecedented surge in cases driven by the new Omicron variant. The number of daily infections rose five-fold in the space of a week, from 2,828 on 26 November to 16,055 last Friday.

About a quarter of tests for coronavirus have been positive, compared to just around two per cent of those tested a fortnight ago.

“We are experiencing a rate of infections that we have not seen since the pandemic started,” Ramaphosa warned in his weekly newsletter.

Omicron, detected by South African scientists 10 days ago, “appears to be dominating new infections,” he said. “I call on all South Africans to go out and get vaccinated without delay,” he said. Ramaphosa, whose country is the worst-hit in Africa for Covid, last week hinted at making

coronavirus vaccines mandatory.

Despite the rise in infections, fatalities remain relatively low. Just one coronavirus-related death was recorded on Sunday, when 11,125 new infections were diagnosed. Scientists are keeping a close eye on the new variant to see whether it may be more contagious or virulent, or can side-step existing vaccines.

So far 14.8 million people have been fully vaccinated in South Africa, translating to around a quarter of the country’s population. The rate of vaccination is higher among adults. Children aged from 12 years are eligible for vaccines in South Africa.

With adequate supplies of the Johnson & Johnson and Pfizer shots, the government has set a target of vaccinating 70 per cent of the population by year’s end.

Seeking to overcome vaccine hesitancy, the authorities at the weekend opened up pop-up sites offering jabs at shopping malls, bus stations, airports, churches and recreation centres. — AFP ■

Italy imposes new Covid rules on unvaccinated

PEOPLE in Italy unvaccinated against Covid-19 can no longer go to the theatre, cinemas, live music venues or major sporting events under new rules that came into force Monday.

Only those who have recently recovered from Covid-19 are exempt from the rules, which represent a significant tightening of restrictions in the face of rising infections.

New measures are also being enforced on public transport, with a so-called Green Pass showing proof of vaccination, recent recovery or a negative Covid-19 test now required even on local services.

A man in his 50s was fined 400 euros for not having his pass on Monday morning as he got off a bus near Piazza del Popolo in Rome, according to the Corriere della Sera newspaper. “I don’t have it because I wanted to get vaccinated in the next few days,” he was reported as saying.

A record 1.3 million Green

Passes were downloaded on Sunday ahead of the change.

Meanwhile in Rome at the weekend, new rules requiring face masks to be worn outdoors in the busiest shopping streets came into effect. Italy was the first European country to be hit by coronavirus in early 2020 and has one of the highest death tolls, at more than 134,000.

However, it is currently faring better than many of its neighbours, with 15,000 cases out of a population of 60 million reported on Sunday. Almost 85 per cent of over 12s have been vaccinated, a booster campaign is in full swing and jabs will soon be available for younger children.

The Green Pass was introduced in August for access to theatres and cinemas, museums and indoor dining, and extended to workplaces in October — a move that sparked widespread protests. — AFP ■

Japan confirms 3rd case of Omicron variant

JAPAN has confirmed its third case of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus, the government’s top spokesman said Monday.

A man in his 30s who had travelled to Italy was found to be infected with the heavily mutated variant, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said at a press conference. The man entered Japan through Tokyo’s Haneda airport, according to a different government source.

The man’s travelling companion and other passengers seated nearby on the flight have already been identified, Mat-

suno said.

Japan confirmed its first domestic case of the Omicron variant on 30 November — a Namibian diplomat in his 30s. It confirmed a second unrelated case, a man in his 20s who travelled from Peru, the following day. Both men tested positive upon arrival at Narita airport near Tokyo.

The Omicron variant has already been detected in dozens of countries including the United States, Australia and parts of Europe since being first reported by South Africa last month. — Kyodo ■



People stand in front of an arrivals board at Tokyo’s Haneda international airport on 1 December 2021, as Japan suspended all new flight bookings into the country in response to the Omicron Covid variant. PHOTO: AFP

Asia's biggest flower market makes stars out of influencers

BOXES of roses, lilies and carnations pile up as influencer Caticai speaks into her smartphone from a small studio at Asia's biggest flower market — with thousands of customers eagerly awaiting her view on the best deals.

E-commerce is big business in China and influencers and livestreamers have made their fortunes showcasing products for luxury brands and cosmetics firms.

Now the nation's horticulture industry, worth an estimated 160 billion yuan (\$25.1 billion), is getting in on the action. And where once people visited markets and florists themselves, they are increasingly shopping for blooms via their smartphones. Online retail now represents more than half the sector's turnover.

"Five bouquets, only 39.8



This photo taken on 22 October 2021 shows employees sorting flowers in a warehouse at the Dounan Flower Market in Kunming in southwestern China's Yunnan province. Demand for cut flowers has soared in China as standards of living have risen, with the southern province of Yunnan at the epicentre of that boom thanks to its all-year mild climate. **PHOTO: JADE GAO / AFP**

yuan (6.25 dollars) for those that order right away," the 23-year-old says — a sales pitch she hones for eight hours a day delivered at lightning speed.

"When you sell something for a long time, the words come naturally," she tells AFP.

Earnings can be unreliable, however.

"Flower sales vary in busy and slack seasons, so a livestreamers' daily income is very variable. All I can say is that the more you work, the luckier you will be," she explains, as colleagues next to her put the bouquets in cardboard boxes ready to be shipped. Demand for cut flowers has soared in China as standards of living have risen, with the southern province of Yunnan at the epicentre of that boom thanks to its all-year mild climate.

Provincial capital Kunming boasts the biggest flower market in Asia — the second biggest in the world after Aalsmeer in the Netherlands.

'Flowers are vital'

Everyday at 3 pm, a rose auction starts in a huge room where over 600 buyers share the day's supply behind their screens.

"Yunnan represents around 80 per cent of flower production in China and 70-80 per cent of the flowers on sale pass through our auction room," says Zhang Tao, responsible for the market's logistics — a crucial role when the goods are so perishable. "That represents on average more than four million flowers sold every day. For Chinese Valentine's day, we sold 9.3 million in a day." They are shipped across China within 48 hours.

On the retail side of the market, another influencer, Bi Xixi, showcases flowers and bouquets from stalls to sell on to her own online subscribers.

Wearing a traditional Chinese dress known as a hanfu, passing from one stand to another with her phone at the end of a cane, the 32-year-old has racked up around 60,000 subscribers. — AFP ■



An employee cycles past cold-rolled steel on coils in a hall at the ThyssenKrupp plant in Duisburg, western Germany on 16 November 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

German industrial orders go into reverse in October

GERMAN industrial orders dropped significantly in October after a revival in September, official figures showed Monday, as continuing supply issues bedevilled industry.

The federal statistics office Destatis calculated that industrial orders in Europe's largest economy fell by 6.9 per cent in October compared with the previous month, after a small 1.8 per cent rise in September.

The indicator, which gives a foretaste of industrial production, was also down one per cent on the previous year, the first annual fall since September 2020.

Orders for capital goods fell 10.7 per cent, while those for intermediate goods fell 2.7 per cent compared with the previous month. Only orders of consumer goods rose, growing 4.3 per cent on September.

International demand suffered particularly in October, with orders from outside the European Union down 18.1 per cent, while domestic orders were 3.4 per cent higher than in September. The coronavirus pandemic has led to disruptions in supply chains across the globe, causing shortages of everything from wood to semiconductors.

These widespread bottlenecks were "slowing German industry in 2021", Destatis concluded. The figures were a "cold shower for German industry", said Carsten Brzeski, head of macro at ING. The pandemic-related backlog meant that "order books are still well filled", Brzeski said.

Improvements in the supply situation would lead to an "immediate boost" in production, but "the summer collapse of industrial orders does not bode well for the medium-term outlook for industrial production", Brzeski said. — AFP ■

Chinese developer misses major bond repayment of \$179 million

ANOTHER Chinese property developer said Monday it had defaulted on a major bond repayment, citing liquidity problems amid a government crackdown on the debt-laden sector.

China's real estate industry — a key growth driver in the world's second-largest economy — has cooled in recent months after Beijing tightened home buying rules and launched a regulatory assault on speculation.

The moves have created headaches for several major developers, notably China Ev-

ergrande, the country's second-largest by volume that is weighed down by billions of dollars in debt. On Monday, Hong Kong-listed Sunshine 100 China Holdings said it had missed a Sunday deadline to make \$179 million in principal and interest payments on a 10.5 per cent bond.

The default was due to "liquidity issues arising from the adverse impact of a number of factors including the macroeconomic environment and the real estate industry", the company said in an exchange filing. — AFP ■

Governments help arms firms avoid Covid slump: report

THE world's biggest weapons manufacturers largely avoided the economic downturn caused by Covid-19 and recorded a growth in profits last year for the sixth year in a row, according to a report published on Monday.

Governments around the world have continued to buy arms during the pandemic and some also passed measures to help their big weapons firms, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

Overall, the 100 top weapons firms saw their profits rise by 1.3 per cent on 2019 to a record \$531 billion, despite the global economy contracting by more than three per cent.

"Military manufacturers were largely shielded by sustained government demand for military goods and services," said SIPRI researcher Alexandra Marksteiner in the institute's annual assessment of arms companies. — AFP ■

Asia markets mixed as investors eye Omicron, Chinese tech woes

ASIAN markets were mixed in trading Monday, tracking uncertainty over the Omicron variant of the coronavirus as well as disappointing US jobs data and struggling Chinese tech firms.

The Omicron variant has been detected across the globe but no deaths have yet been reported, with authorities worldwide racing to determine how contagious it is and how effective existing vaccines are at fighting it.

Top US pandemic advisor Anthony Fauci said Sunday that while more information was needed, preliminary data on the severity of the Omicron variant are “a bit encouraging”.

Nevertheless, the new strain has sparked fears that the global recovery could be put in jeopardy, as governments reimpose restrictions that many had hoped would be a thing of

the past.

“Omicron-related uncertainty will linger while market participants wait to learn about the severity, infectiousness and resistance of the strain,” Kim Mundy, a strategist at Commonwealth Bank of Australia, said in a note.

“Omicron could further push back the timeline on any travel-related and reopening rebound, and this continued ‘stop-start’ approach to reopening could result in weaker near-term growth,” said Alexander Wolf, head of Asia investment strategy at JP Morgan Private Bank in Hong Kong.

“From a stock perspective, we’ll likely see some near-term volatility given the amount of unknowns and the unclear impact on growth and policy,”

Tracking virus fears — as well as signs of a looming hawkish shift in



A women walks past a digital sign showing stock market information in the Central district of Hong Kong on 5 November 2021. PHOTO:ISAAC LAWRENCE / AFP

US rates — Tokyo closed lower. Seoul and Sydney were up.

Tech slumps

Also down was Hong Kong, where news last week that Chinese ride-hailing giant Didi Chuxing would start the

process of delisting from the New York Stock Exchange has sent shares in tech firms tumbling.

The move comes in the wake of a sweeping Chinese regulatory crackdown over the past year that has clipped the wings of major internet firms wielding

huge influence on consumers’ lives — including Alibaba and Tencent.

Shares on the Hang Seng Tech index, which represents the 30 largest tech companies in the southern Chinese city, slumped by over three per cent in afternoon trading

on Monday.

Alibaba fell up to 8.3 per cent in early trading, after the firm announced the biggest reshuffle of its top management since a massive fine for antitrust violations.

Also suffering blowback from the Didi delisting was Japanese conglomerate Softbank — whose Vision Fund owns a substantial piece of the ride-hailing giant — which lost nine per cent Monday on the firm’s woes and other regulatory bad news.

“A look at Alibaba Group, Didi Global and edutech companies highlights how little visibility there is on regulatory change in China,” wrote Kirk Boodry of Redex Holdings on Smartkarma. “On the aggregate, Vision Fund’s public losses on China investments are \$3.2 billion so far.” — AFP ■

European equities climb at open

EUROPE’S stock markets advanced Monday in opening deals despite ongoing uncertainty over the Omicron coronavirus variant.

In initial trade, London’s benchmark FTSE 100 index gained 0.6 per cent to 7,166.60 points, compared with the closing level on Friday.

In the eurozone,

Frankfurt’s DAX won 0.8 per cent to 15,291.44 points and the Paris CAC 40 added 0.7 per cent to 6,810.61.

However, Asian indices broadly fell on Monday, tracking Omicron concerns as well as disappointing US jobs data and the future of Chinese tech firms on Wall Street.

Global stocks had

sunk Friday on weak US jobs data and heightened fears over the long-running Covid crisis. “Markets remain beset by uncertainty as the spread of the Omicron variant threatens to derail the general economic recovery,” said Richard Hunter, head of markets at Interactive Investor. — AFP ■

Saint-Gobain group expands hold in construction chemicals

THE French Saint-Gobain construction materials group said on Monday it would buy US-based GCP Applied Technologies to consolidate its position on the global construction chemicals market.

Saint-Gobain said in a statement it would acquire all of the outstanding shares in GCP in a transaction valued at around two billion euros (\$2.3 billion).

“This acquisition is a decisive step in establishing Saint-Gobain’s leading

position worldwide in construction chemicals with total sales of more than four billion euros (up from three billion euros)”, the statement said. In May Saint-Gobain bought the French-based Chryso, which also specializes in construction chemicals, for 1.2 billion euros.

Chryso has “strong positions” in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, while GCP has footprints in the Americas and the Asia-Pacific region, Saint-

Gobain said. GCP, which boasts \$1 billion in revenues, has 50 manufacturing plants in 38 countries, the French company said. The US company specializes in cement additives, concrete admixtures, infrastructure and commercial and residential waterproofing. “GCP is a unique opportunity for Saint-Gobain to establish a leading worldwide presence in the growing construction chemicals sector,” Saint-Gobain said. — AFP ■

THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
MINISTRY OF ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY
ELECTRIC POWER GENERATION ENTERPRISE

Date: December 6, 2021

Invitation to Bid for Hybrid Power Plant (Gas Generation and Solar Generation) on Independent Power Producer and Build-Operate-Own Basis

1. Electric Power Generation Enterprise (EPGE) seeks to invite tender for the purchasing electricity from **Hybrid Power Plant (Gas Generation and Ground mounted Solar Generation)** on Independent Power Producer and Build-Operate-Own Basis.

2. The concession period shall be **fifteen (15)** years from commercial operation date (COD).

3. Natural Gas shall be supplied 10 million cubic feet per day from EPGE.

4. Location of Hybrid Power Plant shall be as follow:

Description	Location	Connection Point	Contracted Capacity (MW)	Remark
Package-1	Magway	132kV Magway Substation	100	Gas (Pass Through basis)
Package-2	Myingyan	230 kV Myingyan (Steel Mill) Substation	100	Gas (Pass Through basis)

5. In order to meet the Contracted Capacity, 100 MW, from Hybrid Power Plant, it is necessary to implement the 100 MW Gas Generation Plant and 100 MW Ground Mounted Solar Generation Plant.

6. Land acquisition for Hybrid Power Plant (including transmission line and gas pipe line right of way) shall be arranged by the Bidder at its owned cost.

7. The Tender Form fee for each package is Kyat.300,000/- (Kyat three hundred thousand only) and can be purchased at the following address within office hour from the tender announced date:
Procurement Department,
Electric Power Generation Enterprise,
Building 27, Nay Pyi Taw,
OR
Procurement Department (Yangon Branch)
No.39, Kanner Road, Ahlone Power Plant,
Ahlone Township, Yangon,

8. The bid submission date is January 6, 2022 at [14:00] hr. Myanmar Standard Time.

9. The bidders shall prepare the proposals in accordance with the Tender Document. Bidder's Proposals must be submitted at the following address on time. Any late proposal shall be rejected.

10. The necessary information of this tender can be inquired within office hour.
Electric Power Generation Enterprise
Ministry of Electricity and Energy
Building 27, Nay Pyi Taw
The Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Ph +95 9 989330333

Pope ends visit to Greece focused on the plight of migrants



Pope Francis (3L) greets people next to responsible for youth pastoral care Petros Stefanou (2L) during a meeting with young people at the Saint Dionysius School of the Ursuline Sisters in Maroussi in Athens on 6 December 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

POPE Francis on Monday wraps up a landmark three-day visit to Greece which has been marked by his calls for better treatment of migrants in Europe and a visit to asylum seekers on the island of Lesbos.

After a last meeting with young people at a Catholic school, the pope is due to leave Athens to return to Rome at the end of the morning.

Since his arrival in Greece on Saturday, Francis has met with the head of the Greek Orthodox Church and visited the

Mavrovouni tent camp on Lesbos, where he called the neglect of migrants the “shipwreck of civilisation”.

Following his visit to the migration flashpoint, he celebrated mass for some 2,000 faithful in Athens, where he urged respect for the “small and lowly”.

In 2016, Francis visited the sprawling Moria camp on Lesbos, when the island was the main gateway for migrants heading to Europe.

His visit to Mavrovouni was shorter than in 2016 but he was

warmly welcomed by a crowd of migrants at the camp, which houses nearly 2,200 asylum seekers.

People later gathered in a tent to sing songs and psalms to the pontiff, who listened to them, visibly moved.

“I am trying to help you,” Francis told one group through his interpreter.

The Mavrovouni camp was hurriedly erected after Moria, then the largest such site in Europe, burned down last year. — AFP ■

Iran says ready to continue nuclear talks, rejects ‘blame game’

IRAN said Monday it was ready to resume nuclear talks but based on draft proposals it submitted last week, accusing Western powers of stalling negotiations in Vienna.

Last week, the Islamic republic returned to international talks in Vienna aimed at reviving the 2015 nuclear deal after a five-month pause.

On Wednesday it submitted two draft resolutions on the lifting of US sanctions and nuclear-related measures.

But at the weekend the United States, as well as European participants at the Vienna talks, accused Iran of back-tracking.

A senior US administration official said the proposals “walked back any of the compromises that Iran had floated” during the previous six rounds of negotiations.

The official accused Iran of seeking to “pocket all of the compromises that others — the US in particular — had made

and then ask for more”.

On Monday, Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh hit back.

“Our texts are fully negotiable,” he told a news conference about the draft proposals, “also charging that the other parties “want to play a blame game”.

“We are waiting naturally to hear the other side’s opinion concerning these texts and whether they have a real (counter) offer to make to us in writing,” Khatibzadeh added.

The seventh round of nuclear talks ended Friday after five days in Vienna, with delegations returning to their national capitals and expected to go back to Austria next week.

Khatibzadeh said the negotiations were expected to resume “at the end of the week”, without elaborating.

The landmark 2015 nuclear accord was initially agreed between Iran and Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the United States. — AFP ■

Kishida vows to “prepare for worst” amid Omicron variant fears

JAPANESE Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Monday vowed to “prepare for the worst” in dealing with the Omicron variant of the coronavirus while still moving swiftly to get the economy back on track.

In a policy speech marking the start of an extraordinary parliamentary session, Kishida also voiced hope for further debate on constitutional revision and pledged to conclude a sweeping review of security policy in about a year.

While the coronavirus situation in Japan has significantly improved, Kishida warned of “new risks including the confirmation of the Omicron variant across a number of countries.”

“We will maintain our stance of being cautious and prudent,” the prime minister said, adding Japan has added 10,000 hospital beds for COVID-19 patients since the summer and expects to approve the use of an oral drug to treat the disease later this month.

Infections in Japan have plunged recently, with just 115 new cases reported on Sunday compared with more than 25,000 daily at the peak of the previous wave caused by the Delta variant in the summer.

“The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining,” Kishida said, quoting US President John F. Kennedy’s 1962 State of the Union address.

Kishida also reiterated his government will short-



Prime Minister Fumio Kishida delivers his policy speech at the House of Representatives chamber in the parliament in Tokyo on 6 December 2021. **PHOTO: KYODO**

en from its previous timeline of eight months the period between which people can receive their second vaccine shot and become eligible for a booster.

Regarding the decision to ban new entries of foreigners into Japan to prevent the introduction of the Omicron variant, which has sparked some backlash as being overly restrictive, the prime minister said he is “ready to accept criticism that I’m being too cautious before we have an adequate grasp of the situation.”

The policy speech was Kishida’s second, and first since he led his Liberal Democratic Party and its junior partner Komeito to victory in the October 31 House of Repre-

sentatives election. He gave it while looking to create a list of achievements to campaign on ahead of the House of Councillors election scheduled for next summer.

In the address, the prime minister vowed to protect businesses and workers hit hard by the pandemic through an enormous stimulus package, funded mostly with a record 36.0 trillion yen (\$319 billion) fiscal 2021 supplementary budget expected to be passed by parliament during the extraordinary session.

He also said the government will start issuing on 20 December digital certificates for people who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. — Kyodo ■



This handout photo taken and released on 3 December 2021 by the EU delegation in Vienna shows representatives from Iran (R) and the European Union (L) attending a meeting of the joint commission on negotiations aimed at reviving the Iran nuclear deal in Vienna, Austria. **PHOTO: HANDOUT / EU DELEGATION IN VIENNA / AFP**

Indonesia volcano erupts again, hampering rescue operations

INDONESIA'S Mount Semeru spewed more ash on Monday, hampering the search for survivors as aerial images showed the extent of the devastation unleashed by the volcano's deadly weekend eruption.

The biggest mountain on the island of Java thundered to life Saturday, ejecting a mushroom of volcanic ash high into the sky and raining hot mud as thousands of panicked people fled their homes. At least 15 were killed.

Aerial photos showed entire streets filled with grey volcanic ash and mud, which had swallowed many homes and vehicles, including whole trucks.

Indonesia's national disaster agency said 27 people were still missing.

"I'm still hoping my son will be found... Every time I hear victims have been found, I hope it



This aerial picture shows members of a search and rescue team (orange and green) conduct a search operation for missing people at the Sumberwuluh village on 6 December 2021 in Lumajang following a volcanic eruption from Mount Semeru that killed at least fourteen people. **PHOTO: AFP**

is my son," said Maskur Suhri of Sumberwuluh village, who was collecting palm tree sap when Semeru erupted.

"There's a very small chance he survived... Maybe it's my son's fate, but I still hope he will be found, even just his body."

Fresh volcanic activity on Monday hampered search efforts, forcing rescue teams to pull out from some areas.

"There was a small fresh eruption and it could endanger the evacuation teams," said rescue worker Rizal Purnama.

Dangerous thick plumes of smoke continued to emerge from areas blanketed by the volcanic ash, while rescuers in hardhats tried to dig through the mud to try and find survivors — and recover bodies.

Their task was made more difficult as the volcanic debris had started to harden.

"It's very difficult... with simple tools," Rizal Purnama said. "It is very likely bodies that have not been found are buried under the hot mudflow."

Other rescuers helped desperate villagers salvage their belongings from wrecked homes. Some locals lifted mattresses and furniture on their shoulders while others carried goats in their arms. — AFP ■

Putin heads to India with eye on military, energy ties

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin arrived in India on Monday for just his second overseas trip since the pandemic, seeking to bolster military and energy ties with a traditional ally being courted by Washington.

In its efforts to address a rising China, Washington has set up the QUAD security dialogue with India, Japan, and Australia, raising concerns in both Beijing and Moscow. India was close to the Soviet Union during the Cold War, a relationship that has endured, with New Delhi calling it a "special and privileged strategic partnership". "The friendship between India and Russia has stood the test of time," Modi told Putin at a virtual summit in September. "You have always



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (R) greets Russian President Vladimir Putin before a meeting at Hyderabad House in New Delhi on 6 December 2021. **PHOTO: MONEY SHARMA / AFP**

been a great friend of India." It is only the Russian leader's second trip abroad since the coronavirus pandemic began — he skipped

both the G20 and COP26 summits this year — after a June summit with US President Joe Biden in Geneva. — AFP ■

Russia to send Japanese tycoon to ISS in return to space tourism

RUSSIA on Wednesday will send Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa to the International Space Station in a move marking Moscow's return to the now booming space tourism business after a decade-long break.

One of Japan's richest men, Maezawa, 46, will blast off from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan accompanied by his assistant Yozo Hirano.

On Sunday morning, their Soyuz spacecraft with a Japanese flag and an "MZ" logo for Maezawa's name was moved onto the launch pad in unusually wet weather for Baikonur, an AFP journalist saw.

The mission will end a

decade-long pause in Russia's space tourism programme that has not accepted tourists since Canada's Cirque du Soleil co-founder Guy Laliberte in 2009.

However, in a historic first, the Russian space agency Roscosmos in October sent actress Yulia Peresild and director Klim Shipenko to the ISS to film scenes for the first movie in orbit in an effort to beat a rival Hollywood project.

Maezawa's launch comes at a challenging time for Russia as its space industry struggles to remain relevant and keep up with Western competitors in the modern space race. — AFP ■

IAEA delays Fukushima visit to assess water release due to Omicron

THE International Atomic Energy Agency has delayed an expert team's visit to the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant to assess the planned release of treated radioactive water into the sea due to the Omicron coronavirus variant, the Japanese government said Monday.

The team's visit, originally scheduled for mid-December,

will be postponed to January or later next year, according to the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. The IAEA mission was aimed at increasing transparency amid concerns over the water release plan raised by China and South Korea as well as local fishing communities.

Water pumped into the ruined reactors to cool the melted fuel at the Fukushima plant hit

by the 2011 massive earthquake and tsunami has been accumulating at the complex and mixing with rain and groundwater that has also become contaminated.

It is treated using an advanced liquid processing system. The process removes most radioactive material except for tritium, which is said to pose little health risk. — Kyodo ■



The Soyuz MS-20 spacecraft is transported to the launch pad at the Russian-leased Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan on 5 December 2021. Space tourists Yusaku Maezawa and his assistant Yozo Hirano, led by Roscosmos cosmonaut Alexander Misurkin, will take part in a mission to the International Space Station (ISS) scheduled for 8 December 2021. **PHOTO: KIRILL KUDRYAVTSEV / AFP**

Myanmar U-22 team to resume training for upcoming SEA Games

THE Myanmar U-22 national football team will begin preparations for next year's ASEAN U-22 and the 31st SEA Games early next year.

The Myanmar U-22 team has stopped training after the 2022 Asian Cup U-23 Championship held from 27 October to 2 November and is scheduled to resume training at the beginning of 2022.

Popov, a Bulgarian national, will serve as a head coach of the Myanmar U-22 team.

The Myanmar national team currently competing in the Suzuki Cup includes some players from the Myanmar U-22 team, who will join the U-22 team after the Suzuki Cup.

Team Myanmar will compete in the ASEAN U-22 Cham-

pionship from 14 to 26 February in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

The 31st SEA Games will be held in mid-May in Viet Nam.

The Myanmar squad will have more than four months to prepare for the SEA Games and will compete in the ASEAN U-22 Games in preparation for the SEA Games, officials said.

— Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Barca, Atletico in danger of Champions League exit

XAVI Hernandez faces his first critical test as Barcelona coach with the club at risk of failing to make the Champions League knockout stages for the first time in two decades. A goalless draw at home to Benfica last month left Barca with their destiny in their own hands, but with a much trickier final game away to Group E winners Bayern Munich.

Spanish champions Atletico Madrid have their work cut to secure one of the five unclaimed last-16 tickets after three defeats on the spin, while all four teams remain in the hunt in an unpredictable Group G. AFP Sport looks at what's at stake going into the final round of Champions League group games:

Ballon d'Or backlash from



Barcelona's Spanish coach Xavi (R) attends the UEFA Champions League Group E football match between FC Barcelona and SL Benfica, at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona on 23 November 2021. PHOTO: AFP

Bayern?

Barca find themselves on the ropes ahead of Wednesday's trip to Germany, but it could have

been far worse were it not for Benfica forward Haris Seferovic's glaring miss in stoppage time at Camp Nou. — AFP ■

Hamilton wins Saudi thriller, goes level with Verstappen for title decider



Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton speaks to the press after winning the Formula One Saudi Arabian Grand Prix at the Jeddah Corniche Circuit in Jeddah on 5 December 2021. PHOTO: AFP

LEWIS Hamilton kept his hopes of an eighth world championship title alive with a thrilling victory

in a dramatic and at times chaotic Saudi Arabian Grand Prix on Sunday.

The result left the seven-time champion level on 369.5 points with title rival Max Verstappen ahead of the final race in Abu Dhabi next weekend.

Hamilton was behind Verstappen for much of the 50-lap race which was stopped twice because of crashes and interrupted numerous times by the safety car and virtual safety car.

But Hamilton, nursing a damaged front wing caused by a collision with Verstappen, came through late, to claim his eighth win of the season and the 103rd of his career. The title will be settled in Abu Dhabi, although if neither finishes in the points it will be Verstappen, who has nine victories, who will take the title. — AFP ■

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.

Juve sink lowly Genoa to keep Shevchenko winless

JUAN Cuadrado and Paulo Dybala scored as Juventus eased to a 2-0 win over Andriy Shevchenko's Genoa on Sunday to register their fourth victory in five Serie A games.

Cuadrado struck direct from a corner that sailed over the head of Genoa goalkeeper Salvatore Sirigu in the ninth minute, with Dybala drilling a second late on to send Juve up to fifth place.

The victory begins an important month for Massimiliano Allegri's side who will hope a run of favourable fixtures can allow them to close the seven-point gap to the Champions League places.

Juve are 11 points adrift of leaders AC Milan ahead of matches against Venezia, Bologna and Cagliari in the run up to Christmas and the winter break.

"We know we need to carry on like this, to try and get to the last game in December with as many wins as possible to get closer to the teams above," Dybala told DAZN.

Genoa have won once in 16 games this term, picking up just one point in four outings since the appointment of former Ukraine and Milan star Shevchenko.

They have yet to score under the 2004 Ballon d'Or winner and did not attempt a single shot against Juve.

The league's joint-top scorer Dusan Vlahovic scored the winner from the penalty spot in a 3-2 victory at Bologna to leave Fiorentina level on points with Juve.

Vlahovic's 13th goal of the campaign moved the Tuscany side ahead of Jose Mourinho's Roma who lost 3-0 at home to champions Inter Milan on Saturday. Vincenzo Italiano's Fiorentina ended a run of four consecutive defeats on the road to Venezia, Lazio, Juventus and Empoli.

Fiorentina's Youssef Maleh opened the scoring with a header after half an hour at the Stadio Dall'Ara for his first Serie A goal. — AFP ■