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.

New Year Message for 2022 from Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

All esteemed national brethren,

First and foremost, I extend my greetings for your mental and physical health and well-being with auspiciousness on the occasion of the New Year 2022.

The year 2021 was an important year for our country. We faced various kinds of challenges within the previous year. I implemented the stands on the peace and stability of the State, unity and development as much as possible for ensuring the firm path of multiparty democracy we all are walking today.

The Tatmadaw is always serving the interests of the State and the ethnic people in accord with the duty and obligations entrusted by the Constitution. Our government will continuously cooperate with the ethnic people in harmony for further peace and stability of the State, prosperity and food sufficiency. "As unity will reflect the prosperity", I would like to urge all to participate in building the country peaceful and prosperous through our united strength.

COVID-19 pandemic which started in December 2019 was found in our country on 23 March 2020. During the two years, such pandemic changes its form as the variant virus. The Coronavirus disease triggered by COVID-19 changed itself to the Omicron variant virus. It has been found in our country, so all people need to take care of such a pandemic. Hence, we need to make preparations for the disease and conscience.

With regard to the vaccination, I set an aim to complete vaccination for more than 50 per cent of the targeted people in 2021. So far, people more than 18 years old have been vaccinated for more than 51 per cent. As schools have been reopened, 87 per cent of the students above 12 years old have been inoculated.

I would like to inform the people about efforts to produce the vaccines at home. It is sure to secure success. If we manufacture the vaccines at home, we would vaccinate the target people groups by cent per cent in 2022.

If one is vaccinated, one will prevent infection of the disease to some extent. If they are infected with the disease, they will have the ease of infection to some degree. Only when we all are healthy will we ourselves create our future.

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New Year Message of Chairman of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa

I disperse Metta through eleven ways in conformity with Metta Sutta.

1. May all living beings have physical and mental pleasures. It is inclusive of Ekaka way of dispersing Metta.
2. May all living beings in fear of something or not have physical and mental pleasures. It is inclusive of Duka way of dispersing Metta.
3. May all living beings in long, short and medium sizes have physical and mental pleasures. It is inclusive of Tika way (a) of dispersing Metta.
4. May all living beings in big, small and medium sizes have physical and mental pleasures. It is inclusive of Tika way (b) of dispersing Metta.
5. May all living beings in fat, thin and medium sizes have physical and mental pleasures. It is inclusive of Tika way (c) of dispersing Metta.
6. May all living tangible and intangible beings have physical and mental pleasures. It is inclusive of Duka way of dispersing Metta.
7. May all living beings here and there have physical and mental pleasures. It is inclusive of Duka way of dispersing Metta.
8. May all living beings in endless and non-endless lives have physical and mental pleasures. It is inclusive of Duka way of dispersing Metta.
9. May all humans be free from deception. It is inclusive of Ekaka way of dispersing Metta.
10. May all living beings be free from underestimation. It is inclusive of Ekaka way of dispersing Metta.
11. May all living beings be free from making miserable. It is inclusive of Ekaka way of dispersing Metta.

There are 11 ways – four Ekaka ways of dispersing Metta, four Duka ways of dispersing Metta and three Tika ways of dispersing

Dr Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa (Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru, Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja)
Chairman of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Bhamo Monastery Sayadaw, Mandalay.

Attitude of Buddhists

Sitagu Sayadaw Ashin Nyanissara

THE Buddha's teachings teach to live peacefully in unity with equal Metta (loving-kindness), Karuna (compassion) and Mudita (sympathetic joy) for all human beings.

Even the Lord Buddha himself set the standard for a uniform attitude in all beings. Some of the examples that significantly express the equal Metta (loving-kindness), Karuna (compassion) and Mudita (sympathetic joy) of Buddha for all human beings are as follows :

- The Metta of Buddha for Brahmaji who held an umbrella for him and the demon Mara who attacked him.
- He has the same Metta on his father King Suddhodana and father-in-law King Suppabuddha who always attempts to attack the Buddha.
- The Buddha has no different Metta on Devadatta who wait for a moment to kill him and Rahula, his son.
- The Buddha holds the same Metta for his wife, Yathawdaya and Seinsamana, who told untrue words that Buddha was her husband according to the instructions of opposite Gangs.
- The Buddha also has Karuna on the relatives who were killed by Vitatubha and also on Vinanuba who brutally killed the relatives.
- The Buddha holds equal Metta, Karuna and Mudita for Ashin Ananda who respectfully takes care of Ashin Ananda and Sunakhatta who disrespectfully takes care of Buddha.
- He also keeps the great Metta Karuna on Nanlagiri elephant that attempted to kill Him when the Buddha resided at Rajagaha now called Rajgir. Similarly, when Buddha lived in Parlilayyaka forest, He offered the great Metta and Karuna to the Parlilayraka elephant.

Dear devout Buddhists,

May all Buddhists build unity and peace with equal Metta, Karuna and Mudita for all human beings accordingly to the solemn teachings and guidelines of Buddha as above-mentioned irrespective of race and religion.

Sitagu Sayadaw
1 January 2022

New Year Message from Rector Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Nandamala Bhivamsa,

International Year 2022

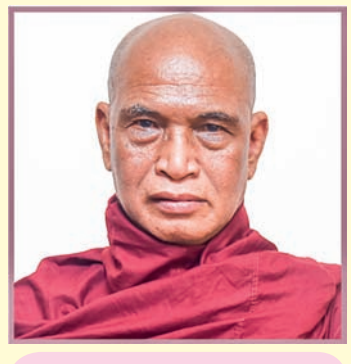
Sabbaroga Vinimutta
Sabbasantapa Vijjita
Sabbavera Matikkanta
Sukhita Hontu Pannino

PANNINO Sabbaroga Vinimutta means may all living beings be free from all diseases, Sabbasantapa Vijjita, be free from frets, Sabbavera Matikkanta, be free from dangers, and Sukhita Hontu, enjoy physical and mental wellbeing with happiness, pleasure and pleasantness.

Rector Sayadaw
Dr Bhaddanta Nandamala Bhivamsa

New Year Message of Secretary of State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee Sayadaw Dr Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa

"Securing victories on New Year occasion"



TODAY is significant for the World New Year leaving the old year of 2021 and marching onward New Year 2022. As everybody wishes to win the victory in all measures they do in line with the nature of humans, I would like to disseminate the four ways of winning the victory as a Dhamma gift on the New Year occasion.

1. Akkodhena Jine Kodham which means dispersing loving-kindness to the people who act behaviours with anger;
2. Asadhum Sadhuna Jine which means responding to wrongdoer with good doing
3. Jine Kadariyam Danena which means making donations to those who are reluctant to donate
4. Saccenalikavadinam means rebutting those who commit fake and fabricated news with the true topics to secure the victory according to the preaching of the Lord Buddha recorded in the Kodhavag of Dhammapada Pali treatise.

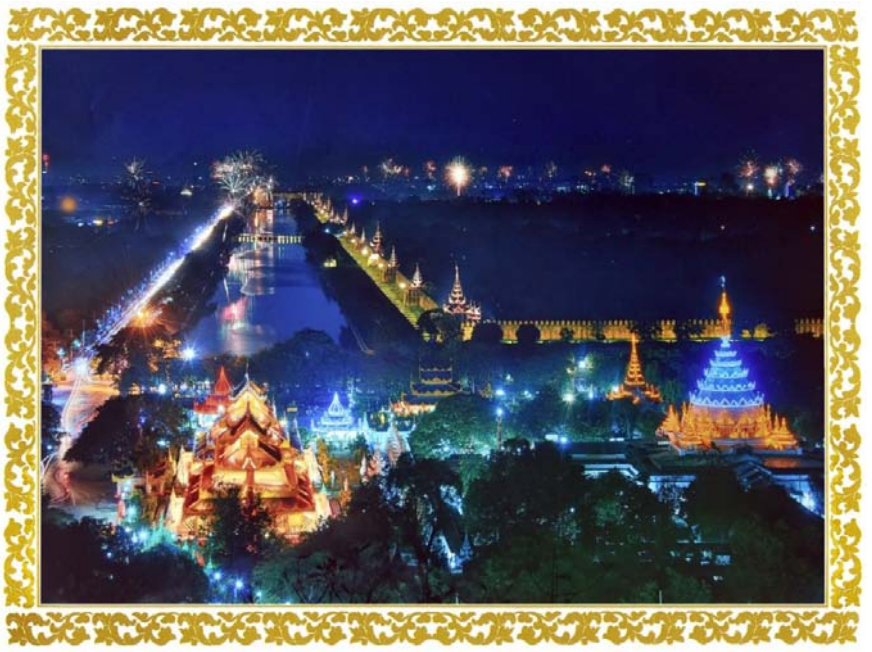
As such, I'd like to give Dhamma gifts on the New Year occasion that all the people should disperse Metta, perform good deeds called Dhamma, make donations as Dana and spoke words of truth called Sacca kept in their souls to secure the victory.

Bhaddanta Candima Bhivamsa (Agga Maha Pandita, Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotikadhaja)
Secretary, State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee
Minkyaung Pahtamabyan Buddhist Learning Centre
Thanlyin

IN building a union based on democracy and federalism, it is necessary to choose a system compatible with our country, notwithstanding the differences on the concept of democracy and federalism. The will of the majority is to prevail while that of the minority is to be respected in pursuit of democracy. There is no region or state in our country where only a single national race resides. Different national races and ethnicities are living harmoniously in every state and region.

We are implementing peacebuilding efforts as a national task to hand over a peaceful and stable future to our new generations and to build a prosperous and developed nation in the world. We wish all our national races to enjoy the democratic rights.

(Excerpt from the speech delivered by Chairman of the State Administration Council Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting 1/ 2021 of the National Unity and Peacemaking Coordination Central Committee on 3 March 2021)



New Year Message for 2022 from Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing

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The year 2022 is of importance. Coming 12 February is the Diamond Jubilee Union Day and the 4 January 2023 will be the Diamond Jubilee Independence Day. As such, this year is the pre-Diamond Jubilee period. Hence, it is important to further strengthen the sovereignty of the State and progress of the nation with development fruits.

So, we have to start the new paces for restoration of the peace this year. As it is mentioned in the fourth point of the five-point road map, all stakeholders and organizations are invited to join the peace talks.

The government will continue its endeavours for ensuring peace and stability of the State, development, the prosperity of the State, peace and emergence of the Union based on democracy and federalism and requests all the entire people to cooperate with the government in the work process.

Upholding the saying goes: "Unity will reflect the prosperity", I would like to urge all that let's join hands and pray again for all ethnic people to enjoy the fruits of good deeds and wishes as of this New Year.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing
Prime Minister
Chairman, State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Announcement of Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

13th Waning of Nadaw 1383 ME

31 December 2021

AS it is necessary to continuously control infection of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), it is hereby announced that public requests, orders, notifications and directives (except for easing the restrictions) released by the Union-level organizations and Union ministries up to 31 December 2021 have been extended until 31 January 2022 for the prevention, control and treatment of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Effective period for Temporary Measures to Prevent Importation of COVID-19 to Myanmar through Air Travel extended until 31 January 2022

THE effective period of the Temporary Measures to Prevent Importation of COVID-19 to Myanmar through Air Travel issued on 29 March 2020 by the Ministry of Health for International Commercial Passenger Flights was changed into **Temporary Measures to Prevent Importation of COVID-19 to Myanmar through Air Travel Issue-2 on 31 December 2020 and extended up to 31 December 2021** 23:59 hours Myanmar Standard Time, in line with the approval of the Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19.

To prevent the spread of disease from the passengers of international flights, the existing effective period will be further extended with the approval of the Central Committee for Prevention, Control and Treatment of COVID-19, until 31 January 2022, 23:59 hours of Myanmar Standard Time.

Ministry of Transport and Communications

SAC Member U Thein Nyunt wishes Myanmar people Happy New Year

IT has been 74 years that Myanmar has gained independence due to the revolutions against the British colonialists and the Japanese fascists. How do we proceed to the 75th Diamond Jubilee Independence Day?

We must clear out the current CRPH, NUG, PDF terrorist groups, under the leadership of State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing.

The situation in Myanmar today requires a nationalization between foreign influencers and patriots. In this political upheaval, those of us who love Myanmar must face any domestic or foreign enemy who determines Myanmar's sovereignty. We must break through the crisis created by the enemies. I wish we learn the lessons from history and may we defeat the colonial invaders and national traitors in the New Year so that we will not be colonized again.

U Thein Nyunt.

Four national objectives of 74th Anniversary of Independence Day 2022

1. All ethnic nationals to safeguard non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national unity, and perpetuation of sovereignty;
2. To ensure the emergence of a good and clean government and administrative system by implementing a genuine disciplined democracy;
3. All ethnic nationals to amicably and unitedly cooperate in the country development based on the genuine Union spirit;
4. To strive for restoring perpetual peace the entire people aspire.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Education Department of Higher Education Announcement Opening of University Day Classes

ALL the universities, degree colleges and colleges under the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, will open the following bachelor and master day classes for the Academic Year 2019-2020 and the Academic Year 2021-2022 on 6 January 2022.

(a) Fourth Year (Law) Semester II
(b) Fourth Year (Education) Semester II
(c) Third Year (Honours) Semester I
(d) Master (Qualifying) Semester I
(e) Master (1st Year) Semester I
(f) Master (2nd Year) Semester I

Department of Higher Education
Ministry of Education

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Science and Technology Announcement Opening of technological universities, universities of computer studies, colleges and institutes

ALL the technological universities, universities of computer studies, government technological colleges and government technical institutes under the Ministry of Science and Technology will open the following undergraduate, postgraduate and diploma classes for the Academic Year 2019-2020 on 6 January 2022.

(a) technological universities

(1) B.S Bio-Tech (third year)
(2) B.E/B.Arch (fifth year)
(3) B.E (sixth year - Internship & mini-thesis)
(4) Postgraduate Diploma
(5) From first year to fifth year of Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University

(b) universities of computer studies

(1) fourth year
(2) undergraduate diploma
(3) postgraduate diploma
(4) from first year to fourth year of Myanmar University of Information Technology

(c) government technological colleges and government technical institutes

(1) AGTI -first year
(2) AGTI -second year

Ministry of Science and Technology

189 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 31 December, total figure rises to 530,834

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 530,834 after 189 new cases were reported on 31 December 2021 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 508,232 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 19,268 after 3 died.—MNA

New Year wishes from various religious groups

U Sein Than (Chairman of the Myanmar Interfaith Friendship and Solidarity Committee, Buddhism)

Mingalabar. Today marks the end of 2021 and the beginning of the New Year 2022. On this occasion, our committee wishes all ethnic people living in Myanmar and people of all faiths to live together in harmony and love each other. Our committee also wishes Myanmar to be free from diseases and a prosperous and peaceful country.

U Ba Sein (a) Nadara Chan Pi Lay (Honorary Patron, Central Association of Hindu Priests and Pujaris in Myanmar-Hinduism)

On the occasion of the New Year 2022, I wish all the people of the world good health and prosperity. May Myanmar be a disease-free, prosperous and peaceful nation.

U Myint Than (Patron, Interfaith Friendship and Solidarity Committee, Methodist Church (Lower Myanmar), Honorary Representative (Christianity)

Today marks the end of 2021 and the first day of the New Year 2022. On the occasion of the New Year, I wish all the people of Myanmar, including the ethnic nationalities, good health and prosperity. I would like to urge people of all faiths to live in harmony under the teachings of each religion and to work together for the development of Myanmar. I wish you a Happy New Year 2022 and a disease-free and worry-free life in Myanmar.

U Aung Zaw Win (Vice-Chairman of the Myanmar Interfaith Friendship and Solidarity Committee, Islam)

On the occasion of the New Year of 2022, I wish all Myanmar citizens good health and prosperity to all ethnic brothers and sisters. May Myanmar people be free from this COVID-19 pandemic. May you all be in good health and work together to build a prosperous and modern nation.
— Interviewer Ko Theik/PHOTO : KO ZAW/GNLM

New Year wish of Cardinal Charles Bo, Yangon Catholic Archdiocese

DEAR Myanmar people, brothers, sisters, and children, I wish you a Happy New Year that is full of hope and rehabilitation. In this country, compassion must be held by all. It is the truth. Without peace and reconciliation, our nation will not be established. We can create an environment of peaceful coexistence. We firmly believe that peace songs will be sung soon. May the light of peace be spread on this land.

Cardinal Charles Bo,
Yangon Catholic Archdiocese

Myanmar Interfaith Friendship and Solidarity Central Committee Wish

MAY All Myanmar citizens and the people of the world be safe from misery, be healthy and prosperous. May all live together in peace and happiness.

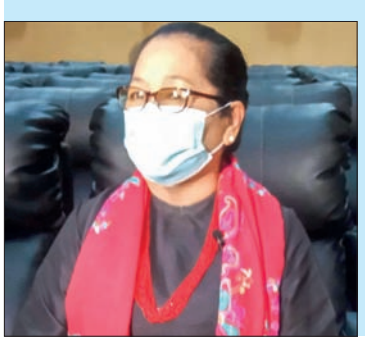
New Year wishes of various artistes and literary scholars

Dr U Than Oo (doyen literati)

AT the end of the old year and the transition to the new year, may all the blessings be complete. May all human beings have a long, healthy and happy life. May all be healthy, prosperous and happy.

Baji U Soe Moe (Film Director)

OUR country is much more resistant than other countries since the first wave of COVID-19. May all the people of Myanmar be free of COVID-19 disease and all the people of the world be free of COVID-19 disease. May businesses succeed. I would like to say to the world that the world will be more peaceful if there is no war after the friendship of all the people of the world is strengthened.



Daw Nwet Nwet San (Actress)

I wish peace be upon Myanmar and the world. I wish the people of Myanmar peace of mind and good health. I wish you all peace.

U Kyi Soe Tun (Chairman of the Myanmar Film Association)

MAY all the citizens of Myanmar be safe and free from all dangers. On behalf of the film world, I wish every family a happy New Year 2022.

U Ohn Maung (a) Myinmu Maung Naing Moe (Chairman of the Myanmar Press Council)

I wish all the people in Myanmar a happy and prosperous career on this occasion of the New Year. I pray that the COVID-19 disease will be eradicated with the strength of the people and the leadership of the state unitedly. In addition, I wish journalists to release accurate information to the public in a timely manner, and work together with the people and the state to eradicate false news and poisonous news. May all be well.

U Lwin Myint (Chairman of the Myanmar Music Association)

THE New Year is also a blessed day for all people. I wish the peace of mind and good health for all mankind. May the world be at peace. I wish all can build peace and friendship. May all overcome the pandemic. – Nyein Thu (MNA)/Photo : Kanu GNLM

Public Notice

THE flag hoisting and message reading ceremony to mark the 74th Anniversary of Independence Day will be conducted at the City Hall of Nay Pyi Taw. The road section from the municipal guesthouse traffic light on the Pyinmana-Taungnyo road in Zabuthiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw to the Thabyaygon Market traffic light corner will be blocked from 02:00 am to 08:00 am on the dress rehearsal day 2-1-2022 and the day of ceremony 4-1-2022.

The people can use a detour from the municipal guesthouse traffic light on the Pyinmana-Taungnyo road in Zabuthiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw to Taw Win Yadana road heading to Shwekyapin traffic light or from the Thabyaygon Market traffic light corner to Padauk street heading to Ayeyawady road on these two days.

Nay Pyi Taw Supervisory Committee for Traffic

MoC facilitates daily imports of essential anti-COVID-19 equipment

THE Ministry of Commerce is overseeing the importation of essential medical supplies plus anti-COVID devices that are critical to the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities, including liquid oxygen and oxygen cylinders, through trading posts, international airports and seaports.

Anti-COVID-19 equipment was imported by one company using two vehicles. A total of 16 tonnes of masks were imported via the Chinshwehaw trade zone yesterday.

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 and treatment of COVID-19 as well as contact persons for inquires can be reached through the Ministry's Website — www.commerce.gov.mm. — MNA

Minbu rural solar electrification project to cover Magway Region, Rakhine State

THE rural solar electrification project in Minbu city, Magway Region will soon provide reliable electricity to townships across Magway Region and Rakhine State, with a capacity of 170 megawatts.

This solar-powered project launched on 836 acres of land at No. 1,273 Goatgyi Yard on 2 February 2018. It started generating 40 megawatts on 2 June 2019. The project utilizes 15,900 solar panels to add more megawatts. At present, solar power distribution is estimated at 25 megawatts to a sub-station in An city, Rakhine State and 15 megawatts to Mann sub-station in Minbu city under phase 1.

Upon the completion of the Minbu rural solar electrification project, the villages near the project area will have access to adequate electricity supply and this 170 megawatts project in Minbu will expand electricity access to Magway Region and Rakhine State, said U Nyunt Aung, head of GEP Myanmar Co., Ltd.— Zeya Htet/GNLM

Upon the completion of the Minbu rural solar electrification project, the villages near the project area will have access to adequate electricity supply and this 170 megawatts project in Minbu will expand electricity access to Magway Region and Rakhine State.

Announcement for ethnic armed organizations to ensure State stability and peaceful living of ethnic people

Seized arms and ammunition.

THE government accelerates action plans for peace by organizing the National Unity and Peacemaking Central Committee, the National Unity and Peacemaking Working Committee, and the National Unity and Peacemaking Coordination Committee to hold talks with ethnic armed organizations.

The CRPH, NUG and PDF terrorist groups brutally committed bomb attacks and killed innocent people in some cities. Security forces and responsible citizens worked together to arrest terrorists and seized arms and ammunition related to KIA and TNLA in some cities of upper Myanmar, including Mandalay, Sagaing, Kachin and Chin.

Between 1 February and 31 December 2021, there were 3,751 violent incidents in some cities and security forces arrested 1,492 terrorists and seized 133 weapons, 1,693 rounds of ammunition, 28 grenades, 217 homemade mines and other explosives. Moreover, police also detained 9,958 terrorists and seized 3,417 firearms, 161,500 rounds of ammunition, 647 grenades, 6,895 homemade mines and other related materials in time.

There were three arrests in Mandalay to date — six suspects together with 200 Type-81s, 20 Type-81 machine guns, four K2-5s and one M-79 launcher and one arrest in Monywa — eight suspects with one 779 Pading III – S 40mm launcher.

There were 17 arrests in Mandalay and some cities of upper Myanmar — 209 suspects together with three M16s, 5 AK-47s, 40 M-22s, 17 pistols, 61 K-22s, four K-12s, four KAs, one KO-3s, two KA launchers, 79 K2-5s, 36 K2-5s, 220 Type-81s, 20 Type-81 machine guns, 44 M-79 LL 40mm launcher, 12 779 Pading III –S 40mm launchers and 549 small arms.

According to the confession of terrorists, 43 people attended the explosive training of KIA and 37 joined the explosive training of TNLA. When the seized arms and ammunition were examined, it found that 220 Type-81s, 79 K2-5s, 61 K22s, 36 K2-5s, 20 Type-81 machine guns, 4 K-12s, 4 Kas, 1 KO-3s, 2 KA launchers and 759 grenades were produced by KIA.

Tatmadaw has strictly followed the NCA signed on 15 October 2015 and made efforts following the policy of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services **"Tatmadaw will strictly abide by the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in restoring the perpetual peace that is needed for the country and people".**

The State Administration Council prioritizes peace processes and sets the five-point roadmap and nine objectives.

Therefore, it is here urged the ethnic armed organizations whether they sign the NCA or not to stop acts that affect the State stability, development, lives and properties of national races while the entire people face the impacts of COVID-19. If some commit any actions to destroy the stability of the country and socio-economic status of people, Tatmadaw will keep conducting the necessary security measures.

Information Team
State Administration Council

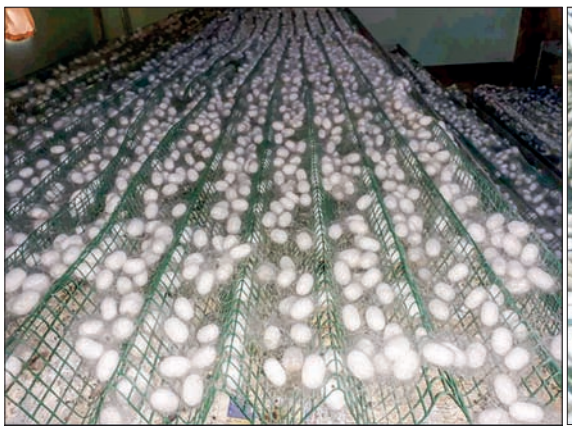
Confiscated assorted weapons, ammunition, explosives and related items.

Myanmar ships 300 tonnes of silkworm cocoon to China yearly

THE private companies export approximately 300 tonnes of silkworm cocoon to China every year, allowing silkworm farmers to increase income and generate foreign revenue, said Daw Moe Moe Win, assistant director of Sericulture Centre in PyinOoLwin.

Mulberry is perennial and the related department also provides sericulture courses so that the growers know how to properly rear the silkworms and produce silk. The export of silkworm cocoons aims to enhance the private sector, income of the silkworm farmers and earn foreign income. The silkworm cocoon is priced at K10,000 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes).

"The silkworm cocoon is sent to the domestic silk-reeling factories and silk are on sale under bidding system. Myanmar companies convey dried silkworm cocoons to China. Earlier, the silkworm cocoon was delivered to China two or three times in December. This year, trade was suspended owing to the preventive measures for the COVID-19. Beyond silkworm production, mulberry cultivation can also produce nutritious mulberry tea leaves, wine and jam as it can bring health benefits," she explained.



The private companies export approximately 300 tonnes of silkworm cocoon to China every year, allowing silkworm farmers to increase income and generate foreign revenue. **PHOTOS : MIN HTET AUNG**

Besides Myanmar, sericulture is commonly found in China, India, Viet Nam, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, the Republic of Korea and Japan. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)/ GNLM

Besides Myanmar, sericulture is commonly found in China, India, Viet Nam, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, the Republic of Korea and Japan.

2,000 companies struck off register due to AR absence over 5 months: DICA

A total of 2,000 companies has been struck off the register as of 17 December since July as they fail to submit an annual return (AR) on the online registry system, MyCO, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The DICA has notified any registered company which fails to submit its AR on MyCO are to be suspended, under Section 430 (F) of the Myanmar Companies Law, according to the DICA's notification.

All registered companies need to file AR on the MyCO registry system within two months of incorporation, and at least once every year (not later than one month after the anniversary of the incorporation), according to Section 97 of the law.

According to Section 266 (A) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public companies must submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5) simultaneously.

The Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within 28 days of the financial year ending under Section 53 (A-1) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

As per DICA's report, more than 16,000 companies were suspended for failing to submit AR forms within the due date. Newly established companies are required to submit ARs within two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns.

The DICA has notified that any company which fails to submit its AR within 13 months will be notified of its suspension (I-9A). If it fails to submit the AR within 28 days of receiving the notice, the system will show the company's status as suspended. Companies can restore their status only after shelling out a fine of K50,000 for AR fee, K100,000 for the restoration of the company on the Register, and K100,000 for late filing of documents, totalling K250,000.

If a company fails to restore its status within six months of suspension, the registrar will strike its name off the register, according to the DICA notice.

The registration and re-registration of companies on the MyCO website commenced on 1 August 2018, in keeping with the Myanmar Companies Law 2017. The number of companies registered on the online registry system, MyCO, topped more than 6,900 in the past 11 months of this year. Earlier, MyCO received more than 1,000 applications from new companies every month.

At present, 100 per cent of the applicants are using the online registration platform, according to data provided by the DICA. — GNLM

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanma Alinn, the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit www.moi.gov.mm/mal, www.moi.gov.mm/km, www.moi.gov.mm/nlm and www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper.

News and Periodicals Enterprise

Let's pledge to march towards a peaceful and prosperous society

NOW, the New Year comes in whereas the old year went out.

Like the old leaves are substituted with new ones, the old year is to bid farewell with conscience and the New Year is also greeted with a conscience to perform good deeds as well as meritorious deeds but evil acts.

Today is significant for the World New Year leaving the old year of 2021 and marching onward New Year 2022. As everybody wishes to win the victory in all measures they do in line with the nature of humans, prominent members of the Sangha disseminate the ways of winning the victory as a Dhamma gift on the New Year occasion.

> Let's change our mindsets to improve ourselves, our society and our land. Let's pray for our country to ripen fruits of peace, stability and prosperity on the occasion of New Year 2022 whereas the people have the chance to enjoy the fruits of development.

State leaders and prominent persons sent New Year messages to the people as a gesture of hailing the New Year. They all pray good things and good doings for the people to welcome the New Year.

People from all walks of life need to leave the measures related to the old year with keen preparations to march forward for meeting the goal. They need to review and analyze the past things they did. Depending on the results from the analysis, they all have to seek the best way to the goal without derailment from the missions and visions.

Venerable members of the Sangha expressed their New Year wishes for all living beings to enjoy their physical and mental wellbeing with happiness, pleasure and pleasantness. Those members of the Sangha disperse the compassion in various ways for being peaceful in society.

On the occasion of New Year Day, all the people should disperse Metta (compassion), perform good deeds called Dhamma, make donations as Dana and spoke words of truth called Saccavaca kept in their souls to secure the victory.

If loving-kindness prevails among the creatures including human beings, the world and the people will be at peace. All the people in the world make use of the 11 ways of cultivating loving-kindness for health, peace, and love in the New Year.

Let's change our mindsets to improve ourselves, our society and our land. Let's pray for our country to ripen fruits of peace, stability and prosperity on the occasion of New Year 2022 whereas the people have the chance to enjoy the fruits of development.

■■■

Hailing the 74th Anniversary of Independence Day

Beware of internal and external destructive elements for the nation

By Aung Kyaw Thant

MYANMAR, located between the two superpower countries, is standing in the strategic area of the Asian Continent. Hence, Myanmar has been cementing diplomatic relations with neighbouring countries for many years, exercising the foreign policy as independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy and upholding the principles of peaceful co-existence among nations.

From its establishment from the time of the First Myanmar Empire to the Third Empire, Myanmar has been overcoming various kinds of challenges and threats posed by external elements. So also, Myanmar has been marching onward to meet its missions and visions till today. But Myanmar never shirked from on its way to the goal. It is because all Myanmar national people accepted a concept that 'the strength of the nation lies within'.

While going on its route, Myanmar has been possessing accumulated experiences in how to overcome challenges, how to tackle political affairs, how to handle business affairs, how to control the military operations, how to manage diplomatic relations, how to implement home affairs and so on.

A retrospective review of Myanmar revealed that the ancestors of Myanmar have settled on this land and lived under their own monarchies and traditions for thousands of years, standing tall and proud in the international community. Myanmar dubbed as a golden land, endowed with rich natural resources and high cultural standards, both above ground and underground, lost its sovereignty in 1885 and fell under the rule of the British colonialists.

Throughout the colonial period, Myanmar had had its resources overexploited, its religion and culture ill-treated, its literature and language restricted, and its national unity hampered by the policy of divide and rule exercised by the colonialists, an administrative system that favoured the bureaucratic mechanism. Aroused by patriotism and nationalism, all the ethnic national people across the country took up any weapons they could lay their hands on to fight back colonialists and fascists in their respective regions.

Hence, all national races residing in the land of Myanmar should not forget the bitter experiences in the time of colonial era. A Myanmar saying goes: "No lawyer never makes mistake; no medical practitioner never dies". As such, all Myanmar national races need to take lessons from the past bitter experiences to be able to analyze the root causes of wrongdoings in the past and seek the best way to apply the good solutions from the past lessons in the practical fields for the benefit of the nation and the nationals.

Ethnic nationals in their traditional dress. **PHOTO: MNA/FILE**

For enabling the national people to reside in peace and prosperity, all national races sacrificed life and limb in the independence struggle and in fighting back the colonialists, holding up high esteemed Our Three Main National Causes —Non-disintegration of the Union, Non-disintegration of national solidarity and Perpetuation of sovereignty—through successive generations.

All nationalities should join hands in deterring possible threats to the security of the country and at the same time make concerted efforts for the development of the socio-economy of the national people. Thus, it is incumbent on the entire population to adhere to the four national objectives of the 74th Anniversary of Independence Day in turning motherland Myanmar into a Union based on democracy and federalism by practising the multiparty democracy.

To organize the 74th Anniversary of Independence Day, the government laid down four national objectives as follows: -

1. All ethnic nationals to safeguard non-disintegration of the Union, non-disintegration of national unity, and perpetuation of sovereignty;
2. To ensure the emergence of a good and clean government and administrative system by implementing a genuine disciplined democracy;
3. All ethnic nationals to amicably and unitedly cooperate in the country development based on the genuine Union spirit;
4. To strive for restoring perpetual peace the entire people aspire.

Concerning the national objectives, everybody, without doubt, knows the in-depth definition of Our Three Main National Causes mentioned on the first objective. As the second point, a good and clean government that exercises a better administrative system would be reliable to develop the country and would be able to realize the genuine disciplined democracy. The third point of the objectives is very important for national races. They have to understand the crucial role of the Union spirit. Only when the Union spirit is strong and dynamic will the country be under protection against alien penetration, threat and danger posed by external elements. Hence, their amicability and unity must be placed under the Union spirit. No matter what danger the country faces, the government and the people are to join hands in restoring the perpetual peace in the country while preparing themselves to be ready to wipe off the internal and international destructive elements.

As part of implementing the four national objectives, all the national people need to hold up a concept that the internal strengths could help people promote the prosperity of the State. Unity is a powerful strength to prevent any external influence or control. It is also a driving force to strive for the development of the country.

Indeed, Independence is freedom from the control and influence of the nation. Nobody wants to be controlled or influenced and wishes to accept the situation on the interference of others in internal affairs. Moreover, nobody from an independent country accepts the influence of others over them. For independence, strength is needed and necessary for the country and the people. The strength can turn out confidence and belief which are motivations behind independence.

Only an independent country could build up a better future of its own with dignity among the international community. Despite being free from control or influence, independence does not mean a lack of faith or trust in another person or community.

Now is the best time to modernize the land of Myanmar to be endowed with various kinds of facilities, and natural and human resources applied for uplifting the living standard of the ethnic national people in all parts of the nation. If the country sees the results of narrowing the development gap between the rural and urban areas, all the residents of the nation will have to grasp the chance for enjoying equal terms of rights in all aspects.

It will be a sowed seed for easing the doubts among the national people and it will be a driving force to build mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual understanding among them for building a modern and developed nation.

■■■

I SAY WHAT I SEE:

By Oung Moung Moung

I HAVE proceeded with one more year in my lifespan like others in the whole world after the last day, 31 December, of the previous year 2021.

Not only people from Myanmar, however, global people as well might not have been quite pleased to greet and embrace a new year amid the pandemic of the deadly pathogen. So pitiful life I am and you are, too! Very recently, the Omicron variant has also been battering us terribly at almost every doorstep of people all across the world. Covid-19 nearly upends all lives and properties of people all over the world in a divergent manner.

I have read one of the international news items entitled World tops one million new daily Covid cases: AFP tally saying, "The number of daily new Covid cases worldwide has crossed one million for the first time since the pandemic began two years ago, according to an AFP tally on 30 December 2021." This is an average of 1,045,000 infections every day – following a surge in cases of the highly contagious Omicron variant, the news added.

Two major hotspots Omicron-related new infections occurred are Europe, US and Canada (North America). This new ultra-contagious variant never halts only in those regions but looks rather aggressive to expand its spreading scopes of infections. Regrettably, we heard the other days that Omicron came to intrude into Myanmar, according to the Ministry of Health, the country's highest health bureau. Our next-door countries like India and Thailand and several ASEAN countries cannot get away with this latest virus mutation, Omicron. Myanmar and its neighbours like international countries worldwide have to buckle up to ramp up respective precautionary measures.

Sincerely, we are almost fed up with this nuisance Covid. However, do not forget simple and easy-to-follow health protocols: always wear a mask whenever in public, ever keep social distancing, frequently wash hands and strictly avoid gathering etc, even if vaccinated.

I wholeheartedly wish for your long healthy prosperous life not just in 2022 but beyond it!

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 31 December 2021)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 1 January, 2022: Light rain are likely to be isolated in Taninthayi Region and Kachin, (Southern and Eastern) Shan States. Degree of certainty is (60%). Weather will be partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-6) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Slight decrease of night temperatures in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin, Shan, Chin States.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 January, 2022: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 January, 2022: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 January, 2022: Partly cloudy.

WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND: Weather will be partly cloudy in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and Yangon Regions.

Germany to close nuclear reactors despite energy crisis

Germany will shut down three nuclear power plants on Friday even as Europe faces one of its worst ever energy crises, following Angela Merkel's timetable for phasing out atomic energy. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

GERMANY will shut down three nuclear power plants on Friday even as Europe faces one of its worst ever energy crises, following Angela Merkel's timetable for phasing out atomic energy.

With energy prices already on the rise and tensions higher than ever between Europe and key gas supplier Russia, the closure of the plants in Brokdorf, Grohnde and Gundremmingen could well tighten the squeeze.

The move will halve remaining nuclear capacity in Germany and reduce energy output by around four gigawatts -- equivalent to the power produced by 1,000 wind turbines.

Protests over the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011 prompted former chancellor Merkel to set the wheels in motion for abandoning nuclear power just over 10 years ago.

Germany is planning to completely wind down atomic energy by the end of 2022, when it will shut its final three plants in Neckarwestheim, Essenbach and Emsland.

But with energy prices soaring across Europe, the timing of the plans coming to fruition could hardly be worse. Europe's reference gas price, Dutch TTF, hit 187.78 euros per megawatt hour in December -- 10 times higher than at the start of the year -- and electricity prices are also soaring.

The spike has been fuelled by geopolitical tensions with Russia, which supplies one third of Europe's gas. Western countries accuse Russia of limiting gas deliveries to put pressure on Europe amid tensions over the Ukraine conflict. Moscow also wants to push through the controversial Nord Stream 2 pipeline, set to ship still more Russian gas to Germany.—AFP ■

Alaska faces 'Icemageddon' as temperatures swing wildly

EXTREME weather in Alaska that has brought record high temperatures and torrential downpours has left authorities in the far northern US state warning of "Icemageddon".

Huge sheets of ice are blocking roads and choking traffic in Fairbanks, Alaska's second largest city, reported the state's transportation department, which has coined the neologism — a play on "Armageddon"— to describe the chilly impasse.

"We're experiencing an unprecedented series of winter storms," the department tweeted.

Scientists say the unchecked burning of fossil fuels and other human activity is changing the climate, making it more unpredictable and prone to wild swings.

Rick Thoman, a weather specialist at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, called the conditions of the past few days "very unusual".

Hours after thermometers on Kodiak Island in the south reached 19.4 degrees Celsius (67 Fahrenheit) — the warmest December temperature ever recorded in Alaska — the interior of the state saw 25 millimetres (an inch) of rain fall in just a few hours, a downpour unseen in decades.

Then when temperatures plummeted again, it all froze.

The rainstorm was caused by the same weather system that brought the soaring temperatures, transporting warm, moist air from Hawaii to the frigid far north.—AFP ■

A landscape is seen in September 2019, near Denali, Alaska. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

China to accelerate improvement of rural living environment

CHINA has released a five-year action plan on improving rural living environment amid the bid to promote rural vitalization and upgrade the living conditions of rural residents.

Rural living environment upgrade is closely related to the well-being of farmers and the construction of a beautiful China, according to the plan jointly issued by the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council.

Noting the achievements made in rural areas since China launched a three-year rural living environment upgrade campaign in 2018, the plan urged efforts to speed up the improvement of rural living environment.

By 2025, rural living environment should be significantly upgraded, with the penetration rate of clean toilets in rural areas steadily increased, and toilet waste effectively treated, according to the plan.—Xinhua ■

Aerial photo taken on May 11, 2020 shows residential houses built for farmers in Lyuliang Township of Jinhu County, east China's Jiangsu Province. **PHOTO: XINHUA/LI BO**

Hong Kong ban on ivory sales comes into force

A ban on selling most ivory products in Hong Kong came into effect Friday, the culmination of a three-year process to eliminate the once rampant trade in the city.

Hong Kong lawmakers in 2018 backed a bill opting for a gradual phasing out of the trade -- a move some conservationists at the time criticized as a loophole that could be exploited.

The city has been accused of playing an oversized role in the industry, with one 2019 report by a local conservation group saying it accounted for around a fifth of all global ivory seizures in the last decade.

On the eve of the ban, small queues of shoppers were spotted outside some stores selling the product in the city's Sheung Wan district, according to local media reports.

Friday's new rules ban the "import, re-export, and commercial possession of elephant ivory", but make an exception for antique pieces dating from before 1925. Offenders could face a maximum fine of HK$10 million ($1.3 million) and 10 years' imprisonment.

With its busy port and other transport links, Hong Kong had thrived as a major transit point for illegal trade in parts of endangered animals like elephants, rhinos and pangolins — most of it headed for consumers in mainland China.—AFP ■

Americans told to avoid cruise travel, even if vaccinated

US health authorities on Thursday urged Americans to avoid cruise travel even if they are vaccinated, citing the surge in Covid-19 cases spurred by the Omicron variant.

"Avoid cruise travel, regardless of vaccination status," said a posting on the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website that upgraded the travel notice on cruising to Level 4, the highest on its Covid risk scale.

"Even fully vaccinated travelers may be at risk for getting and spreading Covid-19 variants," the notice said.

Between 15 and 29 December, there were 5,013 Covid cases in US waters reported to the CDC, 31 times the level in the prior two weeks, according to an email from a CDC spokesperson.

The agency recommends mitigation steps that include getting vaccinated and boosted, wearing a mask in indoor settings and taking a test before gathering.

The Norwegian-flagged cruise ship Viking Jupiter, with a thousand people on board, including several diagnosed with COVID-19, docked at the Argentine port of Ushuaia, on 29 December 2021. **PHOTO: ALEXIS DELELISI/AFP**

"The virus that causes Covid-19 spreads easily between people in close quarters on board ships, and the chance of getting Covid-19 on cruise ships is very high, even if you are fully vaccinated and have received a Covid-19 vaccine booster dose," the CDC said.

The surge in fresh cases linked to the highly-transmissible Omicron variant has raised fresh challenges for the cruise industry, which resumed service in the United States this summer after being essentially dormant for more than a year. On Thursday, Royal Caribbean modified or cancelled 16 destinations out of 331 due to the uptick in Covid cases. Shares of Royal Caribbean dipped 0.2 per cent in afternoon trading.— AFP ■

World tops one million new daily Covid cases: AFP tally

A woman receives a vaccination against the coronavirus at a walk-in centre for tourists, workers and locals in the Cypriot Mediterranean resort city of Ayia Napa on 29 July 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE number of daily new Covid cases worldwide has crossed one million for the first time since the pandemic began two years ago, according to an AFP tally Thursday.

The figures for 23-29 December, the highest since the virus first emerged at the end of 2019, are based on tolls given daily by health authorities in each country.

More than 7.3 million new Covid-19 cases were detected around the world in the last seven days — an average of 1,045,000 infections every day — following a surge in cases of the highly contagious Omicron variant.

The numbers are much higher than the last record before the current wave when daily cases stood at 817,000 on average between April 23 and 29.

A large share of the less serious or asymptomatic cases remain undetected despite ramped up testing in many countries since the pandemic began. Also, testing policy varies from one country to another.

Global infections worldwide -- on the rise since the middle of October -- shot up by 44 percent the previous week over a week earlier. A Covid "tsunami" threatens to overwhelm healthcare systems, the World Health Organization warned on Wednesday.

"This is and will continue to put immense pressure on exhausted health workers, and health systems on the brink of collapse," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said.

More than 85 per cent of the new infections occurred in two regions worst hit by Omicron -- Europe, which recorded 4,022,000 cases in the last seven days, up 36 per cent over the preceding week, and the United States and Canada which had a combined 2,264,000 cases in the same period, up 83 per cent.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Xi'an residents complain of food shortages as lockdown drags on

RESIDENTS in the locked-down Chinese city of Xi'an said they were struggling to find enough food, despite Beijing insisting Thursday that there were now adequate supplies.

China has followed a strict "zero Covid" approach involving tight border restrictions and swift, targeted lockdowns since the virus first surfaced in a central city in late 2019.

The country's commerce ministry told reporters on Thursday that Xi'an's 13 million residents -- who were placed under lockdown eight days ago -- had "sufficient" access to essential supplies.

State TV showed footage of workers in hazmat suits sorting eggs, meat and vegetables into plastic bags, before delivering them to residents door-to-door.—AFP ■

Canada's COVID-19 cases surpass 2.1 million

CANADA reported 32,121 new COVID-19 cases Wednesday evening, raising its national total to 2,102,474 with 30,248 deaths, according to local media CTV.

COVID-19 cases have been surging across Canada due to the fast spread of the Omicron variant. Most provinces and territories in the country, including Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island and Nunavut, reported record-high single-day COVID-19 case numbers. Quebec reported its highest daily COVID-19 case count yet on Wednesday with 13,149 new cases and 10 new deaths. The province's cumulative total has surged to 572,419 with 11,702 fatalities.—Xinhua ■

France reports record 208,000 Covid cases in post-Christmas surge

FRANCE set a new national record for Covid-19 on Wednesday with 208,000 new infections recorded over 24 hours with a post-Christmas surge in cases causing alarm in the government.

According to figures given by Health Minister Olivier Veran to a parliamentary hearing, the number of cases jumped by 15 percent since Tuesday when a record 179,807 new infections were reported, and had doubled since Saturday. "I wouldn't call Omicron a wave anymore… I would call it a tidal wave," Veran said, referring to the new variant which is replacing the Delta variant as the dominant strain in France. Some 10 percent of the French population had been in contact with somebody who is infected with the virus, Veran said, adding that the figures "make your head spin."

The minister had warned on Monday that France could reach more than 250,000 daily Covid cases by the beginning of January, as a week of unrestricted Christmas parties and family get-togethers fuel the spread of the disease.—AFP ■

France recorded over 31,600 COVID-19 cases on Sunday. **PHOTO: AFP**

S.Korea's e-commerce import hits record high in 2021

SOUTH Korea's e-commerce import hit a record high this year as more people purchased foreign goods in cyberspace, customs office data showed Thursday.

Import through the e-commerce transactions amounted to 4.15 billion U.S. dollars for the first 11 months of 2021, up 25.7 per cent from the same period of last year, according to Korea Customs Service.

The amount already topped the e-commerce import for the whole year of 2020, reaching a record yearly high.

The number of e-commerce imports soared 40.6 per cent to hit a fresh high of 79 million in the 11-month period, surpassing the number for the entire year of 2020.

The online direct overseas purchases by those in their 40s accounted for 32.3 per cent of the total in the 11-month period, taking up the highest portion in age groups.

It was followed by those in their 30s with 30.5 per cent, those in their 50s with 15.6 per cent, and those in their 20s with 14.7 per cent.

Health products topped the list of e-commerce imports at 19.4 per cent of the total for the first 11 months, followed by clothing with 17.7 per cent, electronic products and computers with 10.4 per cent and footwear with 7.3 per cent.

Foodstuffs recorded the biggest on-year growth rate of 44.2 per cent, trailed by books with 40.5 per cent, shoes with 28.9 per cent and clothing with 26.4 per cent.— AFP ■

A staff member checks on boxed tofu products for distribution logistics at a tofu plant of Pulmuone in Eumseong-gun of Chungcheongbuk-do, South Korea, 3 Nov 2020. Pulmuone, a leading food company in South Korea. **PHOTO: XINHUA/WANG**

NEWS IN BRIEF

China ready to implement RCEP agreement: official

CHINA has completed the domestic preparation for implementing the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement, a Chinese official said Thursday, two days ahead of the world's largest trade deal coming into force. Ren Hongbin, vice-minister of commerce, said at a press conference that the country is ready to fulfill a total of 701 binding obligations under the agreement.

The RCEP agreement was signed among 15 participating countries in November 2020. China took the lead in ratifying the deal and submitting the instrument of ratification to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat earlier this year.

The RCEP implementation marks a new milestone for China's opening-up, Ren said. Also at the press conference, Yu Benlin, an official of the Ministry of Commerce responsible for international economic and trade ties, said China will fulfill the commitments on service trade opening-up and investment negative lists and ensure all the measures are put in place.—Xinhua ■

Foreign businesses worry as China food import law kicks in

GETTING wine, chocolate, and coffee into China could get even harder from Saturday, with new import restrictions adding fresh hurdles for foreign companies bringing products into the world's largest market for food and drink.

Chinese consumers bought $108 billion worth of imported produce in 2020, with that number set to grow for 2021 as imports jumped nearly 30 per cent year on year in the first three quarters.

But under laws set to kick in on 1 January, all producers of food shipped to China will have to register with the customs authority -- yet another barrier for international companies that have long complained of being unfairly penalized.

The extra hurdle was previously required only for products posing potential health risks, such as seafood. But now coffee, alcohol, honey, olive oil, chocolate and several other products will also be scrutinized.

Consumers choose red wine at the Chongqing International Exhibition and Trading Centre in January. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

On New Year's Day, "the import curtain will fall", Alban Renaud, a China-based lawyer with the firm Adaltys, told AFP.

But he said there were still many unknowns: "Will there be a margin of tolerance? What about the applications that are in progress but not approved? What about those who applied too late?"

One businessman involved in imports told AFP: "You need (certification) otherwise the goods will arrive at ports and you'll have to pay penalties."—AFP ■

Armenia to lift embargo on Turkish goods from January

THE Armenian government said Thursday it was lifting an embargo on Turkish goods from January 1, originally imposed over Ankara's backing of Azerbaijan in a war with Armenia.

"A decision was made not to extend the embargo on the import of Turkish goods into the country," the economy ministry said on Facebook.

Earlier this year Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said Yerevan was prepared to hold discussions to repair relations with Turkey.

Turkey and Armenia have no diplomatic relations, a closed frontier and a long history of hostility rooted in mass killings of Armenians under the Ottoman Turks during World War I.

The bitter relationship has deteriorated more recently over Turkey's support for Azerbaijan, which last year fought a war with Armenia for control of the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region.

The flare-up claimed more than 6,500 lives and ended with a Russian-brokered ceasefire that saw Yerevan cede swathes of contested territory it had controlled for decades.

In October 2020, Armenia introduced a ban on Turkish goods over Ankara's political and military support of Turkic-speaking Azerbaijan in the war.—AFP ■

Following Ankara's strong backing of Azerbaijan in the recent war, Yerevan is banning many Turkish goods. Import substitution at work: The Yerevan Chocolate Company last year. **PHOTO: ARMENIA ECONOMY MINISTRY/AFP/FILE**

India's year of the unicorn: Startups in spotlight of 2021 tech boom

SUMIT Gupta has had a big year — turning 30, getting married and seeing his startup become one of India's newest tech unicorns.

Hampered by the coronavirus pandemic and too busy expanding and getting funding for his crypto-currency platform CoinDCX, his team finally grabbed a few days on the beach in Goa to celebrate recently.

"That was very delightful to everyone," Gupta told AFP. "It's been a very, very exciting journey. I've learned a lot... The future of India is very bright."

This year 44 Indian unicorns — privately held startups valued at more than $1 billion — were minted as investors piled money into a country long overlooked despite its vast potential.

Overseas funds put more than $35 billion into Indian startups in 2021 — a tripling from 2020, accord-ing to data compiled by Tracxn — buying into everything from fintech and health to gaming.

Foreign investors have long preferred China, another Asian country with more than a billion people.

But Beijing's clamp-down on runaway growth in China's powerful inter-net sector, and reining in of big businesses, have spooked investors and wiped billions off giants such as Baidu, Alibaba and Tencent.

In the startup space,

Workers at a poultry shop with a QR code for digital payment platform Paytm on display. **PHOTO: AFP**

investors this year sank $54.5 billion into Chinese firms, down from $73 billion in 2020, analysis by GlobalData showed.

India by contrast became more attractive, with its large pool of well-educated entrepreneurs upending how many businesses work using a fast-developing digital infrastructure.

"India really is that final frontier where businesses can attract a sixth of the world's population," said Siddharth Mehta, founder of investment firm Bay Capital Partners.—AFP ■

Tesla recalls nearly 500,000 autos on crash risk

With the longest range and quickest acceleration of any electric vehicle in production, Model S Plaid is the highest performing sedan ever built. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

TESLA is recalling nearly 500,000 electric vehicles because of problems with the trunk that increase crash risk, according to a US auto safety regulator.

Elon Musk's electric auto company has under-taken two separate recalls to address the issues that can disable the backup camera or cause the hood to open unexpectedly. The company will inform own-ers and fix the issue free of charge.

Tesla's notified reg-ulators on 21 December and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administra-tion (NHTSA) formally acknowledged the issue Wednesday.

The larger recall af-fects more than 355,000 Model 3 vehicles in which repeated opening and closing of the trunk can damage a cable for the rearview camera.

"Unavailability of the rearview camera display may affect the driver's rear view and increase the risk of a collision," ac-cording to a NHTSA safety recall report.

Tesla estimated that just one percent of the recalled Model 3 vehicles contain the problem, and the company knows of no crashes or injuries, NHT-SA said.

The other recall in-volves nearly 120,000 Model S vehicles in which a problem with latch as-sembly for the front trunk hood. An estimated 14 per cent of the recalled vehi-cles have the problem.

"If the primary latch is inadvertently released and the secondary latch is not engaged, the trunk may open without warning and obstruct the driver's visibility, increasing the risk of a crash," NHTSA said. Tesla knows of no crashes or injuries due to this problem, the report said.—AFP ■

Ikea to hike prices by 9% due to supply chain woes

IKEA will hike its prices by an average of nine per cent next year due to ongoing supply and trans-portation disruptions, the company that operates most of the Swedish furniture giant's stores said.

Thursday's announce-ment comes as pandem-ic-fuelled shortages and shipping challenges ramp up inflation and pinch economies globally, with consumers increasingly feeling the bite.

"Like many other in-dustries, IKEA continues to face significant trans-port and raw material con-straints driving up costs, with no anticipated break in the foreseeable future," Ingka Group, the holding company that owns 90 per cent of Ikea's stores, said in a statement. These higher costs — which are mostly being felt in North Ameri-ca and Europe — will now have to be passed on to customers, it added.

"The average of the increase in Ingka Group is around 9 per cent glob-ally, with variations across Ingka Group countries and the range, reflecting local-ized inflationary pressures, including commodity and supply chain issues," Ingka group said. According to the company, Ikea fran-chisor Inter Ikea Group absorbed costs amounting to 250 million euros ($283 million) across 2021 due to these logistical tensions, which were exacerbated by the rebound in demand after the first phase of the pandemic.—AFP ■

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

Extension of Bid Submission Date for Hybrid Power Plant (Gas Generation and Solar Generation) on Independent Power Producer and Build-Operate-Own Basis

1. Electric Power Generation Enterprise (EPGE) invited the bid for the purchasing electricity from **Hybrid Power Plant (Gas Generation and Ground mounted Solar Generation)** on Independent Power Producer and Build-Operate-Own Basis with **Tender No. 11/EPGE/2021-2022(Mini)** on December 6, 2021.
2. In accordance to ITB Clause-8 of Tender Document, Bid Submission Date in Section V, Bid Data Sheet, shall be amended as follow:

For Package-1. Magway & For Package-2. Myingyan

2.	Bid Submission Date for Administrative and Technical Proposals (including consortium information) and Price Proposals	**February 7, 2022**
8.	Location, Time and Date for Envelope I Opening	Electric Power Generation Enterprise Ministry of Electricity and Energy Office No. 27, Naypyitaw, Myanmar Time: 14:00 (Myanmar Standard Time) **(7.2.2022)** Bid Submission Date

3. The Bidders shall prepare and submit the proposals in accordance with the above Bid Submission Date.
4. 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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY.NO. (235N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CTP FORTUNE VOY.NO. (235N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **1-1-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **HPT** 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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India extends security law after botched army ambush

THE Indian government extended on Thursday a special law giving armed forces sweeping powers in the north-eastern state of Nagaland, days after a botched army ambush killed 14 people.

The killings triggered protests against the law which gives the armed forces sweeping powers to conduct raids, warrantless searches and open fire, with broad protection from prosecution.

But the six-month extension issued by India's ministry of home affairs said the government believed the state was "in a disturbed and dangerous condition."

"The use of armed forces in aid of the civil power is necessary," the government said, justifying the extension of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA).

The killings triggered protests against the law which gives the armed forces sweeping powers with broad protection from prosecution.
PHOTO: AFP

Earlier this month, the Indian army shot dead six miners returning to their homes in the state's Mon district, near the Myanmar border, believing them to be insurgents.

Another eight people were killed by the troops when they were confronted by an angry crowd. A soldier was killed and a military vehicle was set alight.

Those calling subsequently for a repeal of the AFSPA included the head of the state government, an ally of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling party.

"India is the biggest democratic country in the world. This is a draconian law. So it should be removed from our country," Nagaland chief minister Neiphiu Rio told reporters after the killings.

The Indian army said in a statement Wednesday that a court of inquiry set up to probe the incident was "proceeding expeditiously."

Nagaland and other states in northeast India, linked to the rest of the country by a narrow land corridor, have seen decades of unrest among ethnic and separatist groups.

While insurgent activity has declined in recent years, the AFSPA governs military deployments in the state.— AFP ■

The USS Tempest patrol ship, pictured docked in Bahrain in 2019, was one of two US Navy vessels which seized heroin in the Arabian Sea.
PHOTO: AFP/FILE

US Navy says heroin worth about $4 mn seized in Arabian Sea

THE US Navy confiscated hundreds of kilogrammes of heroin from a stateless fishing boat in the Arabian Sea whose crew identified themselves as Iranians, the Fifth Fleet said on Thursday.

"Two US Navy ships seized 385 kilogrammes (847 pounds) of heroin worth approximately $4 million" from the vessel transiting the Arabian Sea on Monday, said a statement from the US Navy's Fifth Fleet, based in Bahrain.

It added that the confiscated drugs were destroyed at sea by US forces. "The US Navy released the stateless fishing vessel and its nine crew members, who identified themselves as Iranian nationals, after seizing the drugs," it added.

Two weeks earlier the US Navy said it had rescued five Iranian sailors injured in an explosion on their vessel and seized its cargo of illegal drugs.

US sailors confiscated more than two tonnes of hashish, methamphetamine and heroin from that vessel, which was transiting the Gulf of Oman, the Navy said.—AFP ■

Bangladesh scraps women-only beach zone after outcry

AUTHORITIES in Bangladesh's main tourist resort scrapped a dedicated beach section for women and children after a social media outcry over gender segregation, officials said Thursday.

On Wednesday afternoon, Cox's Bazar officials inaugurated a section of the shoreline on the world's longest natural sea beach as an exclusive zone for women and children.

But hours later, the administration issued a press release saying that it had "withdrawn its decision" after "negative comments".

Abu Sufian, a senior official in Cox's Bazar, told AFP the section had been created following requests from conservative women in the Muslim-majority country.

"They requested a dedicated beach section for themselves, because they felt shy and insecure in a crowded place," he said.

Earlier this month the gang rape of a woman in Cox's Bazar sparked an outcry over women's safety in the city. But the move to cordon off a section of the beach caused uproar on social media, with critics saying it was pandering to hardline Islamists who still wield considerable influence in the country.—AFP ■

Cox's Bazar officials inaugurated a section of the beach as an exclusive zone for women and children, but withdrew the decision hours later.
PHOTO: AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sudan forces seal Khartoum ahead of new anti-coup rally

Sudanese security forces deployed on Khartoum's streets Thursday, sealing the capital off from its suburbs and cutting phone lines and mobile internet as opponents of the military government prepared to hold fresh protests.

Pro-democracy activists have kept up a campaign of street demonstrations against the army's 25 October coup, despite a crackdown that has seen at least 48 people die in protest-related violence, according to the independent Doctors' Committee. Army, police and paramilitary patrols criss-crossed Khartoum's streets, while shipping containers blocked the Nile bridges that connect the capital with its northern suburbs and its twin city Omdurman. The bridges were blocked off for the last protests on 26 December, when tens of thousands took to the streets.—AFP ■

Taliban chief orders fighters not to 'punish' former regime members

THE Taliban's supreme leader has ordered fighters not to punish members of Afghanistan's former regime for past "crimes", days after a video of an army commander being beaten went viral on social media.

The order, tweeted Thursday by group spokesman Mohammad Naeem, also urged Taliban authorities to discourage Afghans from leaving the country as they would not be respected abroad.

"Don't punish employees of the previous regime for their past crimes," Mullah Hibatullah Akhundzada was quoted as telling followers in Kandahar, the birthplace of the hardline Islamist movement. The Taliban chief — who has not been filmed or photographed in public for years — said a general amnesty announced after the Islamists took power in August should be honoured. The Taliban are accused by the United Nations, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch of dozens of extrajudicial killings of members of the former security forces and administration.—AFP ■

Pentagon streamlines National Guard use after Congress attack

NEARLY a year after the deadly attack on the US Capitol, the Pentagon said Thursday it would streamline the process for approving the use of National Guard forces in Washington.

The Pentagon had been criticized for its slow response during the January 6 attack on Congress by supporters of then-president Donald Trump, which left five people dead and dozens injured.

It took military officials more than three hours to get the National Guard deployed to Congress as it was being besieged by rioters because of a chain of bureaucratic requirements.

The US capital, which is separate from the bordering states of Maryland and Virginia and is not a state in its own right, has a special status, preventing local officials from sending military, police or National Guard forces to the US Capitol, which is a federal building. **PHOTO: MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD/AFP**

The Secretary of Defense will from now on be "the single approval authority for all requests" for emergency use of District of Columbia National Guard personnel inside Washington, the Pentagon said.

"By clarifying and refining the request process… the Department will be able to respond to requests efficiently, quickly, and effectively," Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said in a statement.

The US capital, which is separate from the bordering states of Maryland and Virginia and is not a state in its own right, has a special status, preventing local officials from sending military, police or National Guard forces to the US Capitol, which is a federal building. Asked to provide help when Capitol police were being overwhelmed by rioters, Pentagon officials later said that they were reluctant to send uniformed and armed reservists to Congress for fear of exacerbating tensions.—AFP ■

France defers transit ban for EU-based Britons after uproar

FRANCE on Thursday said it would show "tolerance" for Britons hoping to transit the country to reach homes elsewhere in the European Union, after a surprise clampdown caused dismay for thousands of travellers.

Under tougher Covid rules that began to be applied this week, non-resident Britons can no longer drive through France — only those with a primary French residence will be allowed in.

Many Britons take the Channel Tunnel from England to France, using Eurotunnel's Shuttle service, to take cars from the UK to their homes in other EU countries.

But over the holidays many returned to Britain to visit family and friends without knowing that France was planning the tougher rules on non-residents.

But with Britain no longer part of the EU, it is considered a "third country" whose citizens are subject to the same rules as those of other nations outside the bloc.

France decided to ease the new transit rules after thousands of Britons living elsewhere in Europe were turned away at the France border. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

"Unless they hold French residency, British citizens are now considered third country citizens and can no longer transit France by road to reach their country of residence in the EU," Eurotunnel said in a tweet late Wednesday.

P&O Ferries issued a similar tweet warning that "only those with French residency will be permitted to enter France".—AFP ■

Bombardments, glamour and gangsters mark history of Cuba's Hotel Nacional

IN its 91 years, Havana's majestic Hotel Nacional has borne witness to some of the biggest events of Cuban history.

It was once bombed as part of a conflict between rival units of Cuba's military, hosted a summit of mafia dons, was a key site of the Cuban Missile Crisis, and a holiday jaunt for Hollywood's most eccentric figures.

Yet for 20 months ending in mid-November, this building that mixes Art Deco and neoclassical elements along with Moorish tiles was deserted because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Inaugurated in 1930, Havana's Hotel Nacional has been the site of several crucial events in Cuban history. **PHOTO: AFP**

Far from a death knell for the hotel, it was an opportunity to restore the facade, and put in new floors and windows in the rooms.

"A lot of work was done so that when the tourists returned they would find the 1930s hotel, although with greater comfort ... reliving the past," said Arleen Ortiz, a specialist in the hotel's history.

Now guests will often specifically request to stay in certain rooms, like number 211 where the Italian-born gangster Lucky Luciano sojourned in December 1946 during the mafia bosses summit. That was an incident immortalized in the 1974 film by Francis Ford Coppola, "The Godfather II."—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ex-Afghan president says decision to flee Kabul made in 'minutes'

Former Afghan president Ashraf Ghani on Thursday described fleeing the Taliban's victory march on Kabul, saying the decision had been taken in "minutes" and that he did not know he was leaving the country until he was taking off.

Ghani told BBC's Radio 4 "Today" programme that on the morning of 15 August 2021, the day the Islamists took control of the capital and his own government fell apart, he had "no inkling" that it would be his last day in Afghanistan.

But by that afternoon security at the presidential palace had "collapsed", he said.

"If I take a stand they will all be killed, and they were not capable of defending me," Ghani said in the interview, conducted by former UK chief of defence staff, General Nick Carter.

His national security adviser, Hamdullah Mohib, was "literally terrified", Ghani said. "He did not give me more than two minutes."—AFP ■

Three UN peacekeepers injured in C. Africa landmine blast

THREE Tanzanian peacekeepers were injured Thursday when their vehicle struck an explosive device in the western part of the Central African Republic, according to the local UN mission, MINUSCA.

In recent months, the long-running conflict between rebels and government forces has switched gears, with armed groups driven out of the main cities increasingly resorting to guerrilla tactics, including laying mines.

While roadside explosives have previously ground humanitarian work to a halt in the northwest of the country, mines are less common in the west.

On Thursday morning, the peacekeepers' convoy was leaving the town of Berberati – about 500 kilometres (300 miles) from the capital – for a temporary military outpost when it drove over a mine, according to MINUSCA.–AFP ■

Indonesia to play Thailand today in 2nd leg of Suzuki Cup Final

INDONESIA men's national football team will take on Thailand team in their 2nd leg Final of the AFF Suzuki Cup at the Singapore Indoor Stadium today.

Indonesian faced 0-4 loss to Thai in the 1st leg Final but the team head coach Tae-yong has not given up and expressed his feeling about the game.

"It is not all done yet. Some big teams had taken a huge lead but faltered in the end. For us, we have to prepare well for the second game," said Tae-yong.

"The ball is round and in football, anything can happen. We have to work hard not only for the result that we want but we also have to do it for the fans who have been behind the team all this time. "We have to work on our recovery well."

"We have to forget about this game (FINAL 1). We have to prioritize the positives. It is impossible (to come back from four goals down)? We will just have to prepare as well as we can, the Indonesian team head coach added. — GNLM

Premier League stars set for 'exceptional' Africa Cup of Nations

Nigeria midfielder Wilfred Ndidi (L) of Leicester City chases Egypt star Mohamed Salah of Liverpool during a Premier League match on Tuesday. **PHOTO: AFP**

PREMIER League trio Mohamed Salah, Sadio Mane and Riyad Mahrez will be star attractions in Cameroon at the Africa Cup of Nations, which promises to be "exceptional" according to the top foot-ball official in the continent.

The 36-match group phase kicks off on January 9 at the newly built Olembe Stadium in Yaounde and the tournament concludes at the same 60,000-seat venue on 6 February with the final.

Champions Algeria top a 24-team cast that includes former title-holders Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Morocco, Nigeria, Sudan and Tunisia.

While record seven-time winners Egypt will be making an unrivalled 25th appearance at the African football showpiece, Comoros and Gambia are debutants.

It is a wide-open competition with Algeria, unbeaten in 33 matches since late 2018, the logical favourites, but there are at least seven other nations capable of conquering Africa. — AFP ■

Has the Premier League turned into a one-horse race?

MANCHESTER City, Liverpool and Chelsea looked set for a titanic three-way Premier League title tussle just over two weeks ago but it is now beginning to look like a one-horse race.

The three clubs were separated by just two points before matches kicked off on December 14. Fast forward to the end of the month and City are now eight points clear of second-placed Chel-sea.

Pep Guardiola's men were not at their best at Brentford on Wednesday but did enough to win 1-0 on an evening when injury-hit Chelsea conceded a last-gasp equaliser at home to Brighton.

Liverpool lost ground the previous day, beaten by a feisty and committed Leicester side after Mohamed Salah failed to convert a first-half penalty. AFP Sport looks at some of the key factors in the title race heading into the new year.

Manchester City look unstoppable at the top of the Premier League. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Champions City could streak 11 points clear if they beat fourth-placed Arsenal on Saturday, with Chelsea and Liverpool meeting at Stamford Bridge the following day. — 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.

Myanmar football clubs to compete in Asian-level club competitions

MYANMAR domestic football clubs will be able to compete in the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) 2022 Asian Club Championships this year.

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) is planning to host next year's Asian Champions League and AFC Cup in all zones.

Due to the epidemic situation, the tourneys will be held in only one round format.

One Myanmar team will compete in the Asian Champions League while another team in the AFC Cup group stage and one more team in the knockout stages.

As the Myanmar National League could not hold in the 2021 season, the champion team and the runner-up team in the last 2020 competition will be allowed to compete.

Shan United, defending champions of the Myanmar National League will compete in 2022 Asian Champions League Qualifiers and 2022 AFC Cup Group Stage and MNL 1st runners up team Hanthawady will be able to compete in AFC Cup.

The Asian Champions League will be held in March 2022 while the AFC Cup will kick off in May and the group stages in June.

The Asian Championship was held as usual in 2021, but the AFC Cup has been cancelled in all ASEAN zone matches and only the remaining zone matches can be held. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM