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.

Efforts must be made for reducing the import of milk and dairy products and produce the products meeting local demand, says Senior General

THE dairy cow farm needs to supply the milk and dairy product needs of 1.5 million population of Mandalay City, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in inspecting the Dairy Cow Breeding Project (Htonbo) and Marble Tile Factory (Mandalay) in Mandalay Region yesterday afternoon.

At Dairy Cow Breeding Project (Htonbo), an official reported on breeding progress, feeding green feed to animals with hydroponic fodder and distribution of milk.

In his speech, the Senior General said it is necessary to focus on welfare measures for the breeding tasks. The dairy cow farm needs to supply the milk and dairy product demand for the 1.5 million population of Mandalay City.

Quality milk and meat at fairer prices must be sold. Efforts must be made for reducing the import of milk and dairy products and produce the products meeting local demand.

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State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects the Dairy Cow Breeding Project (Htonbo) in Mandalay Region on 22 January 2022.

Efforts must be made for reducing the import of milk and dairy products and produce the products meeting local demand, says Senior General

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It is necessary to seek the consultation of experts on the effectiveness of feeds over the growth rate of cows and milk. Initiatives must be taken for achieving success in the implementation of the project for meeting the local demand for milk and meat on one hand.

The Senior General then visited the project site and left the necessary instructions.

At Marble Tile Factory (Mandalay), Chairman of the Myanmar Economic Corporation Lt-Gen Nyo Saw and officials reported on the production of tiles and plaques to be used on the terrace of Maravijaya Buddha Image precinct in Nay Pyi Taw, and carving of the Buddha images and statues with the use of CNC machines.

After giving necessary instructions, the Senior General presented the cash award for staff. — MNA

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General views around the Marble Tile Factory (Mandalay) yesterday.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Education Department of Higher Education Announcement

Opening of final year (majoring in sciences) courses of University of Distance Education for 2022 academic year

THE Department of Higher Education under the Ministry of Education announced that the practical and lecturing courses of the final year (majoring in sciences) of the University of Distance Education for the 2022 Academic Year will be reopened at universities, degree colleges and colleges as of 22-1-2022.

Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education

Public Notification

THE Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee was reconstituted under the State Administration Council's Order No 366/2021 dated 10.12.2021, and action is being taken effectively against illegal trade under the law.

The following telephone numbers, fax and email address can be reached to safely report information in connection with illegal trade.

Auto telephone number - 067 409 883
Mobile phone - 09 404339969
Fax - 067 409 886
Email address - antiillegaltradeinfo@gmail.com

Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

Public Notification

THE Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee was reconstituted under the State Administration Council's Order No 366/2021 dated 10.12.2021, and action is being taken effectively against illegal trade under the law.

Regarding the "request for money from departmental organizations in conducting trade", the following numbers can be reached to safely report such information.

Auto telephone number - 067 409 881
Mobile phone - 09 699611116
Fax - 067 409 887
Email address - antiillegaltradeoffice@gmail.com

Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

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

A lorry is seen ready to transport the imported anti-Covid medical supplies.

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 three vehicles. A total of 20 tonnes of masks were imported via the Chinshwehaw trade zone yesterday.

From 1 to 22 January, 20 tonnes of liquid oxygen carried by one bowser, 1,100 empty oxygen tanks, one oxygen generator, 942 oxygen concentrators, 35 tonnes of gloves and 90 tonnes of masks were imported by 21 vehicles of 11 companies.

One bowser transported liquid oxygen to Yangon from the Myawady trading zone.

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

The government always invites peace talks

THE government always invites peace talks. As such, it is expected that peace talks will be held in the future to boost the benefits related to peace. Having all tasks concerning the last point of the five-point road map of the State Administration Council been accomplished, a new election will be held and the State power will be handed over to the winning party.

(Excerpt from the speech by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting 4/2021 of Union Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on 30-12-2021)

All the people need to consider the protection, uplifting and contributing to the restoration of peace, socio-economic development, and human rights based on the rule of law: Senior General

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing poses for the documentary photo at the inauguration event of the Mandalay Region Advocate-General Office yesterday.

It is necessary to have good features of buildings, and the judicial affairs must be fair and quick, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the opening ceremonies of the Advocate-General Office of Mandalay Region and the High Court of Mandalay Region separately in Chanmyathazi Township yesterday morning.

The Senior General pressed the button to unveil the signboard of the Advocate-General Office of Mandalay Region and viewed around the building of the region Advocate-General Office.

The Senior General attended the opening ceremony of the High Court of Mandalay Region and unveiled the signboard of the High Court of the region. The Senior General and party visited the High Court building.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said that the State Administration Council is taking over the State responsibilities under the Constitution. Some laws and rules not in conformity with the current era were amended, revoked, substituted and drawn as new ones. The budget is allocated for the construction of new court buildings and new law offices.

Myanmar's judicial system is based on the common law system of the British. According to the Constitution (2008), judicial power is one of the three powers of the State. The Supreme Court of the Union is the highest court in the State. Region and state high courts, district courts, courts of self-administered zones and division, and township courts are formed under the Supreme Court of the Union.

The Ministry of Legal Affairs plays a key role in the Union government. The Union Attorney-General is responsible for the Head of State and region and state advocate-generals are also responsible for the Head of State via the Chief Ministers. Before the British colonialized Myanmar, the Myanmar society used the Myanmar traditional judicial system based on the customs of the society. In the monarchical era, the king ruling the country was the highest authority of the judicial sector. The judicial power descended from the king to the queen, crown prince, royal families, court counsellors, judges appointed by the king, town governors, heads of town and heads of villages respectively. The legal sources exercised by Myanmar kings were codes, codes of laws and judgements. British colonized Myanmar after three aggressive wars and substituted Myanmar traditional judicial system with the common law system.

Prompt and free judgements without any corruption under the law plays a key role. The quickest judicial measure will directly benefit the most correct judgement. Hence, the Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems was formed for quickly handling the cases. The group comprises officials from the Supreme Court of the Union and the Legal Affairs Ministry.

The Senior General sprinkles the scented water on the plaque of new High Court of Mandalay Region yesterday.

It is necessary to have good features of buildings, and the judicial affairs must be fair and quick. It aims to accredit the process of executive, legislative and judicial sectors in Myanmar. Qualified judicial officers and law officers must be appointed and deployed. Opportunities must be created for law graduates, master of law graduates, doctoral law graduates from various universities to have workplace experiences. It can turn out the qualified higher-grade pleaders, advocates, legal consultants and law experts with the aim of becoming a country to apply correct judicial system without corruption.

In building a genuine disciplined democracy all the citizens aspire a democratic country, it is necessary to abide by the human rights which is basic for democratization. All the people need to consider the protection, uplifting and contributing to the restoration of peace, socio-economic development, and human rights based on the rule of law.

All are to cooperate with one another to handle the unnecessary delay of civil cases, criminal cases, appellate and amendment must be undertaken in a short time. As efforts are being made to emerge the Union based on multiparty democracy in accord with the wish of the people, law officers and judicial officials need to handle the cases in their respective areas.

Then, the Chief Justice of the Union expressed thanks for the opening of the grand High Court of Mandalay Region. Officials need to take responsibility for the maintenance of existence beautifying tasks of the high court and security. Officials discussed further maintenance of the buildings.

The Prime Minister also inspected the Yadanabon Garden being built by the Mandalay City Development Committee near the moat.

The chief minister and the mayor reported on the implementation of the garden project and plans to open the garden phase by phase for public relaxation. The Senior General instructed officials to build the recreation centres and ways for the garden to implement the project meeting international standards and carry out maintenance for the long run.

The Senior General and party viewed the progress of construction tasks and future plans and attended to the needs.
—MNA

MoALI Union Minister discusses proper distribution of agrochemicals

UNION Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Tin Htut Oo presided over a coordination meeting on the distribution of agrochemicals, fertilizers at fairer prices to the farmers together with officials of the Myanmar Rice Federation, Myanmar Fertilizer, Seed and Pesticide Entrepreneurs Association and agrochemical companies in Yangon on 21 January.

During the meeting, the Union minister underscored the need to simultaneously develop the existing agricultural industry using modern technologies through the business chain in striving towards an industrialized country.

The government and the private sector should work together to balance the price of fertilizers, which is an important input for the development of the agricultural sector, keeping in line with domestic and foreign prices.

The government also provides the needed assistance under the existing law and so the private organizations should cooperate in it.

The education programmes regarding soil quality, proper agrochemicals to conform with the crops and locations are being conducted for the farmers, retailers and wholesalers.

The farmers' interest in compound fertilizers is now high, and if there is a need for compound plants to improve investment and local compound production, the government will provide timely assistance. Balanced cooperation between the government and private sectors is needed for the interest of the farming sector in the long run.

Then, the attendees to the meeting coordinated the discussion. —MNA

Govt urges businesses to compete in ASEAN-OSHNET Awards

DEPUTY Minister for Labour U Win Shein organized a coordination meeting on the participation in ASEAN-Occupational Safety and Health Network (ASEAN-OSHNET) Awards in Yangon yesterday.

In the event, the deputy minister said the ASEAN-OSHNET Awards are for the companies with good OSH management systems and performances.

Any industry can compete for an ASEAN-OSHNET Excellent Award and only the SMEs can participate in Best Practices Award. The ministry will form an ASEAN-OSHNET Award selecting committee and the entrepreneurs will be invited via State-run newspapers to compete for the ASEAN-OSHNET Awards.

The ASEAN-OSHNET Awards are presented once every two years and it was awarded thrice in 2016, 2018 and 2021.

The deputy minister then highlighted the Excellent Awards and Best Practices Awards received by the factories of Myanmar in 2016, 2018 and 2021.

He also continued that Myanmar will host the 4th ASEAN-OSHNET Awards 2022, including the 23rd ASEAN-OSHNET Coordinating Board Meeting and the 9th ASEAN-OSHNET Conference.

He called on the business people to work together to maintain Myanmar's ASEAN-level competitive image by winning the ASEAN-OSHNET Awards. — MNA

144 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 22 January, total figure rises to 533,959

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 533,959 after 144 new cases were reported on 22 January 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 512,063 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 19,309 after 1 died. — MNA

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.

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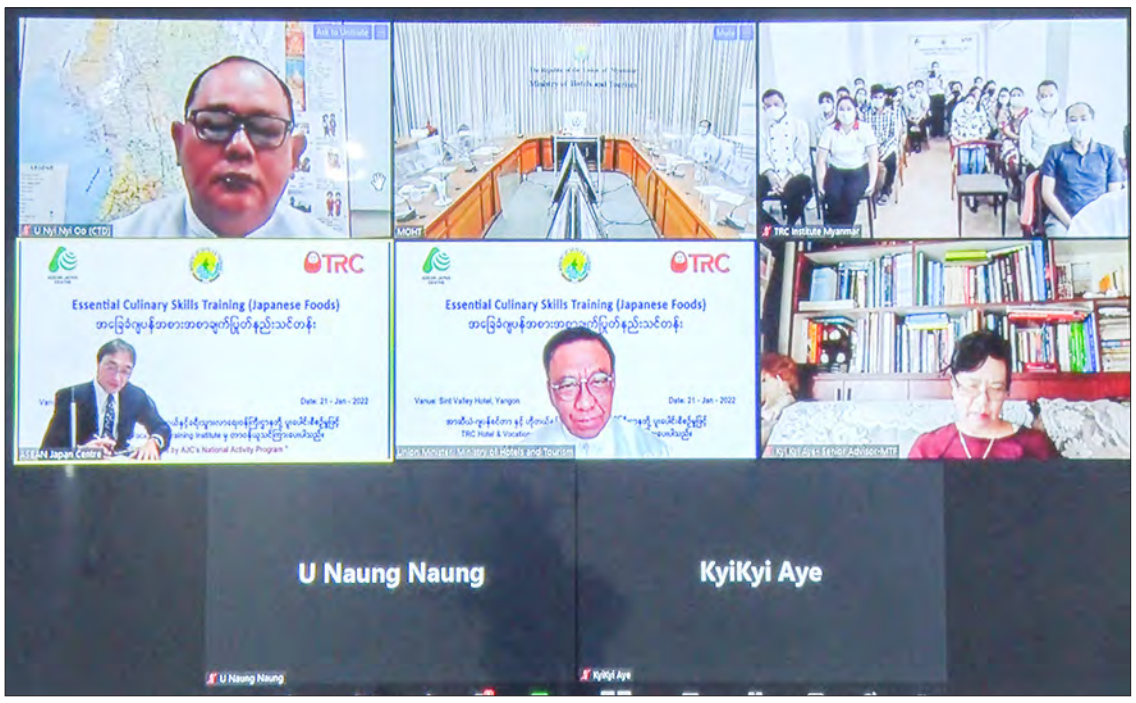
Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish **"Letter to the Editor"** that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Union Tourism Minister attends opening ceremony of basic Japanese cooking course

THE opening ceremony of the Essential Culinary Skills Training (Japanese Foods) jointly organized by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism and the TRC Hotel and Vocational Training Institute with the support of the ASEAN-Japan Centre, was held online on 21 January.

At the opening ceremony, Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Htay Aung said that the trainees who are going to attend the basic Japanese food cooking course need to study with special interest.

"We will be able to attract more Japanese tourists by using our skills effectively and providing good services to Japanese tourists.



"As Japanese tourists are among the majority of visitors to Myanmar, this course is not only for Japanese tourists but also for hotels and resorts in Myanmar," the Union minister added.

He said it was a beneficial course for restaurants and those who want to cook and sell Japanese food.

Afterwards, Mr Kunihiko Hirabayashi, Secretary General of ASEAN-Japan Center gave a speech and U Kyaw Kyaw Sint, Managing Director of TRC Hotel and Vocational Training Institute, explained the training programme.

A total of 20 trainees will attend the course. The course will be conducted three days per week for four weeks.

Afterwards, the Union minister and the Secretary-General of the ASEAN-Japan Centre discussed ways to enhance bilateral cooperation for the development of tourism in Myanmar.

They also discussed food production, support for basic cooking courses as well as services and advanced training plus obtaining technical assistance from Japan for the development of eco-tourism and digital marketing in Myanmar. — MNA

Illegal teak, vehicles and utensils seized

Seized goods and timber.

UNDER the supervision of the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee, effective action is being taken to prevent illegal trade under the law.

According to the report, a joint team led by the Department of Forestry under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force inspected 1.2072 tonnes of illegal timber (estimated value K94,014) in the Bago District Forest Reserve and is taking action under the Forest Law.

Similarly, a joint team led by the Customs Department conducted a joint inspection at the Kawkareik (Tadakyoe) Joint Inspection Station and seized 420 Chinese-made Sanook rice cookers without any official documents (estimated value of K4,200,000) from a 12-wheeler truck from Myawady to Yangon.

Action is being taken as per the procedures of the Customs Department.

Combined forces under the control of the Anti-Illegal Task Force reportedly conducted a surprise check on the Asian Road yesterday.

A total of 55 (45 gallons) of diesel fuel (estimated value of K10,340,000) and carried by one 12-wheeler vehicle Number 3I / 1949 (Nissan Diesel) which is (estimated value of K30,000,000) were seized and action is being taken in line with the procedures of the Customs Department.

The total value of the vehicle and the diesel fuel is estimated at K40,340,000.

In addition, under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force, a joint investigation team led by the Forest Department seized 2.744 tonnes of teak (estimated at K411,600) in Katha Township and is being taken action under the Forest Law.

Thus, a total of five arrests were made on 21 and 22 January with (estimated value of K45,045,614), according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee. —MNA

Bago Region creates over 47,000 job opportunities

Bago Region Investment Meeting 1/2022 in progress.

BAGO Region Chief Minister U Myo Swe Win organized a Bago Region Investment Meeting (1/2022) at the regional government office on 21 January.

The meeting discussed the rights and law protections for the investors in the region.

The chief minister also said the region mainly allows the CMP, fertilizer production industries and other factories that can create job opportunities. In granting permits to the industries, it should scrutinize under the Industrial Zone Law to avoid affecting the natural environment.

Then, the director of the Bago Region Directorate of Investment and Company Administration presented the investment sector and the committee members coordinated the discussion.

Bago Region received investments with US$104.484 million from foreign investors and K8329.15 million from local investors between 1 February 2021 and January 2022, fostering job opportunities for 47,903 people. — MNA

First, second doses of COVID vaccines given in Natmauk

HEALTH officials administered the first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccines to local people in Natmauk Township yesterday morning.

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

Vaccines were given systematically to local people, and only those with normal conditions are vaccinated.

A total of 915 people received the first dose of COVID-19 vaccines and 1,177 got the second dose.

In Natmauk Township, COVID-19 vaccination is being carried out in collaboration with the staff of the Township Public Health Department and relevant departments. — Thin Thin Myat/ GNLM

COVID-19 vaccination continues in Pwinbyu Township

THE first dose of COVID-19 vaccines was given to local people at four designated places in Pwintbyu Township, Magway Region on 22 January.

Vaccination is being carried out following the regulations, and the staff and volunteers from the Township General Administration Department and the Volunteer Team are providing necessary assistance to make the vaccination as convenient as possible.

A total of 110 people received the first dose of COVID-19 vaccines while 917 got the second dose.

In Pwintbyu Township, local people are informed daily by loudspeakers by the relevant ward and village administrators and departments to ensure that the remaining people are vaccinated to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to reduce the spread of the disease, said U Aung Myat Khaing, Chairman of the Pwintbyu Township Administration Department. — Khin Wah Wah Hlaing (IPRD)/ GNLM

Marble business high again in Sagyin

The stone carving businesses were temporarily shut down during the outbreak of COVID-19. There are about 300 marble workshops in the village and most of the workshops resume their operations.

THE transactions of marble Buddha statues in the marble (Sagyin) village of Madaya Township of Mandalay Region are good again, said U Soe Win, the stone carving businessman.

The village mainly runs the stone carving business. Currently, the buyers come to the village to buy the marble Buddha statues and others make orders online, so the transaction is high.

The price of a Buddha statue ranges from K50,000 to K1 million.

"The sales of marble statues are high again recently. Some people make orders and we have good transactions than before. Now, almost the business run again. We mainly operate the business to facilitate the keep of workers and their families who rely on that business. Although the transaction is not much good, we have the proper condition as the business is running always," he said.

The stone carving businesses were temporarily shut down during the outbreak of COVID-19. There are about 300 marble workshops in the village and most of the workshops resume their operations. — Maung Aye Chan/GNLM

Sputnik Light COVID vaccination begins in Mingaladon Township

SPUTNIK Light COVID-19 vaccines were administered in Mingaladon Township for the first time, according to the healthcare officials.

The COVID-19 vaccine is valid for all ages except for breastfeeding mothers and pregnant women.

It is given to all people 18 years of age and older and is a one-shot vaccine.

Vaccination activities are documented by healthcare officials, volunteers and Red Cross members followed by measuring body temperatures, blood pressure, and monitoring oxygen level. Vaccines were given systematically to 1,015 people, and only those with normal conditions are vaccinated. After resting for about 30 minutes people were given healthcare education and then allowed to leave.

The Russian vaccines will be given daily, according to the township health department. — Thanda (IPRD)

Rubber price slightly soar to around K1,200 per pound

THE rubber prices have faintly mounted to around K1,200 per pound (0.45 kilogramme), according to the rubber traders.

The domestic rubber was priced at below K1,000 per pound in late 30 December 2021. But the price of local 3 rubber fetched K1,150 per pound while the local 3 ribbed smoked sheet (RSS) hit K1,170 pound on 22 January 2022.

Due to the market demand and the Kyat revaluation in the local foreign market, the rubber price is still rising in the market, it is learnt.

Presently, there is demand from China and the dollar exchange rate against Myanmar Kyat stood at around K2,000 per dollar.

Consequently, although the resumption of the rubber plantation starting from last September and the availability of raw rubber in the market has increased, the price of rubber is unlikely to fall lower than K700 as last year due to the rising market demand and international exchange rate, according to the rubber traders.

In the last FY2020-21, the country generated $449.10 million from the export of raw rubber to foreign countries, according to the official statistics of the Ministry of Commerce.

Nevertheless, the prices of raw rubber materials are unlikely to rise to continue in the future. The local 3 or RSS5 lower quality rubbers are vastly produced in Mon State. As China is also purchasing these low-quality rubbers mostly, the price is likely to fluctuate around K1,000 per pound, the rubber trader predicted.

Regarding the trade route to China, the previously-closed Chinshwehaw border trade post has permitted re-imports of industrial agricultural raw products such as sugarcane, rubber, tragacanth gum herb and cotton, making it easier to export rubber products.

Similarly, the Kyinsankyawt border which has been shut down earlier was reopened on 26 November and the rubber is being exported through it.

Rubber is primarily cultivated in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago, and Yangon regions in Myanmar. As per 2018-2019 rubber seasons' data, there are over 1.628 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar with Mon State accounting for 497,153 acres, followed by Taninthayi Region 348,344 acres and Kayin State with 270,760 acres, according to the MRPPA.

Besides, about 300,000 tonnes of rubber are produced annually across the country. Seventy per cent of rubber made in Myanmar goes to China. In addition to China, the country also shipped rubber to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, the Republic of Korea, India, Japan and other countries.

In the last FY2020-21, the country generated $449.10 million from the export of raw rubber to foreign countries, according to the official statistics of the Ministry of Commerce. — NN/GNLM

Myanmar-Bangladesh border trade hits $12.7 mln this mini-budget year

Myanmar-Bangladesh total border trade included Myanmar's exports of $12.64 million and its imports of $0.07 million.

THE bilateral border trade between Myanmar and Bangladesh stood at US$12.7 million as of 14 January in the mini-budget year of 2021-2022, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

Myanmar-Bangladesh total border trade included Myanmar's exports of $12.64 million and its imports of $0.07 million.

According to statistics, the border trade during this period has seen a drop, decreasing by $47.6 million, compared with that of the same period last year when the total bilateral border trade was $60.304 million.

Myanmar exports goods to Bangladesh through both maritime and land routes. Bilateral border trade is conducted mainly through the Sittway and Maungtaw points of entry.

In the early period of bilateral border trade, trade through the Sittway border crossing totalled $7.26 million, with $7.24 million in exports and $0.02 million in imports, while trade at the Maungtaw border exceeded $5.44 million, including $5.39 million in exports and $0.04 million in imports. The products traded between the two countries include bamboo, ginger, peanuts, saltwater prawns and fish, dried plums, garlic, rice, mung beans, blankets, candy, plum jams, footwear, frozen foods, chemicals, leather, jute products, tobacco, plastic, wood, knitwear and beverages, according to the ministry. — ACM/GNLM

CBM sells $15 mln at FX auction rate on 20 January

THE Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) sold US$15 million at its FX auction on 20 January 2022, bringing a total number of sales of $65 million in January five times, according to a statement of the CBM.

The Central Bank of Myanmar sold $15 million each on 7, 12 and 20 January and $10 million on 13 and 14 January.

According to monthly purchases and sales of US dollars from January to December in 2021, the CBM sold $6.8 million in February 2021, a foreign exchange auction, but did not sell in March., The CBM sold also $12 million in April, $24 million in May, $12 million in June, $39 million in July, $28 million in August, $63 million in September, $110 million in October, $31 million in November and $118 million in December.

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. This CBM's move is aimed at governing the market volatility and strengthening the local currency value. — Aye Maung/GNLM

Set vision to learn university education to become educated citizens

IMPLEMENTATION of the 30-year national education plan (NEP) aims to resurge the education standard of Myanmar to keep abreast of other countries.

The past generations of Myanmar missed the chance to learn English comprehensively due to the arrangements of successive governments. The majority of the best literature called masterpieces was compiled in English. As such, only then can those who are fluently in English observe the world's best literature as well as subject-wise results of research works.

In Myanmar, just about three million people among the 55 million population are graduates, accounting for less than 10 per cent of the total population. Likewise, some 18 million people could learn primary and middle school education.

> All school-age children must set visions to learn university education to become good and able citizens. All parents need to encourage their offspring to learn university education. Consequently, qualified educated persons will come out one after another in the entire nation.

According to the surveys, there are more than 10 million illiterate people in the country. That is why all school-age children must be arranged to attend the schools and to have education and knowledge. As such, the current government is striving for the development of the education sector in its tenure.

Officials from the education sector, especially academicians should focus on teaching and training students to become educated citizens capable of modernizing the country.

Indeed, universities are the environments where students can study and analyze newer and newer knowledge and techniques. Hence, these institutions must be standardized to some degree. Universities need to create pleasant environments for students as physical improvement and initiate higher learning opportunities.

Hence, the universities facilitated with necessary infrastructures must be the proper environments where faculty members and students frankly exchange knowledge and techniques as the higher learning system without rote process. These facilities must contribute to the in-depth learning of students with the assistance of libraries and internet access as well as various media platforms. If so, the universities will turn out the well-versed educated citizens for the nation.

Truly, the universities must be the best infrastructures for learning of students as well as the proper institutions to search experiences for their lives to be able to overcome challenges not only for themselves but for the State and the people. If so, the universities can turn out reliable educated citizens.

All school-age children must set visions to learn university education to become good and able citizens. All parents need to encourage their offspring to learn university education. Consequently, qualified educated persons will come out one after another in the entire nation.

■ ■ ■

Fake News Spotting

By UAC

WHENEVER you look at the Facebook in Myanmar, you would be bombarded stories shared by your friends or friend of friends, which most of the time, totally do not reflect the reality of the current state of affairs in the outside world. It is as if some of us are living in the virtual FB world, boasting and enjoying achievements that are spread by fake news or propaganda specialists in the social media. In the social media platform, NNCP (NUG, NLD, CRPH, PDF) terrorists were winning against the government. The government soldiers are being killed in drove. NNCP is about to take over major cities of Myanmar in a day or two. Any attacks on civilians, civil servants, schools, hospitals, banks or public infrastructure were carried out by Myanmar Armed Forces. Popular fake news creating pages such as Khit Thit, DVB, Mizzima, Irrawaddy are everyday doing great disservice to the nation and promoting illegal terrorist activities through the spread of fake news.

The damage done by the fake news on the nation's unity will take many years to repair. Now people have to watch out for who they do business with, guess who might be a terrorist or terrorist sympathizer, wonder if any time they can talk freely at all and watch out where they go. Fake news maim businesses, destroy reputations and cause those who believe in the fake news to take the inappropriate action, wasting time and scarce resources. Regardless, the first line of defence the fake news is education, especially to have the knowledge to spot the fake news so that one would not become an accessory to hideous crime of eroding societies and igniting mistrust.

So how do we spot the fake news? There are eight methods of preventing yourself not to fall into the fake news trap:

1. The Title is Too Long

Normally fake news headlines are longer than usual. The headlines need to be long so as to attract eyeballs to the fake news. Social media platform (FB) prioritize content that would get clicks and eyeball time. Fake news and click bait content thrive in this environment. The algorithm (programming) is simply structured that way as more eyeball time means more advertising revenue from advertisers for Facebook. As an example, on 23 December 2021 21:00, Khit Thit Media posted one breaking news with a super long headline "After Bombing with a Military Helicopter, Military Personnel Burned the Whole Village of Nat Chaung in Kalay City". That was the title. That was definitely a fake news.

2. No New Information Other Than What has been Said in Title

Normally fake news can be first spotted by looking at the news title or heading and comparing that with the content below. In cases of fake news, very little new information is observed in the content. For e.g., if the title said, soldiers killed five civilians in San Chaung, Yangon, the content would also roughly says the same. It would not contain any additional information, sources, references or data backing up the statement. That would be highly indicative of being fake news.

3. Verify, Verify and Verify

Before you click the share button super-fast, be wise and verify if the news you just read is factual. Especially if the news ignite your inner hatred, passion or 'I told you so' moment, it is your responsibility to verify the facts, before sharing with others, be it friends or public. It is your PSR - Personal Social Responsibility.

4. Answer this Critical Question

Ask yourself this question before liking, commenting or sharing the news - Am I doing this to prove that I am right or am I doing this to educate all those around me? If you are doing it for the former, you are simply boosting your ego. Do share news, knowledge, short cuts, to educate people. Once you have the mindset of the latter, you would be forced to evaluate if the stuff you are sharing is really educational in nature.

5. Be Skeptical!

Don't believe everything you see on the internet. Do not trust everyone you meet on the net either. Don't trust all news, especially those posted by news agencies with an ulterior motive to ignite hatred against the government. That is being skeptical. Being skeptical also means trying to obtain corroborative evidence on the news you just read. Keep accuracy at the top of your mind.

6. Follow Reliable Media

Even mainstream media such as CNN or AFP have published the fake news arising out of Myanmar. But these agencies are overall quite reliable. You may also have to understand the slant or the lean of an agency, whether it is really impartial. E.g., BBC, VOA, RFA are normally writing against Myanmar current administration. The frequency of fake news arising out of these agencies is higher than CNN or AFP. They have an agenda. Their staff has an ulterior motive, to destabilize the country in order to topple the current government.

7. Check out the News Producer or Sharer

Check if they have a website. Check in the About Us section. Check if they have contact address, telephone numbers. Check if their FB accounts are genuine. Fake news agencies would not normally have physical addresses or phone numbers for fears of getting arrested for making up or spreading fake news. The individuals and celebrities using their own accounts would normally be stationed in another country, to stay away from the law enforcement arm of Myanmar. How would overseas Myanmar know more about what is really happening in Myanmar than the locals themselves! Last, if news producer or sharing is using a fake account, 99 out of 100 times, the news are going to be fake, for fear of both criminal and civil actions against them.

So, for agencies, don't trust those without proper local contacts. For individual and celebrities, do not trust those sharing news or encouraging you to do this and that from overseas. 100% of the times, those using fake accounts on social media are with an agenda and totally not to be trusted.

8. Check out the Citations and Sources of News

If who and who has said, the citations and references should be stated in the news. The quotes should be complete and not just the partial parts. There are also numerous cases of doctored images and using back the images of incidents in the past. Please be aware that you can do a reverse image search on the internet, to see if the image is genuine or just cut and paste from another source. You can also use image.google.com to search using the URL of your image.

Being aware of these eight points would not only ensure that you do not become a victim to fake news but also, unknowingly, make others become of fake news!

■ ■ ■

Covid vaccines show high efficacy against severe Omicron: US data

The paper evaluated data from more than 300,000 visits to emergency departments, urgent care clinics, and hospitalizations across 10 states from 26 August 2021 to 5 January 2022.

COVID-19 vaccines and boosters continued to have very high efficacy against severe outcomes during the Omicron wave of the virus, a large real-world study from the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) showed Friday.

The paper evaluated data from more than 300,000 visits to emergency departments, urgent care clinics, and hospitalizations across 10 states from 26 August 2021 to 5 January 2022.

During the period when the Delta variant was dominant, vaccine efficacy against Covid-19 hospitalization was 90 per cent between 14-179 days after dose two of a vaccine, fell to 81 per cent more than 180 days after the second dose, and rose to 94 per cent 14 days or more after dose three.

After Omicron became dominant, the vaccine efficacy estimate against hospitalization between 14-179 days after dose two was 81 per cent, 57 per cent after more than 180 days from dose two, and 90 per cent 14 or more days after dose three. A second CDC paper, based on data from 25 US state and local jurisdictions, found that vaccine efficacy against infection waned from 93 per cent prior to Delta to around 80 per cent when Delta became dominant, but protection against death remained stable and high at 94 per cent.

Vaccine efficacy against infection fell to 68 per cent by the time Omicron emerged. The authors weren't able to derive an estimate for vaccine efficacy against death during Omicron, because of a lag in reporting, but the broad scientific expectation is that it will remain very high. The paper also showed that while deaths among fully vaccinated people rose sharply during the Delta wave -- totalling more than 20,000 people between July to November -- unvaccinated people were still 16 times more likely to die during the same period.

SOURCE: AFP

Health workers prepare as people arrive at a Covid-19 testing station in Houston, Texas, to receive a Covid test on 7 January 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 22 January 2022)

BAY INFERENCE: Weather is partly cloudy over North Bay and a few cloud over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 23 January 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region and Kachin, Kayin and Mon states and isolated in Upper Sagaing, and Mandalay regions and (Northern and Eastern) Shan and Chin states. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Magway, and Yangon regions and Southern Shan, Rakhine and Kayah states and generally fair 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: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin and Chin states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23 January 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23 January 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 23 January 2022: Generally fair weather.

I SAY WHAT I SEE:

By Oung Moung Moung

I have read a piece of somewhat super encouraging news the other day in The Global New Light of Myanmar. The news story, which is entitled "105 nations to get cheaper Merck Covid pill", says that the global Medicines Patent Pool, a UN-backed organization, signed agreements with 27 manufacturers to produce the oral antiviral medicine "Molnupiravir" that would be more affordable than earlier versions for supply in low- and middle-income countries totalling 105.

Furthering internet research, a Reuter news reported that the producer, Merck & Co Inc, said in January it expects "Molnupiravir" to be effective against the ultra-infectious Omicron variant. This new mutation is now spreading and driving a surge in Covid-19 cases and hospitalizations all over the world.

World scientists are sparing no or little effort in inventing several versions of Covid vaccines at present in the still unending battle against the Covid-19 pandemic. On the other hand, world citizens, including Myanmar nationals, continue encountering formidable hurdles in almost all aspects – health, safety and socio-economy among others. People are suffering from the deadly pathogen, while global economies are becoming much rather sluggish as all countries have to struggle for their respective economic recovery across the world.

Nevertheless, the Omicron variant has arrived in Myanmar recently. The daily positivity rate is more or less beginning to slow or move towards a downtrend. What a relief! However, we all should be always careful to just adhere to – vaccinated or unvaccinated – very basic and easy-to-understand health protocols that everyone gets accustomed to nowadays as follows: -

Let's keep a safe distance,
Let's wear a mask properly,
Let's avoid poorly ventilated spaces and crowded places,
Let's wash hands frequently.

I wholeheartedly wish for your long healthy prosperous life not just in 2022 but further on.

‘World first’ hydrogen shipment set to leave Australia for Japan

The Suiso Frontier is a world-first tanker built to transport hydrogen by sea. **PHOTO: HESC PROJECT/AFP**

A state-of-the-art liquid hydrogen tanker readied for loading in Australia Friday ahead of shipment to Japan, in what Canberra described as a “world first” trial of the technology.

The Suiso Frontier is docked near Melbourne and is being loaded with super-cooled hydrogen, a source of fuel that supporters hope could one day rival LNG. The ship is part of the Hydrogen Energy Supply Chain (HESC), a joint Japanese-Australian project intended to produce plentiful, affordable fuel for Japan. “This is a historic day, this is the beginning of an industry that will shape the future of global energy,” said Australian energy minister Angus Taylor.

Hydrogen produces only steam and no carbon dioxide when burnt, making it an attractive possible alternative to dirtier fossil fuels. It can be made from renewable sources like water — but in Australia is extracted from brown coal or lignite, significantly reducing its green credentials.

Australia hopes to win over increasingly environmentally conscious investors by capturing the carbon emitted in production. Australia’s pro-coal government has thrown its weight behind the new industry, while trying to reassure supporters it is not the end of locally produced fossil fuels.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Singaporean expert expects no substantial global environmental impact by Tonga volcano eruption

A weather and climate expert said on Tuesday that so far he did not expect a substantial impact on the global environment from the recent volcano eruption in Tonga.

The eruption in Tonga is quite sizable, with dust and gases that came out of the volcano reaching up to 30 km, according to data from NASA sources, said Koh Tieh Yong, associate professor with the School of Science and Technology at the Singapore University of Social Sciences. “When you inject a substance into 30 km high, it has gone beyond the layer of the troposphere where you have all the weathers going on into the next layer of the atmosphere known as the stratosphere,” he said in an interview with Xinhua.—Xinhua ■

Monster iceberg released ‘billions of tonnes’ of fresh water into ocean

A giant iceberg that detached from Antarctica in 2017 released the equivalent of 61 million Olympic-sized swimming pools of fresh water as it melted, according to research published Thursday, raising questions over the impact on the marine ecosystem.

The monstrous iceberg was twice the size of Luxembourg when it separated from the Larsen ice shelf, which has warmed faster than any other part of Earth's southernmost continent.

At 5,719 square kilometres (2,200 square miles) it was the biggest iceberg on Earth when it formed and the sixth-largest on record, according to the British Antarctic Survey. —AFP ■

Pakistan proud of pig-to-human heart transplant pioneer

This handout photo released by the University of Maryland School of Medicine on 10 January 2022 shows surgeons performing a transplant of a heart from a genetically modified pig to patient David Bennett, Sr., in Baltimore, Maryland, on 7 January 2022. **PHOTO: UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF MEDICINE / AFP**

FRIENDS and former classmates of the Pakistan-born surgeon behind the world’s first pig-to-human heart transplant say they earmarked him for greatness from his medical school days.

Karachi-born Muhammad Mansoor Mohiuddin made headlines last week as the co-founder of the US university programme that successfully transplanted the heart of a genetically modified pig into a gravely ill American man. While hailed as a medical breakthrough, the procedure also raised ethical questions -- particularly among some Jews and Muslims, who consider pigs to be unclean and avoid pork products.

None of that worried Mohiuddin’s friends and former colleagues in Pakistan, who remember him as an ace student with a passion for medicine.

“He would be so interested, always there, always available and always ready to get involved in surgery,” said Muneer Amanullah, a specialist who attended Karachi’s Dow Medical College with Mohiuddin in the 1980s.

College vice-chancellor Muhammad Saeed Qureshi said pride in Mohiuddin’s achievement had flooded the campus.

“There was exhilaration that this has been done by a graduate from this college,” he told AFP.

Mohiuddin was quick to share the limelight with a team of 50 from the University of Maryland Medical School.—AFP ■

The Cattenom Nuclear Power Plant located in Grand Est in the Cattenom commune, France, on the Moselle River between Thionville and Trier. **PHOTO: EDF/AFP**

EU nations quarrel over whether nuclear, gas are ‘green’

HOURS before the window for lodging objections closes, EU environment and energy ministers meeting in France Friday differed sharply on a European Commission provision that would classify nuclear and natural gas energy as “sustainable”.

The controversy pits countries led by France -- where nuclear generates a world-leading 70 per cent of electricity -- against Germany, Austria and others in the 27-nation bloc.

Debate over the Commission’s so-called “taxonomy” is not on the agenda of the informal, three-day talks in Amiens, but flared nonetheless.

In late December the European Commission unveiled a classification labelling investment in nuclear gas-based energy as sustainable, in order to favour sectors that reduce the greenhouse gas emissions driving global warming.—AFP ■

Indonesia to push for new global health agency, president says

INDONESIA will push for the creation of a new global health agency while the country holds the presidency of the G20, President Joko Widodo said Thursday at the virtual Davos forum.

Widodo said the agency would strengthen the world's "health resilience" and help make the global health system more inclusive and more responsive to crises. "The Indonesian presidency will fight to strengthen the world's health resilience architecture, which will be run by a global agency," he said in a speech to the World Economic Forum's online meeting. "(Its) task is to mobilise world health resources, including for financing health emergencies, purchasing vaccines, medicines and medical devices."

The Indonesian leader said the World Health Organization had showed limited capacity to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic.

A dentist wearing full personal protective equipment amid the pandemic tends to her patient at a dental clinic in Bandung on 19 January 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

Many current global health collaborations including on vaccines were only temporary programmes, he added. "The WHO's role has yet to cover many strategic aspects for the world," Widodo said. Comparing the new agency to the International Monetary Fund, the president said it would help formulate standardised protocols for activities such as cross-border travel and would work on boosting manufacturing capacity for medicines and medical equipment. He called on the world's major economies to co-finance the initiative and reach an agreement during Indonesia's presidency of the G20 this year.

"The costs are clearly much smaller than the world's losses due to the fragility of the global health system," Widodo said.

Indonesia holds the G20 presidency for the first time this year and has specified recovery from the pandemic as its core objective. Its official G20 presidency slogan is "Recover Together, Recover Stronger" and its focus will be on global health architecture, the transition to sustainable energy, and digital transformation, the president said.—AFP ■

Quarantine-free travel lane between Malaysia, Singapore reopens, quota halved

THE bus and flight tickets under the land and air Vaccinated Travel Lane (VTL) between Malaysia and Singapore have resumed with immediate effect, Malaysian Health Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said on Friday.

However, the volume of tickets has been halved with only 50 per cent of the capacity of vehicles plying the routes allowed, as part of measures to slow the spread of COVID-19, he said in a statement.

"The timeline regarding this ticket sales quota increase will depend on the risk assessment to be performed from time to time by the Health Ministry based on the current COVID-19 situation in both countries," he said.

The VTL kicked off on 29 November last year and involved travel via the bridge connecting Malaysia to Singapore as well as an air corridor, but was suspended since 23 December over the emergence of the Omicron variant.

Those travelling via the VTL will face eased restrictions including quarantine requirements being waived for fully vaccinated individuals. — Xinhua ■

A Vaccinated Travel Lane (VTL) bus plies the causeway between Singapore and Malaysia, as it reopens after nearly two years amidst the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, Singapore 29 November 2021. A file picture shows vehicles forming a long queue to enter the Woodlands checkpoint in Singapore on 17 March 2020 from across the causeway of the southern Malaysian state of Johor. **PHOTO: AFP**

Austria makes Covid vaccination mandatory in EU first

People queue to receive jabs from a Covid vaccination bus in Vienna, Austria. People who are not fully vaccinated face a lockdown in the province of Upper Austria. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

AUSTRIA'S parliament on Thursday approved making Covid-19 vaccinations mandatory for adults from next month, becoming the first European country to do so despite a wave of protests opposing the measure.

Tens of thousands have demonstrated against mandatory vaccination in regular weekend rallies since the measure was announced in November in a bid to drive up the country's vaccination rate.

All parties, except the far-right, supported the measure, with the new legislation passing with 137 votes in favour and 33 votes against it in the 183-seat parliament.

"It is adopted with the (necessary) majority," Doris Bures, second president of the National Council, said.

To date, 72 per cent of Austrian residents have been fully vaccinated against the coronavirus — in line with the European Union-wide average of just more than 70 per cent, but several percentage points below regional neighbours such as Italy and France.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Egypt announces new travel restrictions amid COVID-19 spread

THE spread of COVID-19 has prompted the Egyptian Health Ministry to tighten up health restrictions at airports, seaports and land crossings.

Starting Saturday, "Egyptian and foreign travellers to Egypt, except children below the age of 12, will be required to present certificates of coronavirus vaccination or negative results of coronavirus tests," the ministry said in a statement on Thursday.

A traveller has to bring a certification of having received a single-dose or two-dose vaccine at least 14 days before arrival, or the result of a test taken within 72 hours prior to the arrival, the statement said.

Egypt witnessed a recent surge in daily infections, with 1,403 new cases and 22 more deaths recorded nationwide by Thursday, pushing up the respective total to 405,393 and 22,260.– Xinhua ■

US airliner turns back in mid-flight due to passenger defying mask rule

An American Airlines jetliner headed from Miami to London turned around in mid-flight Thursday because a passenger refused to wear a Covid mask, the airline said.

"American Airlines flight 38 with service from Miami to London returned to MIA due to a disruptive customer refusing to comply with the federal mask requirement," the airline said.

Police were waiting when the Boeing 777 carrying 129 passengers and a crew of 14 landed back in Miami. When the plane landed police escorted that passenger off the plane without incident, a police official told CNN.

American Airlines said that pending further investigation this passenger has been placed on a list of people barred from flying with the airline. The Federal Aviation Administration said in January 2021 it would observe a zero tolerance policy toward people who reject federal rules mandating mask-wearing on US domestic flights.–AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

France, Germany to support joint 5G projects

FRANCE and Germany would support four projects on 5G applications for private networks with a total of 17.7 million euros (20.1 million US dollars), the countries' Ministries of Economic Affairs said on Friday.

The aim is to "deliver innovative solutions that will strengthen Europe's ecosystem for private networks in the field of 5G telecommunications," their statement noted. "I am looking forward to an intensive collaboration between France and Germany," said Robert Habeck, Germany's federal minister for economic affairs and climate action. "This is an important step in order to drive the economy forward with the help of state-of-the-art technologies." Back in 2020, France and Germany already agreed to strengthen cooperation in the field of 5G applications and subsequently launched a call for funding of innovation projects in early 2021.—Xinhua ■

Chile's president-elect unveils young, woman-majority cabinet

CHILE'S leftist president-elect Gabriel Boric, whose victory at the polls last month unsettled the markets, on Friday named the country's Central Bank governor as his finance minister in a young, diverse and woman-majority cabinet.

Mario Marcel, an independent politician and former member of the Socialist Party, with which he maintains strong ties, had held various roles under centre-left governments from 1990 to 2008. Now 62, he was appointed Reserve Bank governor by Socialist former president Michelle Bachelet for a five-year term that started in late 2016 and continued under her center-right successor Sebastian Pinera.—AFP ■

China's new regulations for entertainment, tech giants' expansion: Report

CHINA has issued fresh directives to crimp the expansion of the country's entertainment and tech giants, including Alibaba, Tencent and Bytedance, owner of TikTok, a media report said. Nine different departments, including China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the State Administration for Market Regulation and the Cyberspace Administration of China issued joint statements about how to regulate and tame the development of what it labels "the online platform sector", reported Chron, a US-based news outlet.

Among the new policy directives, the most prominent is the strict regulation of the tech companies' activities and investments in the finance sector.

According to an NDRC document, "Platform operators must not use data, technology, market, or capital advantages to restricting the independent operation of other platforms and applications."—ANI ■

Tencent Holdings Ltd., also known as Tencent, is a Chinese multinational technology and entertainment conglomerate and holding company headquartered in Shenzhen. It is also the largest company in the gaming industry in the world based on its investments. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Japan, US agree to launch economic dialogue, align on China, Russia

JAPANESE Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and US President Joe Biden on Friday agreed to launch a high-level bilateral economic dialogue amid China's growing clout in the region, and to cooperate over security threats posed by North Korea as well as potential Russian invasion into Ukraine.

During their first formal summit meeting, held virtually, Biden signaled to Kishida his intention to travel to Japan in late spring when the Asian country plans to host a meeting of the leaders of the Quad, a US official said, referring to the group of four Indo-Pacific democracies also involving Australia and India.

"The two leaders shared the intention to coordinate closely under the strong Japan-US alliance and to deepen cooperation with like-minded countries such as Australia, India, ASEAN, and Europe, toward realizing a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific,'" the Japanese government said in a press release.

Photo shows Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in a teleconference with U.S. President Joe Biden on 21 January 2022. **PHOTO: CABINET PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE/KYODO**

To step up cooperation for resilient supply chains and technology investments, the two countries will launch ministerial talks on economic policy, with Japan's foreign and industry ministers to be joined by US state and commerce secretaries.

The US official noted that the agenda has "not been fully worked out" but that the expectation is to work "in a number of areas," including export controls. But he said the focus would mostly be on supply chains, technology investments and standard-setting.— Kyodo ■

Intel's chip manufacturing plant in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. **PHOTO: INTEL/AFP**

Biden hails Intel's $20 bn chip plant investment amid shortage

PRESIDENT Joe Biden on Friday praised Intel's plans to spend $20 billion on a new US semiconductor facility, hailing the "historic" investment even as a global chip shortage fans the inflation wave weighing on his leadership.

Biden is urging manufacturers to bring production back to the United States, which was once a leader in making the chips key to everything from vacuums and televisions to cars which have become scarce during the pandemic.

Intel said it plans to begin construction at the end of the year on two plants in the Midwestern state of Ohio, and chip production could start as early as 2025.

"This is a truly historic investment in America and American workers," Biden said at the White House, where he spoke alongside Intel's CEO Pat Gelsinger.

Biden called it "one of the largest investments in semiconductor manufacturing in American history."

Problems in global supply chains have highlighted the fundamental importance of semiconductors, as well as the risks of overreliance on imports.

The closure of semiconductor plants, particularly in Asia, due to pandemic disruptions led to a global chip shortage that has affected a range of industries from automobiles to video games.

That was coupled with surging demand creating bottlenecks, forcing companies to slow production, and sending prices soaring. "This will be our first new manufacturing site in 40 years, and spanning nearly 1,000 acres (400 hectares) will be a mega fab location," Gelsinger said at the White House.—AFP ■

Malaysia ratifies RCEP regional trade pact

Aerial photo taken on 15 April 2019 shows the Alliance Steel at the Malaysia-China Kuantan Industrial Park in Pahang, Malaysia. **PHOTO: XINHUA/ZHU WEI**

MALAYSIA has submitted its Instrument of Ratification (IOR) of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement, the country's Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) said on Friday.

The IOR was submitted to the ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Secretariat on 17 January, with the agreement coming into force for Malaysia on 18 March, the ministry said in a statement.

The ministry added that RCEP would provide a huge boost to Malaysia's economic activity and strengthen the multilateral trading system, especially in the face of the pandemic which has made international trade and cooperation more important than ever.

"It bears stressing that RCEP is a testament to efforts to strengthen not only the multilateral trading system but advancing regional economic integration and upholding the development agenda of the World Trade Organization (WTO)," it said.

"The pandemic has underscored the paramount importance of international trade and cooperation as well as the inter-linkages of regional supply chains. In this regard, RCEP would be a key enabler for Malaysia in revitalizing the domestic and international business activities, post-pandemic," it added.

The ministry also said within ASEAN, Malaysia is expected to be the largest beneficiary of the RCEP agreement in terms of gains in exports, with a projected 200 million US dollar increase, resulting from tariff elimination and reduction for merchandise goods, including the facilitation of export and import of goods.—Xinhua ■

Lebanon to sign electricity deal with Jordan next week: minister

Power ship near Zouk power plant, Lebanon. **PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/XINHUA**

CRISIS-HIT Lebanon will sign a deal with Jordan next week to bring in electricity via Syria to help ease gruelling power cuts, the energy minister has told AFP.

The agreement, which comes as the country grapples with round-the-clock power cuts, is part of a wider government effort to eventually provide state power for eight to 10 hours a day, up from just two now in most parts of the country.

"The deal is important primarily because it will increase state power supply, which is cleaner and cheaper" than electricity produced by "expensive and polluting private generators", Walid Fayad told AFP in an interview on Thursday.

The minister said a visiting Jordanian delegation would sign the deal in Beirut next Wednesday before heading to Damascus, where Jordanian and Lebanese officials are set to sign a transit agreement with Syria.

The deal will provide Lebanon with up to 250 megawatts of electricity during the day and 150 megawatts at night, equivalent to a total of two additional hours of power, Fayad said.

Two years into Lebanon's economic meltdown, the cash-strapped state is struggling to purchase fuel for its power stations.

With state power effectively non-existent, many rely on private generators, but prices have increased after the government lifted fuel subsides. Lebanon has been importing fuel oil from Iraq to operate its power plants in recent months.— AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Airbus cancels Qatar Airways plane order in feud

AIRBUS has taken the extraordinary step of cancelling a multi-billion-dollar order of 50 planes from Qatar Airways, a major customer, in an escalating feud over the airline's grounding of A350 aircraft.

The Qatari company, one of the Gulf region's "big three" carriers, has grounded nearly half of its 53-plane A350 fleet over degradation of exterior fuselage surfaces.

The airline has taken the dispute to the High Court in London and stopped accepting further deliveries of the wide-body aircraft from the European firm until the problem is resolved.—AFP ■

China's used car sales soar in 2021

USED car sales fostered new highlights in China's automobile market in 2021, with the growth of trade volume and value both over 20 per cent year on year, data from the China Passenger Car Association shows.

More than 17.58 million used cars changed hands last year, up 22.62 per cent year on year, despite the challenges of the pandemic, extreme weather, lowered consumption expectations and surging risks of global supply chains, according to the association. The combined value for the transactions soared 27.32 per cent over one year earlier to top 1.13 trillion yuan (about 178 billion US dollars) during the period.—Xinhua ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V GREEN CLARITY VOY.NO. (0253-043N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V GREEN CLARITY VOY.NO. (0253-043N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **23-1-2022** 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.

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S EVERGREEN MARINE (S'PORE) PTE LTD

The Global New Light of Myanmar
www.gnlm.com.mm

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Land battle awaits Indigenous communities over Indonesia capital relocation: NGO

TENS of thousands of Indonesia's indigenous people are at risk of being expelled from their lands to make way for the construction of a new capital on jungle-clad Borneo island, a rights group warned on Friday.

At least 20,000 people from 21 indigenous groups live in the area designated for the construction of the new capital with laws enabling the move from Jakarta not providing enough protection for the communities' land rights, according to the Indigenous Peoples Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN).

The group issued its warning after parliament last week approved the capital's relocation from Jakarta, on Java island, to the East Kalimantan province on the Indonesian part of Borneo, which the country shares with Malaysia and Brunei.—AFP ■

Red Cross appeals to hackers after major cyberattack

THE International Committee of the Red Cross on Thursday made an appeal to hackers who seized a trove of private data, saying they were willing to speak "directly and confidentially" to those behind the cyberattack.

Hackers seized ICRC data of more than 515,000 vulnerable people, including people who have fled conflict and others in detention, the Geneva-based organization said this week. It was not immediately clear who was behind the breach, but on Thursday the ICRC urged the attackers to come forward. "We want to make a humanitarian appeal to those responsible for this data breach, given the enormous potential harm to those among the world's least powerful (people)," an ICRC spokesman said.

"We are willing to communicate directly and confidentially with whoever may be responsible for this operation to provide more information as to the protected status of the data in question." —AFP ■

Twitter suspends hundreds of accounts promoting Philippines' Marcos Jr

Former Philippine senator Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr holds a huge lead over his nearest rival and nemesis Leni Robredo. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

TWITTER has suspended hundreds of accounts reportedly linked to supporters of Philippine presidential frontrunner Ferdinand Marcos Jr, which the social media giant said had violated its rules on manipulation and spam.

The son and namesake of the country's former dictator is drawing support from a massive social media campaign seeking to get him elected in May, which critics say is attempting to rewrite the family's history.

Twitter said it had reviewed the accounts and hashtags identified in a recent article by Philippine news site Rappler.

More than 300 accounts had been removed "for violating our platform manipulation and spam policy," Twitter said in a statement sent to AFP Saturday.

Most of them had been taken down before the Rappler article was published on Tuesday and an investigation was ongoing, it said.

Filipinos are among the world's heaviest users of social media and the country has become a key battleground for fake news.

"With the Philippine elections taking place this May, we remain vigilant about identifying and eliminating suspected information campaigns targeting election conversations," Twitter said.

Marcos Jr's spokesman Vic Rodriguez said there was "no certainty" that all the suspended accounts belonged to supporters of the presidential hopeful.

Election victory for Marcos Jr would mark the ultimate political comeback for the family, which was chased into exile in the United States after its patriarch's humiliating downfall in 1986.

Marcos Sr and his wife Imelda were accused of massive corruption while in power.—AFP ■

'Immersive' Princess Diana documentary opens Sundance

"The Princess" documentary focuses on how the press and public perceived and judged Diana's behaviour. Britain's Princess Diana (L), accompanied by Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Estaing, president of the Children's Foundation, arrives at the Palace of Versailles, France, on 28 November 1994, to preside an international gala for children. **PHOTO: JOEL ROBINE/ AFP/FILE**

AN "immersive" Princess Diana documentary offering an "origin story" for the British royal family's latest woes was among the opening night movies at the online Sundance film festival Thursday.

Sundance, which celebrates independent cinema, was forced to go virtual for a second year running by the Omicron variant of Covid-19's surge across the United States.

The pandemic has forced filmmakers to innovate, and "The Princess" is one of several Sundance movies constructed entirely from archive footage.

Without a narrator, it transports viewers back to Diana's tumultuous marriage to Prince Charles, and explores an obsessed media and public's impact on those events via contemporaneous footage. "It is a kind of Shakespearean tragedy, but it's one that lots of us lived through, and actually actively participated in," said director Ed Perkins.

While many previous documentaries tried to "get inside Diana's head", Perkins focuses on how the press and public perceived and judged her behaviour.

Well-known awkward interviews given by the couple to major broadcasters sit alongside rough footage of bored paparazzi with long lenses crouching in bushes, complaining among themselves about Diana's wariness.—AFP ■

Samsung pulls Singapore drag queen ad after backlash

SOUTH Korean tech giant Samsung has pulled an online advert in Singapore that featured a hijab-wearing Muslim woman hugging her drag queen son after it sparked a backlash from socially conservative corners.

LGBTQ rights remain a sensitive topic in the prosperous city-state, where a rarely invoked colonial-era law banning sex between men was upheld by the country's High Court only two years ago.

The ad, part of a campaign called "Listen to Your Heart" for wearable tech like noise-cancelling earbuds and smartwatches, showcased the warm relationship between the mother and cross-dressing son.

Support for LGBT rights is growing in some quarters of Singapore, where authorities have been criticised for their stance on the issue. **PHOTO: AFP**

But it touched off a wave of online criticism, with one group labelling it "an unfortunate attempt to push the LGBT ideology into a largely conservative Muslim community".

"We are against the ideology of mainstreaming homosexuality and transgenderism into a conservative society," said "We are Against Pinkdot", a group that opposes Singapore's gay rights movement.—AFP ■

10 countries to observe UN nuke ban treaty meeting in March

AT least ten countries have officially notified the United Nations that they will participate as observers at the first meeting of signatories to a treaty banning nuclear weapons slated for March in Vienna, sources familiar with the matter said Friday.

Japan, which relies on the US nuclear umbrella for its security and is not one of the treaty's 86 signatory countries and regions, is facing growing calls to join the meeting as an observer as it is the only country to have experienced atomic bombings.

"We urge the government of Japan...to swiftly sign and ratify the treaty," the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations said in a statement released Saturday, the first anniversary of the treaty's entry into force.

People celebrate in front of the Atomic Bomb Dome in Hiroshima, western Japan, on 25 October 2020, after the ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons by 50 countries, paving the way for its entry into force on 22 January. **PHOTO: KYODO**

The ten countries include Brazil, Finland and Indonesia. The number is expected to grow as Germany and Norway have expressed their intention to take part in the meeting as observers.

A total of 59 countries and regions have already ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which bans the development, possession, testing, and use of such arms. But no nuclear weapons states such as the United States and Russia have signed the treaty adopted in 2017.—Kyodo ■

Cold War flashbacks in Russia-US talks in Geneva

Ukrainian Territorial Defence Forces, the military reserve of the Ukrainian Armes Forces, holding replicas of Kalashnikov rifles, take part in a military exercise near Kiev on 25 December 2021 **PHOTO: SERGEI SUPINSKY/AFP**

GENEVA, the neutral turf that was once host to so much Cold War bargaining, is again welcoming Russian and US officials to discuss missiles, nuclear arms and spheres of influence on the eve of a possible conflagration.

There is a heavy whiff of the 20th-century East-West power struggles in the Swiss capital, a flashback to the tense period between World War II and the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991, when the fate of the world often appeared to hang in the balance. The two rival camps are beginning to openly make the comparison themselves, even if observers note significant differences.

"What we're having now we have is kind of a remake of the Cold War, Cold War 2.0," Dmitri Polyansky, the Russian deputy ambassador to the United Nations, said last month, putting the blame on the United States. In Berlin, the city once split by a wall that became the emblem of the Cold War, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken warned Thursday that any Russian invasion of Ukraine, which Westerners fear could happen at any moment, would bring the world back to a time "when this continent, and this city, were divided in two... with the threat of all-out war hanging over everyone's heads."—AFP ■

US army confirms Russian mercenaries in Mali

THE US army has confirmed the presence of Russian mercenaries from the Wagner group in Mali, which the African nation's government has denied amid increasingly strained relations with the West.

"Wagner is in Mali," General Stephen Townsend, the head of US Africa Command, said in an interview with Voice of America, "They are there, we think, numbering several hundred now."

"They're deploying there, supported by the Russian military, Russian Air Force airplanes are delivering them," he said, directly tying the Wagner group to the Kremlin, a link that Moscow denies. "The world can see this happening," Townsend said. "It's a great concern to us." French foreign minister Jean-Yves Le Drian last week accused Wagner's mercenaries of "supporting" Mali's ruling junta under the pretense of fighting jihadists. He also slammed Russia for allegedly lying about the status of the Wagner group. "When we asked our Russian colleagues about Wagner, they said they don't know anything (about it)," he said.—AFP ■

Malian military personnel. Mali's military has invited the Russian paramilitary Wagner Group into the country to help in their fight against jihadists. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Brawl in Honduras Congress ahead of new president's inauguration

LAWMAKERS exchanged blows in the Honduran Congress Friday as a dispute among members of president-elect Xiomara Castro's party turned violent.

Legislators from her leftist Libre party protested after 20 rebel members proposed Jorge Calix, one of their cohorts, as provisional congress president.

The Castro loyalists claimed this violated a pact with Libre's coalition partner.

Amid cries of "traitors" and "Xiomara!" angry Libre legislators forced their way to the podium while Calix was being sworn in, causing him to flee under a hail of punches and much pushing and shoving.

It was the first sitting of the 128-member Congress since it was elected last November.

The crisis started late Thursday when Castro called her party's 50 legislators to a meeting to ask them to support Luis Redondo of the Salvador party of Honduras (PSH) as congress president.

The 20 rebel members did not attend.—AFP ■

Air strike on Yemen prison leaves at least 70 dead

At least 70 people were killed in an air strike on a prison as Yemen's long-running conflict suffered a dramatic escalation Friday that drew condemnation from UN chief Antonio Guterres.

The Huthi rebels released gruesome video footage showing bodies in the rubble and mangled corpses from the attack, which levelled buildings at the prison in their northern heartland of Saada.

Further south in the port city of Hodeida, at least three children died when air strikes by the Saudi-led coalition hit a telecommunications facility as they played nearby, Save the Children said. Yemen also suffered a country-wide internet blackout.

"The children were reportedly playing on a nearby football field when missiles struck," Save the Children said.—AFP ■

SUFC to play against Australian club in AFC Champions League

THE 2022 Asian Champions League will be played in March and Myanmar club Shan United will play against one of the Australian clubs, officials said.

Myanmar clubs will start from the semi-finals and will face the Australian club that won the 2021-2022 FFA Cup.

The AFC will be divided into West Asia Zone and East Asia Zone, while Myanmar Club Shan United will compete in the East Asia Zone.

Shan United will play against the Australian club on 8 March, and if they win, they will play against Japanese club Visel Kobe in the playoffs.

Shan United will have to overcome these two stages to advance to the knockout stages and face some Asia's top clubs.

The representing Myanmar club will be competing in both Asian Club Championships this year, with the Asian Champions League qualifying round and the 2022 AFC Cup group stage. This is Shan United's third match in the Asian Champions League. As the Myanmar National League could not be held in 2021, defending champions Shan United, will be able to compete in the tourney.

—Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM ■

Eddie Howe defends Newcastle trip to Saudi Arabia

EDDIE Howe has confirmed that Newcastle will travel to Saudi Arabia for a training camp despite a fresh warning from Amnesty International that the kingdom was "trying to sportswash their appalling human rights record".

Relegation-threatened Newcastle, who are 80%-owned by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF), will fly to the Middle East after their Premier League game at Leeds on Saturday.

Amanda Staveley's consortium bought the club in October against a background of concern over the Gulf state's human rights record and accusations of "sportswashing".

But Howe, who was appointed as Newcastle boss the following month, insisted the focus would be entirely on football.

"It's a football decision," he told his pre-match press conference, confirming the trip, which had been widely reported.

Newcastle boss Eddie Howe is taking his squad to Saudi Arabia for a warm-weather training camp. **PHOTO: AFP**

"We're doing it for the benefit of the players, the group, in our fight to stay in the division, and that's my only thought.

"The facilities and everything around the trip are going to be first-class. We will train and we will train hard and we will train in preparation for our next game, so that's always going to be my only focus."

Staveley's consortium had to give assurances to the Premier League of the separation between the PIF, of which Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is the chairman and club chairman Yasir Al-Rumayyan the governor, and the Saudi state in order for its takeover to be approved.

Asked whether he would be happy to meet the Crown Prince and if that might prove a distraction, Howe added: "There'll be no distraction from my side.—AFP ■

'Like home': Medvedev enjoys Melbourne love-in to reach last 16

PEACE broke out between title favourite Daniil Medvedev and the Australian Open crowd on Saturday as the forthright Russian cruised into the last 16.

In sweltering conditions, the world number two defeated unseeded Dutchman Botic van de Zandschulp 6-4, 6-4, 6-2 in 1hr 55min at Margaret Court Arena. The atmosphere was considerably more friendly than it was during Medvedev's high-octane win over home favourite Nick Kyrgios two days ago at Rod Laver Arena, when he was critical of sections of the raucous crowd booing him in between serves. Medvedev, who has a history of riling up partisan crowds, made headlines when he said afterwards: "It's not everybody doing it but people who are doing it probably have a low IQ." But there was no hint of animosity from the spectators on Saturday, who applauded him during his on-court interview after his win over Van de Zandschulp.

"It's great. The other night I don't feel like there was anything wrong," he said.

"I just talked about exactly one thing, which is between first and second serve, because the rest is, of course, they are going to support Nick, I'm not stupid, you know.—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.

Lewandowski eyes toppling own record of 41 Bundesliga goals

Lewandowski has scored 23 goals in 19 league games this campaign and featured in every Bundesliga game for Bayern. **PHOTO: AFP**

HAVING scored a record 41 goals in just 29 league games last season, Bayern Munich star Robert Lewandowski aims to stay injury-free in order to better his own Bundesliga milestone this campaign.

The Poland striker scooped FIFA's 'The Best' male player award for the second year running on Monday, two days after chalking up his 300th league goal with a hat-trick as Bundesliga leaders Bayern swept aside Cologne.

Lewandowski has scored 23 goals in 19 league games this campaign and featured in every Bundesliga game for Bayern.

Only last May, he finally broke Gerd Mueller's legendary record of 40 Bundesliga goals in a single season despite missing four games due to injury in April and was rested for one match in October 2020.—AFP ■