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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.

War veterans need to nurture their offspring to have higher living standard with peace and prosperity along their lives: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets war veterans and families at Advanced War Veteran's Housing (Mandalay) 23 January 2022.

WAR veterans must conserve their environs as the Tatmadaw has created housings and job opportunities, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in meeting with war veterans and families at Advanced War Veterans' Housing (Mandalay) yesterday

afternoon.

In his greetings, the Senior General said he has been striving for convenience of socio-economic development of war veterans and families as much as possible. He expressed his delightedness for convenience of war veterans and families residing at the housing.

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The government is carrying out rehabilitation for businesses and all situations damaged by terrorists. Depending on the budget, the government is fulfilling the welfare of Tatmadaw members and families. To do so, Tatmadaw-owned businesses paid necessary taxes to the State. All functions were undertaken under the law without seeking chances. The profits from these businesses are being spent on welfare tasks for Tatmadaw members, war veterans and families.

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War veterans need to nurture their offspring to have higher living standard with peace and prosperity along their lives: Senior General

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War veterans must conserve their environs as the Tatmadaw has created housings and job opportunities. They all need to avoid the indulgence with individual conscience and manage their offsprings to live under the religious advice.

The unity is very important. Tatmadaw members are born of the people and they are a part of the State. Every country prioritizes the Tatmadaw discharging the State defence duty but those seeking the political profit



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing cordially greets war veterans and families.

utilize the national political endeavours of the Tatmadaw in the political arena.

War veterans need to nurture their offspring to have high-

er living standard with peace and prosperity along their lives. They have to encourage offspring to learn education.

The Senior General present-

ed rice, cooking oil and foodstuff produced by Tatmadaw factory for war veterans and families from the housing to a war veteran. Then, the Senior General

attended to their needs.

After the ceremony, the Senior General cordially greeted war veterans and families and visited the housing by car.—MNA

State Administration Council Press Release

Re-invitation to Myanmar citizens who reside in various regions for many reasons

1. Some student youths, State service personnel and citizens, with worries, have evaded to areas of EAOs and foreign countries due to the incitements and intimidation of NLD members, extremist followers, unlawful associations and terrorist groups such as CRPH and NUG, stimulation of CDM, and persons and organizations at home and abroad not wishing to restore peace and stability of the State since Tatmadaw assumed the State responsibilities on 1 February 2021.
2. They are further worried about the dictatorship statement and speeches of unlawful association and terrorist group CRPH and NUG, and some relevant persons. As they face no security guarantee and difficulties in socio-economic life in those areas, they wish to return to their native lands.
3. **The State Administration Council will specifically ease restrictions for service personnel, intellectuals and intelligentsia, and persons from various arenas and citizens who, with worries, absconded from the country except for persons who committed murders, robberies, setting fires, mine explosions and intentional attacks on security troops, those who crowded to attack public service personnel and some people, those who destroyed government and private-owned buildings and those who are highly involved in the CDM activities by providing monetary assistance and other means.**
4. As those who evade their native areas are also citizens, the State Administration Council will arrange their returns from the evaded areas to various parts of Myanmar.
5. As such, the information was released that if those who evaded to various areas, except for persons who committed any kinds of crime, wish to return to their native lands in Myanmar of their own accord due to multiple worries, the citizens abroad can contact nearby ward, village, township and district administration bodies and relevant embassies, military attaché offices and consulates in accord with the easing restrictions under the law.

Information Team
State Administration Council

THE State Administration Council will specifically ease restrictions for service personnel, intellectuals and intelligentsia, and persons from various arenas and citizens who, with worries, absconded from the country except for persons who committed murders, robberies, setting fires, mine explosions and intentional attacks on security troops, those who crowded to attack public service personnel and some people, those who destroyed government and private-owned buildings and those who are highly involved in the CDM activities by providing monetary assistance and other means.

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanmar 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

Weakness happened in the education sector

SENIOR General first and foremost expressed his wish to improve the education standard of the country. But states and ethnic areas faced weakness of rural education due to language barriers and poor transport facilities. In successive eras of the governments, weakness happened in the education sector because of lesser number of teachers.

(Excerpt from the speech by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the coordination meeting on the higher-education sector on 18 January 2022.)

The Government set aim for ensuring prosperity and food sufficiency: Senior General

IF Mandalay utilizes remarkable development gained in terms of multiparty democratic governments, it will be a business hub of the State, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in meeting with leaders of all religious organizations, town elders, officials from Mandalay Industrial Zone Management Committee, Mandalay Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry at the city hall in Mandalay Region yesterday.

The meeting was attended by leaders from Mandalay-based YMBA, Upper Myanmar Hindu Religious Organization, Mandalay Catholic Cathedral, Mandalay Baptist Church, Islamic Religious Organization, MMIC Chairman U Khin Maung Hla, MRCCI Chair U Win Htay and officials.



Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets religious leaders in upper Myanmar, town elders and officials on 23 January 2022.

Some organizations politically utilize the generating of electricity in Myanmar with reasons on impacts of natural environments. So, Myanmar does not have sufficient electeicity. Use of LED bulbs can reduce electric-ity consumption as well as charges of electricity bills. Biogas from the ag-riculture and livestock farms can be utilized for consumption.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said that Mandalay is of importance for Buddhists, Islams and Chris-tians as well as other State leaders and artistes. If Mandalay utilizes remarkable development gained in terms of multiparty democratic governments, it will

be a business hub of the State. Maravijaya Buddha Image is being carved with the use of marble rocks obtained from Ma-daya Township, and the image will be the largest marble image not only in Myanmar but in the world. As Mandalay is a cultural city of Myanmar, it is necessary

to preserve the culture and pre-stige of Myanmar dynasties.

Mandalay is a centre for transport of goods to across the nation in a convenient manner. Efforts were made for ensuring sufficiency of electricity in succes-sive eras. Now, implementation of the electricity projects are delaying due to various distur-bances.

Some organizations polit-ically utilize the generating of electricity in Myanmar with rea-sons on impacts of natural en-vironments. So, Myanmar does not have sufficient electeicity. Use of LED bulbs can reduce electricity consumption as well as charges of electricity bills. Bi-ogas from the agriculture and livestock farms can be utilized for consumption.

The government is striving for improvement of roads and bridges so as to ensure smooth transportation for the people.

Hence, all need to make efforts for development of economy based on good transport facil-ities.

Every country is striving for development of respective countries. Governments of devel-oping countries, least developed countries, G-7 countries and OECD countries are focusing on development of their coun-tries. The governments which cannot manage development of the countries face various prob-lems. Those who could develop the countries can take support of the people. Hence, efforts are being made for development of the nation. And individual people need to strive for improvement of their lives.

The Government set aim for ensuring prosperity and food suf-ficiency. It means all the people must be happy in working and the country must be prevailing rule of law, peaceful and free

working. All school age children will have the chance to learn education. The Senior General requested all religious leaders in Mandalay to urge the people to participate in prosperity and development of the country. All must join hands in prosperity of the nation and food sufficiency.

The Senior General present-ed gifts and K15 million each to religious organizations in Mandalay through respective religious leaders.

On behalf of the religious leaders in Mandalay, Vice Chair-man of Upper Myanmar Hin-duism Organization U Maung Maung Lwin spoke words of thanks, pledging that they will coordinate to successfully serve the religious measures and in-tersts of the State.

After the ceremony, the Sen-ior General cordially greeted the attendees to the meeting.—MNA

SAC Chairman donates offertories to Maha Wizitayon monastery in Mandalay, pays homage to Hsutaungpyae Pagoda on Mandalay Hill



Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing pays homage to State Ovadacariya presiding Nayaka of the monastery Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Vicarinda Bhivamsa in Mandalay on 23 January 2022.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing visited Sasana Hitakari Dhamma Beikman of Maha Wizitayon monastery in Chanayethazun Township in Mandalay Region and donated rice, cooking oil and offertories for members of the Sangha yesterday.

The Senior General firstly paid homage to State Ovadacariya presiding Nayaka of the monastery Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Bhaddanta Vicarinda Bhivamsa, and asked after him, and instructed relevant officials to make the necessary arrangements.

After receiving the Five Precepts, the Senior General and party offered K 15 million for nine prerequisites, 50 bags of rice, 5 bags of gram, 10 containers of cooking oil, 10 bags of potatoes, 10 bags of onion, including nutritious food and medicines donated by the families of Tatmadaw (Army, Navy and Air).

In the evening, the Senior General and party paid homage to the Hsutaungpyae Pagoda on Mandalay Hill, and donated cash for all round renovation to the members of the pagoda board of trustees. The Senior General also instructed officials to maintain the uphill road, the stairways of the pagoda and Mandalay Hill, terrace and the roof of the pagoda, for long term existence.—MNA

Second batch of Covaxin COVID-19 vaccine (1 mln doses) donated by Nippon Foundation arrives in Yangon

A QATAR Airways Flight was landed at the Yangon International Airport yesterday morning, carrying a total of 1 million doses of Covaxin COVID-19 vaccine, donated by the Nippon Foundation of Japan through the Myanmar Red Cross Society.

The Nippon Foundation donated 2 million doses of the vaccine worth of USD 17 million to Myanmar, and the first one million doses arrived on 9 January. Officials from the Yangon Region Public Health Department received the vaccines and have stored them at the Central Cold Room under the specific temperature.

The Ministry of Health has been conducting COVID-19 vaccination throughout the country as per priority groups. As of 22



Packages of Covaxin COVID-19 vaccine donated by Nippon Foundation arrive at Yangon International Airport on 23 January 2022.

January, 18.25 million people have been vaccinated twice and 3.49 million people have been vaccinated once, making 21.74 million people having been vaccinated at least once. Therefore, a total of 40 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in Myanmar.

The Ministry has bought 45 million doses of the vaccine and received more than 15 million doses. The people are urged to not miss a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine given to them, and those who have received their first doses are also encouraged to visit nearby immunization centres for the second dose and to actively participate in the immunization activities, according to the Ministry of Health.—MNA

MoALI Union minister inspects development activities in Rakhine state

UNION Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Tin Htut Oo visited Mya Sein Yaung Village Project and Saemaul Undong in Myanmar (SMU) Project in Thandwe Township in Rakhine State on 22 January.

During the meeting with the villagers, the Union Minister said the socio-economic situation of the self-reliant villages has improved significantly despite the state policies to narrow the gap between urban and rural development, and the technical and development assistances. He also called on the growing villages to share their experiences as role models for other villages in their area and work hand in hand with development goals.

Afterwards, the Union Minister and party inspected the construction of Yaysin Dam near Yaysin village and instructed officials to make field trips to



Union Minister U Tin Htut Oo views progress of development in Rakhine State.

install sluice gates and dams in the rivers to provide more fresh water in Rakhine State. He then visited the cattle and pig breeding activities under the Mya Sein Yaung Project in Khayanmaw village, regional development

and income generation activities under the SMU New Village Project, and agricultural fields, and discussed the requirements. The Union Minister and party also visited TMP Company's Cold Storage in Dwarawady Myothit

and inspected the packing of shrimp and crab.

In the evening, the Union Minister held a meeting with the entrepreneurs from rubber businesses, fishing and livestock businesses within Thandwe Dis-

trict and discussed requirements for efforts to increase food security and export of the district, balance cooperation between the departments and the private sector for the development of agriculture and livestock.—MNA

Plan to set Myeik Archipelago as fifth popular tourism spot



Holidaymakers are taking relaxation at the beach of island at Myeik Archipelago in Taninthayi Region. **PHOTO: MYINT OO (MYEIK)**

THE stakeholders in tourism sector need to endeavour to designate Myeik Archipelago in Taninthayi Region as the fifth popular tourism spot in Myanmar.

At present, Yangon Region, Mandalay Region, Bagan cultural zone and Taunggyi city are rated as the most popular destinations in Myanmar. Myeik Archipelago is the only marine based tourism spot in the country.

In order to effectuate the

tourism development in Myeik Archipelago, the transportation sector plays a pivotal role. The COVID-19 pandemic caused disruptions in transport. The suspension in local transport to Taninthayi Region by bus or by plane hinders local tourism in the region. Only the group tours with charter service are seen in the region at the moment, said Dr Thein Swe Myint, chair of Myeik District Tourism Association.

The enchanting coastline,

picturesque views, natural pebble beach, sandy beach, study the culture, tradition, customs and living styles of Salon and Kay-in ethnic people are the tourist attractions in the Myeik Archipelago. Additionally, the visitors can enjoy fun sporting activities such as cycling, swimming, diving and snorkeling, fishing, studying natural rainforest and fishing businesses. Therefore, Myeik Archipelago is required to be listed on the top five desti-

nations in Myanmar.

"Marine ecotourism attracts 60 per cent of overall tourists. The majority of the tourist eyes Myeik Archipelago as its untouched islands are paradise in the Southeast Asia. As a result of this, conservation of coral reefs and aquaculture resource are a must for sustainable tourism. We will make a collaborative effort to develop the Community-Based Tourism as well. Consequently, those businesses linking with tourism industry will also thrive. It will enhance the socio-economy of the residents in the region," said an official of Taninthayi Region Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

Natthamee, Lay, Thameehla

and Donenyaungmine islands and Done waterfall are the tourist attractions of Myeik Archipelago. The tourists also eye the famous Smart Islands out of 800 islands of Myeik Archipelago as it has natural pebble beach and sandy beach.

The local residents are looking forward to tract to tourism recovery in Myeik Archipelago, Taninthayi Region. Myeik Archipelago has already attracted the attentions of local visitors and tourists. The tour companies received tons of inquiries about tour plan to Myeik islands. There were approximately 40 tour companies who have been offering service to Myeik Islands.—Myint Oo (Myeik)/GNLM



Photo shows natural pebble beach of island in Taninthayi Region.

112 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 23 January, total figure rises to 534,071

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 534,071 after 112 new cases were reported on 23 January 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 512,201 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 19,310 after 1 died.

COVID-19 vaccine is being injected to those of priority groups in regions and states for prevention and control of the disease. Up to 22-1-2022, a total of 21,746,417 people have been vaccinated. Of them, 18,254,992 people have been fully vaccinated and 3,491,425 people yet to get the second shots.—MNA

MoST Union minister inspects IT university, ICT research centre

UNION Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw met with the Rectors of the Technological and Computer Universities in Yangon Region yesterday morning at the Information and Technology University.

At the meeting, the Union Minister instructed them to make learning more effective by using ICT enable students to develop a qualification and true educational education system, to do systematic work to improve classrooms, labs and libraries, to provide a good learning environment for students to enjoy learning and to continue teaching capacity courses for the teachers.

The Rector of the Information and Technology University



Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw meets rectors of Technological and Computer Universities in Yangon Region on 23 January.

ty presented the information of the university. The Union

Minister coordinated the requirements presented by the

faculty members and staff of the university, and inspected

the classrooms, laboratory rooms, teaching aids and the library.

In the afternoon, the Union Minister arrived at the Information and Communication Technology Research Centre and made necessary instructions for the preparations for the opening of ICT development trainings under the Mekong-Lanchang Cooperation Special Fund, to continue ICT human resource development training courses in collaboration with C-DAC of India, JICA of Japan. He also looked around the classrooms, lab rooms, server rooms and the library and coordinated the requirement presented by the staff.—MNA

Yangon Region Minister for Development Affairs inspects development tasks in Thanlyin Township

YANGON Region Development Minister U Bo Htay yesterday morning discussed the upgrading of roads in Thanlyin Township and inspected the flood control works and the trade in the Thanlyin Myoma Market.

Firstly, the Minister and party inspected the construction site of Thiri Road's brick drain in North Myoma Ward, Thanlyin Township and instructed officials to collect garbage and waste in Lanmadaw Road which continues to flow from the drains and to improve the access road from houses during construction.

Next, the Minister inspected the construction work of the 70 feet long, 40 feet wide and 32 feet high three-story office

building inside the Thanlyin Township Development Committee office.

At Thanlyin Myoma Market, he inspected the 480 feet long, 16 feet wide and 2 inch thick asphalt concrete paving of the market road and 320 feet long, 14 feet wide, and two inches thick asphalt concrete paving of the warehouse road.

The Minister also inspected the systematic settlement of shops in the fish farm in accordance with the COVID-19 guidelines and ordered to manage the proper flow of water in drains.

After that, the Minister viewed expansion of Bogyoke Ne Win Street between Kyai-kkhauk Pagoda Road traffic



Yangon Region Minister for Development Affairs U Bo Htay views construction of drains in Thanlyin Township on 23 January.

light and the hospital and inspected concrete road exten-

sion and construction of drainage cover. Next, he looked into

paving of 1.5-inch thick asphalt concrete on the road.—MNA

YRTC to set three highway lanes to reduce traffic congestion



Photo shows scene of traffic condition on No 3 Highway in Yangon. PHOTO: KO NAING (BAGO)

THE Yangon Region Transport Committee (YRTC) will designate three highway lanes for heavy trucks, highway cargo trucks and express buses in order to slash traffic congestion at the corner of No 3 Highway and Khayebin Road.

According to the set new lanes, highway trucks that depart Insein Township will pass the old Yangon-Bago route through Htaukkyant Street, No 4 Highway. After that, highway express excluding cargo trucks are to pass Pyay Road to Yan-

gon-Mandalay Highway through Khayebin Road. The third route is trucks plying regularly across Yangon Region, trucks en route from Dagon Myothit (East) to highway through Zaykabar Industrial Zone and highway express leaving for Mawlamyine-Ye-Dawei-Myeik-Taninthayi-Kawthoung have to pass the old Bago route. Those instructions for the new lanes of heavy trucks and highway express will come into effective on 1 February.

Yangon Region govern-

ment has instructed the traffic inspection teams to supervise the vehicles in a systematic way. Myanmar Highway Freight Transportation Services Association and Myanmar Container Trucks Association are notified of the new lanes as well.

Moreover, township-level inspection subcommittees will also conduct a surprise check on the vehicles whether they abide by the instructions or not. The related associations must notify the truck operators to follow the rules.—Ko Naing (Bago)/GNLM

Pigeon pea price unlikely to fall despite abundant supply

THE prices of pigeon pea continue gaining in spite of the high supply and they are unlikely to fall on the back of strong demand by India as well, a trader from Bayintnaung wholesale market shared his opinion.

The price of pigeon pea touched a high of over K1,380,000 per tonne in the third week of January 2022, which is a drop of K50,000 within a week.

Myanmar can export 250,000 tonnes of black gram (urad) and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon pea under the G to G pact. Additionally, India extended relaxations of conditions regarding clearance consignment until 31 March 2022.

At present, the price of pigeon pea in India is rising following the relaxation on bean import quota by India, according to Bayintnaung wholesale Centre's price data.

Myanmar's pigeon pea is primarily shipped to India, and also exported to Singapore, the US,



Samples of pulses and beans are displayed of wholesale centre.

Canada, Pakistan, the UK, and Malaysia. But, the export volume to other countries rather than to India is extremely small.

The domestic bean market is positively related to the law of

supply and demand, said an official of Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association.

This year, the G to G pact ensured strong market next five

years, along with other relaxations on import quota, Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization under the Ministry of Commerce stated.

Myanmar's agriculture sec-

tor is the backbone of country's economy and it contributes to over 30 per cent of Gross Domestic Products. The country primarily cultivates paddy, corn, cotton, sugarcane, and pulses and beans. Its second largest production is the pulses and beans, counting for 33 per cent of agro-products and covering 20 per cent of growing acres. Among them, black gram, pigeon pea and green gram constitute 72 per cent of bean acreage. Other beans including peanut, chickpea, soya pea, black eyed beans, butter bean and rice bean are also grown in the country.

Myanmar exported more than 38,000 tonnes of pigeon pea to the foreign trade partners between 1 October 2021 and 14 January 2022 in the current mini-budget period (Oct 2021-Mar 2022), generating an income of US\$25.6 million, according to the Ministry of Commerce's trade data.—KK/GNLM

Foreign rentals condominiums continue downward spiral



Condominiums are mushrooming in urban areas of Yangon City.

FOREIGN rentals show a downward trend from houses to condominiums, real estate agents stated.

As the foreign expatriates working in Myanmar went back to their home countries, the rental market for condominium sharply plummeted down.

The property market slashed the rental price by half. For instance, the rent for property valued at K1 million dropped to K600,000. Furthermore, the occupancy rate is drastically declining. The condominium market can solely rely on the local

residents at the moment. Most of the Japanese, Korean and Chinese businessmen returned to their countries and the foreign rental is seldomly found, said a realtor in Yangon Region.

The COVID-19 negative consequences shut down some foreign investment enterprises and the condominium property market relying on foreign expatriates plunged to 70 per cent.

As a result of this, the realtors are forced to reduce the rents. Nevertheless, the occupancy is quite low. —Ko Naing (Bago)/GNLM

Bulk supply of rice causes price slide

THE prices of rice and rice crops slipped owing to the bulk supply of rice in the domestic markets, traders said.

The prices of rice crop in domestic markets stand at K616,000-K920,000 per 100-baskets. At present, the rice worth of K43,000-K50,000 per bag is highly demanded in the domestic market. The prices of high-quality rice move in the range of K34,500-K58,000 per bag, Bayintnaung Rice Wholesale Centre's price data indicated.

Meanwhile, the low-quality rice fetches K2,2500-K2,3500

per bag. Low-quality rice was mostly purchased by Chinese traders yet COVID-19 restriction measures negatively affected the border trade between Myanmar and China.

At present, traders turned to maritime trade for rice export. Myanmar shipped rice and broken rice to China, regional countries and European Union countries through maritime trade. Trading in the domestic market is quite sluggish amidst the excess supply.

Myanmar has shipped more than 801,000 tonnes of rice and broken rice to foreign

trade partners between 1 October and 30 December in the current six-month mini-budget period (2021-2022), Myanmar Rice Federation stated.

Myanmar also generated an income of US\$700 million from 2 million tonnes of rice exports to the foreign countries in the past 2020-2021 financial year.

About 80,000 bags of rice and broken rice were earlier traded per day at the Bayintnaung Rice Wholesale Centre, whereas the trade volume plummeted to about 30,000 bags.—GNLM



Workers are seen in production process of rice mill.

Strive for enhancing the border trade process

BORDER trade camps along the Myanmar-China border-line temporarily closed for the outbreak of COVID-19 resumed their operations recently. The border trade process mostly relies on the Myanmar-China border.

Border trade camps namely Muse-Ruili, Chinshwe-haw-Lenchang, Kampaiti-Hteinchon and Lweje-Longchuan lie on the borderlines of both countries. Indeed, China is the main trade partner of Myanmar and it has put the largest amount of foreign investment in Myanmar. Among the border trade camps, the Muse-Ruili camp secures 83 per cent of the total border trade volume along the Myanmar-China border. It was reopened at the end of last year while the Lweje camp was reopened on 17 January 2022.

With the reopening of border trade camps, those from the

agricultural sector of Myanmar and businesspersons became reactive. They primarily export rice, pulses and beans, sesame, maize, corn, fruits, dried tea, marine products, rubber, gems and animal products to China and import machinery, plastic raw materials, chemicals, personal goods and electronic equipment. Due to statistics from China, the Myanmar-China trade volume reached US\$9.07 billion in the first six-month of 2021, exceeding seven per cent of economic growth rather than the previous year. As China has more than 1,000 million of population, Myanmar's export products are reliable for the consumption of China. To be able to solve the payment problems between the border area, the Central Bank of Myanmar allowed the direct payment of Myanmar kyat and Chinese yuan at the border area as

of 14 December 2021, contributing to smooth trading between Myanmar and Chinese businesspersons.

Whenever financial crisis and trade problems were based on the US dollar, its impacts caused raising the forex rate of the US dollar. As such, trading faced losses. Raising the prices of fuel, gold, cooking oil and other consumer goods is based on fluctuation of the US dollar, but on the political situation. Thanks to direct payment of kyat and yuan, the monetary and commodity market can ease the impacts.

It is necessary to strive for increasing the export volume and decreasing the import volume. As now the Myanmar-China border trade resumes, efforts must be made for further manufacturing the export products for earning incomes.

Now is the time to resume and resurge the State economy for recovery. Myanmar has to arrange rehabilitation in various kinds of businesses owned by the government and the business people. It is noticeable that only when the booming economy of the nation will help the people uplift living standards.



Every Individual ...

By Saw Phokwa

THIS article did not take the readers to the ocean and the sea beach as well. It can be assumed that the article expresses just a sample drop of water for enabling the readers to understand the gratitude of those who teach the pupils to have vocational education, techniques and basic knowledge with the aim of developing the society with an improved living standard in the history.

Learning capability

When knowledge was shared with each other, it can be seen that human was higher capable than animals in intelligence quotient. They have had efficient knowledge to control elephants with the use of a small goad. Horses installed with muzzles could be ridden and controlled to pull the chariots. A large number of

elephants and horses could be formed as troops to protect the country and safeguard the sovereignty. They could control buffalos and oxen to be used in farming works and transportation.

Times had passed an agricultural era, industrial manufacturing era and technological era and has reached now advanced technological era. Robots created by humans are working like humans through artificial intelligence (AI). But, the people of Myanmar are struggling in just agriculture and livestock farming similar to the social-economic status of the early man stage, with unreachable technologies. While we are trying to catch the speed of forerunners, some persons speedily running before us commit blocks in front of our legs on our way and make hindrances to us to fall on the

track. They all are naughtily making miseries to us.

Advanced technological era

When other countries use hypersonic bullet trains and supersonic jets, we, Myanmar is trying to efficiently use tractors and thrashers.

What data dominates the developed socio-economic era? As the shortest answer,

Isn't it education?

It must be a good education.

It must uplift education standards.

It is necessary to uplift education standards.

All need to encourage education.

Toward utter devastation

Some persons unwillingly to see the development of Myanmar people focus on attacking the education estate as the main target

for its deterioration in Myanmar lagging behind the development of other countries. They dangerously assail Myanmar. Both internal and external saboteurs attack Myanmar as follows: -

1. killing teachers not to dare to do teaching
2. killing and shooting abbot members of the Sangha
3. setting fire to schools not to teach students
4. bombing school buildings not to teach students
5. posing threat to teachers of going to teach
6. deterring students not to go to school
7. obstructing students not to receiving the vaccination
8. setting fire to and bombing schools
9. bombing education offices
10. posing threat to teachers

online

It is sorrowful to see and hear that schoolchildren and student youths who are new generations of Myanmar are being attacked in various ways and means. These are serious pains for the State and the people.

Terrorist murderers are satisfied with seeing substandard youths and their uneducated measures losing to competitions with the international community. Likewise, some persons with rudeness and atrocities provide arms and ammunition, mines and bombs to those murderers. Their despicable acts are a black drop in Myanmar history, isn't it? We should not keep tolerance. We must perform a counterattack on them.

Such a situation caused dis-

appointment to parents of children in a short term. It caused sadness to teachers. As those terrorists are digging and cutting the education estate from its foundation, it should be put on record in the long term that they commit atrocious and despicable acts in cold blood to destroy the country. Let's deter them!

Time to stop

I'd like to make a request. Those terrorists who don't have sympathy over humans may not have a good history. Everybody is creating their respective histories. Now is time to respond to and clear the enemies who destroy the learning opportunities of our offspring. Only when everybody bravely participates in the movements to fight against the terrorists for the sake of the State and the people will they be dutiful for their histories.

How vaccine misinformation left US children vulnerable to Omicron

The rapid spread of the Omicron variant led to record pediatric infections and hospitalizations in the US, and anti-vaccination misinformation that tells parents the shots are dangerous is adding to the risk.

THE Covid-19 pandemic took a deadly toll on adults in the United States for two years while largely sparing children from adding to the dire statistics.

But the rapid spread of the Omicron variant led to record pediatric infections and hospitalizations in the country, and anti-vaccination misinformation that tells parents the shots are dangerous is adding to the risk.

The chances of young people dying from Covid-19 remain low. The shots greatly reduce the odds of severe illness, and vaccinated mothers may pass protection to their babies, but vaccine hesitancy pushed online leaves both parents and children vulnerable.

From worries that the shots were developed too quickly, to false claims that the jabs can impact future fertility, physician Wassim Ballan of Phoenix Children's Hospital said combating misinformation has become part of his job.

"Unfortunately, a lot of times when we're having this time with a family to discuss these things is when the child is already in hospital," he said of the problem.

Parents need to understand that the vaccines are "the most important tool for protection," especially to avoid multisystem in-

flammatory syndrome in children, a rare and dangerous complication that can follow a mild Covid-19 infection.

Only 27 percent of children aged five to 11 have received a first dose of the vaccine in the United States. Hospitalizations reached a pandemic high of 914 children per day this month, up dramatically from the previous peak of 342 in September 2021.

Protection from the womb

The first week of January 2022 saw Texas Children's Hospital in Houston report 12 babies in intensive care with Covid-19.

Babies are too young for the Covid-19 shot, but Kathryn Gray, attending physician of maternal-fetal medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital, said research increasingly shows that vaccination during pregnancy leads to antibodies safely being transferred to the baby, offering limited protection.

Expectant mothers have also shown hesitancy to get the shot after they were excluded from initial clinical trials.

Gray is among those who are monitoring the situation. "To date there have been no safety signals" in the data, she said, adding that

she has "a lot of confidence" in telling patients the shot is safe during pregnancy for mother and baby.

"If they truly want to protect their infants, getting vaccinated is the thing that will protect them the most at this time."

Health agencies across the globe say the same, but the initial lack of data continues to be exploited in vaccine-opposed messaging on social media. Posts on Facebook and Twitter claimed that stillbirths rose following the push to vaccinate pregnant people, even though going unprotected against the disease is the greater risk.

Epidemiologists Carla DeSisto and Sascha Ellington from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said data from 1.2 million US births showed "no evidence the rate of stillbirths is higher overall during the pandemic."

But their research did reveal the risks of contracting the virus while pregnant.

Unvaccinated milk

Breastfeeding has also been the target of misinformation, with posts claiming that babies suffered rashes or even death upon nursing from a vaccinated mother.

The Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine recommends vacci-

nation for those who are lactating and says there is no reason to stop breastfeeding upon receiving the vaccine.

Misinformation became increasingly common in private Facebook groups where parents connect to share and sell breast milk, group moderators told AFP.



Only 27% of children aged five to 11 received a first dose of vaccine in the US with hospitalizations reaching a pandemic high of 914 children per day this month. A 5-year-old girl prepares to receive a reduced dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine during a trial at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. PHOTO: DUKE UNIVERSITY/AFP



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 23 January 2022)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 24 January 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State and isolated in Chin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw, Bago, Yangon and Ayeyawady regions and Kayah State and 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: Likelihood of isolated to scattered rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin and Chin states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 January 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 January 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 January 2022: Partly cloudy.

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Illegal foodstuff, teak timber, vehicles seized



Officials check seized illegal goods.

EFFECTIVE action is being taken to prevent illegal trade in accordance with the law under the supervision of the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee.

On 18 January, investigations were carried out under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force.

A total of 6.9686 tons of sawn timber (estimated value K906,536) including 3.4946 tons of various types of timber (estimated

value K559,136), and 3.474 tons of Taungthayet timber (estimated value K347,400) were seized in Taungup Township of Rakhine State on 19 January and were handed over to the Township Forest Department and action is being taken in accordance with the forest law.

On 22 January, at Asia World Port Container Inspection Station, Food Supplement Dietary Supplement that contains more

than what is stated in the import declaration ID imported from the USA (net value of K70,020,000) including four items of Food Supplement Dietary Supplement Item (estimated value of K26,940,000) and eight items of Food Supplement Dietary Supplement Item (estimated value K43,080,000) were confiscated and action is being taken in accordance with the customs law.

Next, a combined inspection

team led by the Customs Department conducted a search at the permanent Yaypu checkpoint and seized 120 China-made TOF-FEE Candy cartons (estimated value of K2,400,000) without any official documents and is taking action in accordance with customs law.

In addition, combined inspections were conducted by the Joint Task Force under the management of the Anti-Trafficking Task Force from Kayin State.

A total of K23,065,600 worth of goods including 720 pairs of shoes (estimated value K4,065,600) carried by one 16-wheeler (Mitsubishi Canter) (estimated value K19,000,000) were seized on Asian Highway, Thayagon Village-tract, Hpa-an Township and action is being taken in accordance with the customs law.

In addition, under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force, inspection was carried out by joint teams led by the Forest Department on 22 and 23 January.

In the forest reserves of Toungoo and Thayawady districts, a total of 8.7462 tonnes of timber (estimated value 1,524,660

kyats) including 6.2862 tons of illegal teak (estimated value K1,438,560) and other types of 2.46 tons of timber (estimated value K86,100) were seized and action is being taken in accordance with the forest law.

Similarly, a combined team led by the Customs Department conducted inspections at the 16th-mile Kyaukchaw checkpoint in Mandalay Region yesterday.

Next, 48 bottles of Chinese brand Chunliang Yuanjing brand liquor (estimated value K480,000) and 400 TAILI brand 36W bulbs (estimated value K800,000) were seized and action is being taken in accordance with customs law.

In addition, Sagaing Region, under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force, and led by the Forest Department, combined inspections were carried out in Tamu and Homalin Townships, and 14.428 tonnes of Kanyin (approximately K721,400) and action is being taken in accordance with the forest law. Thus, a total of 11 arrests with the estimated value of K99,918,196 were made from 18 to 23 January according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee.—MNA

IDPs return to Kayah State as areas calm down

PDF terrorists and some members of KNPP in Kayah State have been identified and arrested by security forces as clashes broke out in January, and innocent people from the area, including from Loikaw, were fleeing away the fighting to safer areas.

Security forces have regained control of the area since 22 January and the area has returned to normal, with markets reopening and trading peacefully.

Pilgrims regularly visit

pagodas and other religious temples.

In addition, the security forces coordinated with the relevant organizations as necessary for the resettlement of the displaced people. Among the IDPs, 314 people from Loikaw and surrounding villages returned to their homes on 22 and 23 January.

It is reported that the relevant authorities have systematically accepted them and are providing necessary assistance.—MNA



A main road is being packed with vendors and buyers in Kayah State.



PDF terrorists detonate a mine, injuring a firefighter in Budalin, Sagaing region

PDF terrorists attacked a fire truck with a homemade mine in Budalin Township, Sagaing Region, destroying the windshield and injuring a member of the fire brigade.

The incident happened on the afternoon of 22 January at the Yontaw village junction on the Budalin-Monywa road when one of two fire trucks returned after putting out the fire happened near Zeetaw village.

The injured firefighter was treated at Budalin Township People's Hospital for minor wounds to the nose and arms. It is reported that investigations are underway to identify and arrest the perpetrators under the law, according to the Myanmar Police Force.—MNA

Japan's daily COVID cases top 50,000, new record for 5th straight day

JAPAN'S confirmed daily coronavirus cases on Saturday topped 50,000, setting a new record for the fifth day in a row, as the highly transmissible Omicron variant continues to spread across the country quickly with more areas likely to be put under a quasi-state of emergency.

A majority of Japan's 47 prefectures hit a record high on Saturday, with Tokyo confirming 11,227 daily cases and surpassing its previous record of 9,699 logged Friday. Osaka Prefecture in western Japan trailed behind Tokyo with a fresh high of 7,375 cases.

Since the country confirmed its first case of Omicron on Nov. 30, the number of COVID-19 cases increased 100 times in three weeks, rising to 54,576 cases on Saturday from 534 logged on Jan. 1.

The nationwide tally eclipsed the previous record high of 49,854 reported on Friday.



The nationwide tally eclipse the previous record high of 49,854 reported on Friday. PHOTO: KYODO

Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike urged residents to be mindful of the transmissibility of the virus and vowed to make all efforts to curb its further spread.

With the infection count surging rapidly nationwide and fears over the strain on the medical system, the Japanese government has now placed 16 prefectures under the quasi-state of emergency.

Tokyo and 12 other prefectures were added on Friday, now allowing their governors to ask restaurants and bars to close early and stop or limit the serving of alcohol. Several more areas have officially sought or are preparing to seek similar requests. — Kyodo ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Russia sees record daily virus cases amid Omicron surge

RUSSIA on Friday reported a record number of new coronavirus infections over the previous 24 hours, a government tally showed, with officials warning of surging cases driven by the Omicron variant.

A government website reported 49,513 new infections in Russia, which is already one the world's worst-hit countries by caseload, surpassing the previous record set in November of 41,335. — AFP ■

Argentina reports first case of flurona

THE first case of flurona, a double infection with both COVID-19 and influenza, was reported in Argentina's eastern province Santa Fe, local health ministry said on Thursday.

The Santa Fe province confirmed the flurona case in a three-year-old boy, said the ministry, adding that the boy is in good condition and will go to the general ward in the next few hours. — Xinhua ■

Hong Kong public housing COVID-19 cluster rises to over 100

HONG KONG health authorities have confirmed more than 100 COVID-19 new cases on Saturday at a public housing estate.

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) said 96 preliminary positive cases are linked to the Yat Kwai House cluster in Kwai Chung Estatem which is under a five-day lockdown since Friday. — Xinhua ■

Poles urged to work from home as infections spike



People light candles to commemorate deaths from COVID-19 in Poland in Warsaw on 11 January 2022. PHOTO: JANEK SKARZYNSKI / AFP

POLISH Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki on Friday urged Poles to work from home as daily COVID-19 infections reached their highest ever level.

Morawiecki also said Poles can receive free lateral flow tests in pharmacies starting next week and doctors will do home visits for elderly COVID patients. "The fifth wave is now a fact... We are seeing record numbers of infections and we are therefore dealing with a new situation," Morawiecki told reporters. "We recommend working remotely. The public administration will switch to remote work as soon as possible. I appeal to

employers to do the same."

Poland, where less than two-thirds of the adult population is fully vaccinated against COVID, on Friday reported 36,665 infections – a new daily record since the start of the pandemic – as well as 248 deaths. The government has been heavily criticised by the opposition for not doing enough to combat the crisis, including through vaccine certificates.

Thirteen of the government's 17 medical advisers on coronavirus resigned last week, accusing the populist government of inaction in the face of the pandemic. — AFP ■

Nearly 100 employees at Islamabad airport infected with COVID-19

THE fifth deadly wave of coronavirus in Pakistan has left approximately 100 employees at Islamabad airport infected with COVID, reported ARY News.

Initially, the Omicron strain was detected in some officers of the ATC control tower which infected the other officers and personnel at the airport. The infected employees included senior officers including director, joint director, assistant director and ATC control. Furthermore, because of a lack of prevention measures at the Islamabad airport, it is expected that more employees will contract the infection. Thousands of travellers were being tested for COVID-19 at the airport, according to reports, reported the news channel. The Islamabad airport is also crowded with people these days, because of a complete restoration of airline operations, which has become worrisome for airport officials.

Notably, Pakistan registered 7,678 COVID cases, the highest daily figure since the start of the pandemic in 2020, official data showed on Friday morning. — ANI ■



The infected employees included senior officers including director, joint director, assistant director and ATC control. PHOTO: ANI

NEWS
IN BRIEF

IMF, ECB leaders voice concern over volatile global economic outlook at WEF meeting

ON the last day of the World Economic Forum's (WEF) "Davos Agenda 2022" virtual event, the leaders of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Central Bank (ECB) discussed the future of the global economy and called for urgent policy actions to ensure an equitable recovery.

During the WEF's week-long dialogue that began on Jan. 17, several heads of state and government, cabinet ministers, ambassadors, heads or senior officials of international organizations, chief executive officers and other leaders reflected on the forum's theme-setting Agenda on the "State of the World" and discussed the critical challenges facing the world today. — Xinhua ■

Thailand's foreign trade up 23.1 pct in 2021

THAILAND'S foreign trade volume totaled 538.77 billion U.S. dollars in 2021, up 23.1 percent from one year earlier, the Ministry of Commerce announced Friday.

Exports, a main engine powering the country's economic growth, expanded 17.1 percent year on year, the highest growth rate since 2010. Its imports surged 29.8 percent last year, also the fastest pace of increase in 11 years, according to the ministry.

Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister and Commerce Minister Jurin Laksanavisit attributed the strong export growth to the rising demand from major trading partners amid global economic recovery, collaboration between the ministry and the private sector, as well as a weaker Thai currency, the baht.

Looking forward, Jurin expected the country's currency and an easing situation of container shortage to further support exports, adding that the implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement will also help boost exports. — AFP ■

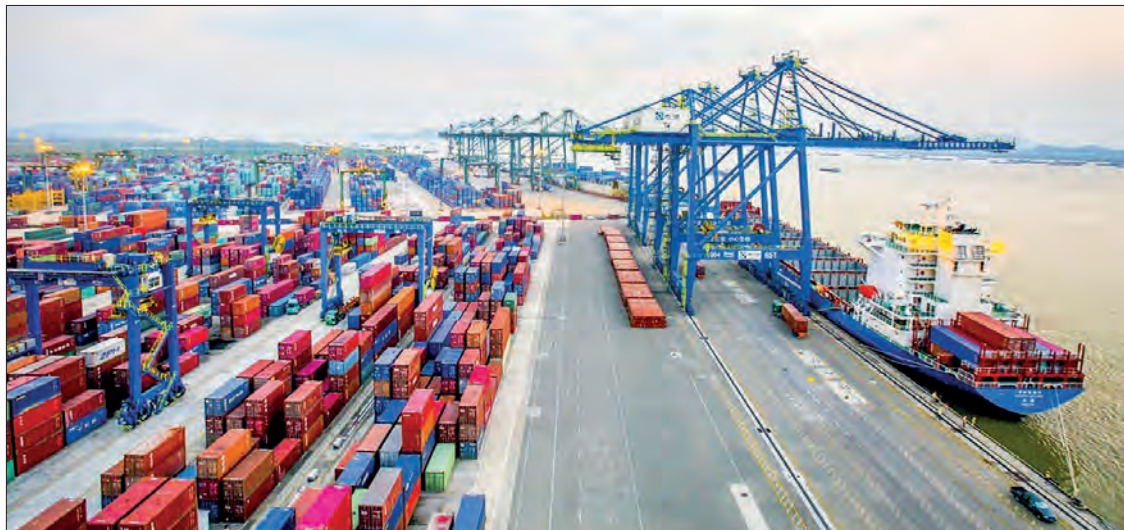
Fed sharpens inflation-fighting tools as rate hikes near

THE Federal Reserve has its inflation-fighting weapons ready to fire, and when the US central bank's policy committee convenes this coming week, the focus will not be on whether they will pull the trigger but rather how many times.

With the Omicron variant of Covid-19 adding to economic uncertainty and fueling a spike in consumer prices rose not seen for decades, the Fed's decision Wednesday will be closely scrutinized for signs policymakers will take more aggressive steps to contain inflation.

The policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC), which opens its two-day meeting on Tuesday, is widely expected to begin hiking interest rates in March, though a few economists note the possibility of early action. — AFP ■

China's waterway freight, passenger volumes rise in 2021



China's waterway freight and passenger volumes rose year-on-year in 2021. PHOTO: XINHUA

CHINA'S waterway freight and passenger volumes rose year on year in 2021, according to the data from the Ministry of Transport.

Freight volume totaled 8.24 billion tonnes last year, up 8.2

percent from a year ago.

China's southernmost province of Hainan saw the biggest increase in waterway freight volume, up 52 percent year on year.

Last year, waterway passenger trips totaled 163.37 million,

up 9 percent year on year.

Northeast China's Jilin Province reported the sharpest rise in waterway passenger trips, surging 160.9 percent from a year earlier, the data showed. — Xinhua ■

Turkish Cypriots head to polls amid economic crisis

TURKISH Cypriots are to cast their ballots Sunday for a snap legislative election in the breakaway northern third of the Mediterranean island after a campaign dominated by an economic crisis.

The self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) — recognised only by Ankara — has been hit hard by the Covid pandemic and the plummeting value of the Turkish lira.

Analysts said there has been a lack of interest in the poll among some 204,000 voters who were "concerned primarily with their health, safety and economic welfare". "Compared to the previous elections in northern Cyprus, there is much less energy and enthusi-



Journalists walk next to the drilling ship 'Yavuz' scheduled to search for oil and gas off Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus at the port of Dilovasi outside Istanbul, on 20 June 2019. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

asm in the air," political scientists Ahmet Sozen and Devrim Sahin wrote on the website of Italian think tank ISPI.

Cyprus has been split since 1974 when Turkish forces occupied the northern part of the island in response to a

military coup sponsored by the junta in power in Greece at the time. Unlike in previous TRNC elections, campaigning this time has focused on the territory's economic woes rather than any talk of a solution to the problem. — AFP ■

Peru declares 'environmental emergency' on coastal area hit by oil spill



Cleaning crews work to remove oil from a beach in the Peruvian province of Callao on 19 January 2022 after a spill which occurred during the offloading process of the Italian-flagged tanker "Mare Doricum" at La Pampilla refinery caused by the abnormal waves recorded after the volcanic eruption in Tonga. PHOTO: CARLOS MANDUJANO /AFP

PERU on Saturday declared an "environmental emergency" along a stretch of coast hit by an oil spill caused by freak waves from a volcanic eruption in the South Pacific.

With the 90-day decree, the government said it plans "sustainable management" of 21 beaches tarred by 6,000 barrels of oil that spilled from a tanker ship unloading at a refinery last Saturday.

That accident followed the stunningly powerful eruption of an undersea volcano near the nation of Tonga, unleash-

ing tsunami waves around the Pacific and as far away as the United States.

In Peru the oil spill near Lima has fouled beaches, killed birds and harmed the fishing and tourism industries.

The government is demanding payment of damages from the Spanish energy giant which owns the refinery.

The environment ministry said 174 hectares — equivalent to 270 football fields — of sea, beaches and natural reserves were affected by the spill.

Crews are working to clean

up the spill.

In declaring the emergency Saturday, the environment ministry said: "the spill amounts to a sudden event of significant impact on the coastal marine ecosystem, which has major biological diversity."

It said that over the short term Repsol is responsible for emergency clean up operations.

Its refinery is in the town of Ventanilla near Lima.

Repsol has said the spill occurred because of freak waves caused by the eruption in the Pacific. — AFP ■

Rail company Alstom to hire 7,500 people worldwide, 1,000 in France

FRENCH railway equipment manufacturer Alstom has announced plans to hire 7,500 people worldwide this year, including 1,000 in France. The new jobs are to meet rising demand and record orders totalling 78 billion euros last year.

The firm hopes to hire 6,000 engineers and managers as well as 1,500 workers and technicians.

“These hires are aimed at projects involving rolling stock, signals, and

services,” Alstom said in a statement.

Order books have swollen since the company bought Canadian Bombardier Transport last year.

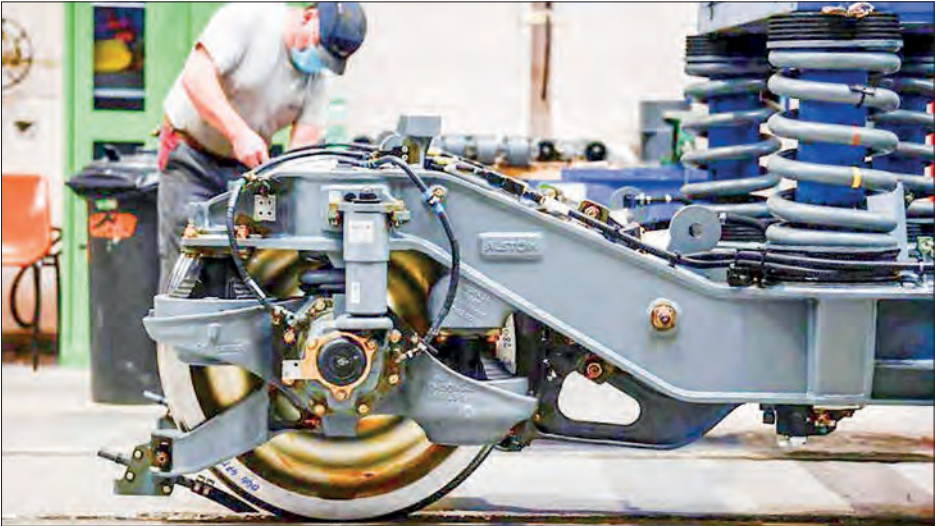
“The company doubled in size a year ago, we are present in 70 countries and our order sheet is quite big,” said the group’s director of human resources, Anne-Sophie Chauveau-Galas.

Alstom’s flagship constructions include high-speed TGV trains,

the commuter rail network in Johannesburg, the Paris metro and the tramway in Berlin.

It announced earlier this month a 1.8-billion-euro deal to supply up to 200 regional trains to Norway.

The framework contract with public rail company Norske Tog includes an initial firm order for 30 trains worth 380 million euros, Alstom said. The firm currently employs 72,000 salaried staff around the world. —AFP ■



An employee works on an axle of a train at the Alstom plant in Belfort, eastern France. Photo: Sebastien Bozon. PHOTO: AFP

‘Heating or eating’: Britons struggle with rising costs



Most foodbank produce is donated by members of the public. PHOTO: AFP

NESTLED amid superstores at a retail park, the Colchester Foodbank in eastern England last year gave out a total of 165 tonnes of food — enough to feed 17,000 people.

But that could be surpassed this year, as British annual inflation hits a 30-year high of 5.4 percent in December, as real wages fall, and food and energy costs rise.

“We think we’re like-

ly to feed 20,000 people in 2022,” said foodbank manager Mike Beckett. “If there is a slowdown, and things get worse, it might be as many as 25,000 people.

“That is certainly a bit of a nightmare. Our worst case scenario is maybe 30,000 people.”

About 95 percent of the produce at the foodbank, run by the Trussell Trust charity, comes from

members of the public donating at collection points at local supermarkets.

But the current economic climate has forced many who wouldn’t normally need food parcels to seek assistance.

“I normally put something in the foodbank trolley but now it’s my turn to have some help,” said Heidi, 45, who said she was struggling with price rises on “just everything”.

“I’m struggling big time, basically. Bills have got really high, that’s why I’m here,” she said.

Like many in Britain, this winter she will have to make the tough choice between “heating or eating”.

“My electricity is going up. I’m putting in probably about £80 (95 euros/110 dollars) a month now, as opposed to 40 or 50 last year,” she said.—AFP ■

Israeli firm develops body cams with facial recognition

TWENTY years after he planned the controversial barrier between Israel and Palestinians, Dany Tirza is developing a security tool that requires no cement: body cameras with facial recognition technology.

Tirza, a former Israeli army colonel, says his company Yozmot Ltd aims to produce a body-worn camera enabling police to

scan crowds and detect suspects in real time, even if their faces are obscured.

Facial recognition in law enforcement has sparked global criticism, with US tech giants backing away from providing the technology to police, citing privacy risks.

Proponents including Tirza, however, tout its ability to track down crim-

inals or missing persons.

“The policeman will know who he is facing,” he said.

‘It’s easy’

Tirza, 63, spoke to AFP from his home in Kfar Adumim, a Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank.

He said he partnered with Tel Aviv-based Corsight AI to develop a body-worn police camera that could instantly identify people in a crowd, even if they wear masks, make-up or camouflage, and could match them to photographs dating back decades.

Corsight CEO Rob Watts did not confirm the collaboration but said his company was working with some 230 “integrators” worldwide who incorporated facial recognition software into cameras. —AFP ■



Tirza said he partnered with Tel Aviv-based Corsight AI to develop a body-worn police camera that could instantly identify people in a crowd, even if they wear masks, make-up or camouflage, and could match them to photographs dating back decades. PHOTO: AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ASIATIC KING VOY.NO. (018W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ASIATIC KING VOY.NO. (018W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-1-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S GOLD STAR LINES PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V VENUS C VOY.NO. (2202S/2203N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V VENUS C VOY.NO. (2202S/2203N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-1-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V DA PING VOY.NO. (072)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V DA PING VOY.NO. (072)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-1-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: 2301185

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES

NEWS IN BRIEF

Buddhist monk who brought mindfulness to West dies in Vietnam

VIETNAMESE monk-turned-peace-activist Thich Nhat Hanh, a hugely influential Buddhist credited with bringing mindfulness to the West, has died aged 95.

The Zen master, whose reach within Buddhism is seen as second only to the Dalai Lama, spent nearly four decades in exile after being banished from his homeland for calling for an end to the Vietnam-American War.

Thich Nhat Hanh "passed away peacefully" at the Tu Hieu Temple in the city of Hue, Vietnam's Buddhist heartland, his Zen teaching organisation, the Plum Village Community of Engaged Buddhism, said. — AFP ■

UK pensioners heavily underpaid: official report

THE British government's Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) estimates that it has underpaid 134,000 pensioners, mostly women, over 1 billion British pounds (1.36 billion U.S. dollars) of their state pension entitlement.

The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee (PAC) said that in a report on Friday. Some errors date as far back as 1985.

"The errors, which mostly affect widows, divorcees and women who rely on their husband's pension contributions for some of their pension entitlement, happened because of the department's use of outdated systems and heavily manual processing. Small errors that were not recognized each time added up over years to significant sums of money," the report said.

Meg Hillier, chair of the PAC, said an unknown number of pensioners died without ever getting what was due to them.

Fixing the DWP's mistakes is expected to cost taxpayers over 24.3 million British pounds in staff costs alone by the end of 2023, the report said.

With experienced, specialized staff moving away, the DWP is already experiencing backlogs in processing new applications, the report added. — Xinhua ■

Bulgarian President Rumen Radev takes office for 2nd term

Bulgarian President Rumen Radev (1st R, front) delivers a speech during his inauguration ceremony in Sofia, Bulgaria, 22 January 2022. PHOTO: XINHUA

RUMEN Radev took office for a second consecutive term as President of Bulgaria on Saturday after an inauguration ceremony held here in front of the Unknown Soldier Monument.

Parliament Speaker Nikola Minchev, Prime Minister Kiril Petkov, other state officials as well as foreign diplomats attended the event.

In his speech, Radev said he devoted his first term to the battle for lawfulness and democracy. In the years to come, he would stand up for sovereignty, lawfulness, security and

justice.

"I will continue to be the president of all Bulgarian citizens, regardless of party affiliation, ethnicity and religion," he said, adding that he would defend the rights, interests and dignity of the people.

"I believe that together we will continue to build a free, democratic, prosperous and modern state," he said.

Radev, 58, won the presidential election for the first time in November 2016, and repeated his success in November 2021. — Xinhua ■

UN issues stamp sheet for 2022 Chinese Lunar New Year

THE United Nations Postal Administration (UNPA) on Friday issued a special-event stamp sheet to celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year.

The stamp sheet consists of 10 stamps of a denomination of 1.30 US dollars each, with the UN logo on the left and a gongbi-style (meticulous painting) tiger among roses on the right, as the Chinese lunar year for 2022 is the Year of the Tiger.

The sheet can be personalized by replacing the UN logo design with photos.

The UNPA completed the entire Chinese zodiac cycle of 12 animals in 2021. The new tiger stamp is the start of a new zodiac cycle issued for UNPA's Lunar New Year stamp series.

The tabs of the stamps and background design feature art-



Passengers are seen at Shenzhen North Railway Station in Shenzhen, south China's Guangdong Province, 17 January 2022. The number of railway passenger trips during China's upcoming Spring Festival travel rush is expected to jump 28.5 percent from the holiday season last year, industry data shows. PHOTO: XINHUA/LIANG XU

work by Tiger Pan of China, said UNPA. Pan also illustrated the Lunar Calendar series in 2018

for the Year of the Dog. The Chinese Lunar New Year, or Spring Festival, is the most important

holiday for Chinese around the world. This year's Spring Festival falls on 1 February. — Xinhua ■

Taliban say Oslo talks with West will 'transform atmosphere of war'

THE Taliban's first official talks with the West on European soil since seizing power in Afghanistan will help to "transform the atmosphere of war" after a two-decade insurgency against NATO forces, the group's top

spokesman told AFP Saturday.

The hardline Islamists stormed back to power in August as US and foreign troops began their final withdrawal from the country following a stalemate on the battlefield.



The hardline Islamists stormed back to power in August as US and foreign troops began their final withdrawal from the country following a stalemate on the battlefield. PHOTO: AFP

No country has yet recognised the Taliban's government -- notorious for human rights abuses during a first stint in power between 1996 and 2001 when they were ousted by a US-led invasion.

"The Islamic Emirate has taken steps for meeting the demands of the Western world and we hope to strengthen our relations through diplomacy with all the countries, including European countries and the West in general," Zabihullah Mujahid told AFP on Saturday.

The Taliban want to "transform the atmosphere of war... into a peaceful situation."

Talks between the Taliban and Western officials will open in Oslo on Sunday on human rights and humanitarian aid as a poverty crisis deepens.

The humanitarian situation

in Afghanistan has deteriorated drastically since the Taliban's takeover. International aid came to a sudden halt and the United States has frozen \$9.5 billion (8.4 billion euros) in Afghan central bank assets held overseas.

Hunger now threatens 23 million Afghans, or 55 percent of the population, according to the United Nations, which says it needs \$5 billion from donor countries this year to address the humanitarian crisis in the country.

The visit from Sunday to Tuesday will see meetings between the hardline Islamists, Norwegian authorities and officials from a number of allied countries including Britain, the European Union, France, Germany, Italy and the United States, the Norwegian foreign ministry statement said. — AFP ■

Russia, Iran aims to further promote nuke cooperation

RUSSIA and Iran have discussed ways to further promote cooperation in the nuclear energy sector, including the construction of new units at Iran’s Bushehr nuclear power plant, Iran’s atomic energy agency revealed, reported Xinhua.

Behrouz Kamalvandi, spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said enhancing strategic nuclear cooperation was an important topic in Wednesday’s meeting between Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, the official news agency IRNA reported on Friday.

“Negotiations are underway between Tehran and Moscow to construct the second and third units of the Bushehr power plant,” said Kamalvandi.

Kamalvandi expressed hope



Laborers work at the construction site of the second phase of Iran’s Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant in Bushehr, southern Iran, on Nov. 10, 2019. PHOTO: AHMAD HALABISAZ/XINHUA

that Iranian and Russian technical groups would soon increase cooperation and exchange of information to kickstart the projects. He said each project at the power plant was worth 5 billion U.S. dollars, and would thus constitute a significant part of their economic ties. — Xinhua ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

New Zealand outbreak forces PM Ardern to scrap wedding plans

NEW Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern was Sunday forced to call off her own wedding as she tightened Covid-19 restrictions in the face of an outbreak of the Omicron variant.

“My wedding will not be going ahead,” she confirmed after detailing new restrictions; including a limit of 100 fully vaccinated people at events.

“I just joined many other New Zealanders who have had an experience like that as a result of the pandemic and to anyone who is caught up in that scenario I am so sorry.”

The emergence of nine cases of Omicron in a family who travelled between cities to attend a wedding, and the infection of a flight attendant on one aircraft they flew on, forced New Zealand to impose its “red setting” restrictions from midnight Sunday.

Omicron is far more transmissible than the earlier Delta variant but is less likely to make people seriously ill. —AFP ■

Germany ‘encouraging Putin’ by refusing to supply weapons: Ukraine

UKRAINE’S Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba on Saturday condemned Germany for its refusal to supply weapons to Kyiv, urging Berlin to stop “undermining unity” and “encouraging Vladimir Putin” amid fears of a Russian invasion.

In a separate development, Germany’s naval chief Kay-Achim Schoenbach announced his resignation late Saturday, after Ukraine summoned the German ambassador to Ukraine, to protest remarks the vice-admiral had made on the crisis.

Kyiv’s foreign ministry stressed “the categorical unacceptability” of Schoenbach’s comments, who had said the idea that Russia wanted to invade Ukraine was “nonsense”, and that Putin probably deserved respect. With tens of thousands of Russian troops gathered on the Ukrainian border, fears are mounting that a major conflict could break out in Europe. —AFP ■

UK accuses Moscow of trying to install pro-Russia leader in Ukraine



With tens of thousands of Russian troops massed on Ukraine’s border, both sides are pursuing diplomatic efforts to avoid conflict. PHOTO: AFP

BRITAIN on Saturday alleged that it had information that Moscow was “looking to install a pro-Russian leader in Kyiv”

as fears of a Russian invasion of Ukraine grow.

Tensions have soared in recent weeks as tens of thou-

sands of Russian troops mass on Ukraine’s border, along with an arsenal of tanks, fighting vehicles, artillery and missiles.

London said it had seen evidence that several former Ukrainian politicians had maintained links with Russian intelligence services, and that former MP Yevgen Murayev was being considered as a potential leader.

Some of those in contact with Russian intelligence officers were “currently involved in the planning for an attack on Ukraine”, the Foreign Office said in a statement, though did not release details of the evidence. A US official called the alleged plot “deeply concerning”.

Moscow dismissed the claims as “disinformation”, and

urged London to “stop spreading nonsense.”

“Disinformation circulated by @FCDOGovUK is yet another indication that it is the @NATO Members led by the Anglo-Saxon nations who are escalating tensions around #Ukraine,” Russia’s foreign ministry said in a tweet.

The accusations come at the end of a week of intense international diplomacy, which concluded with Antony Blinken and Sergei Lavrov, Washington and Moscow’s top diplomats, agreeing to keep working to ease tensions. Murayev, the man named by London, lost his seat in the Ukrainian parliament when his party failed to win five percent of the vote in 2019 elections. —AFP ■

Socialists ahead as Portugal election campaign enters final stretch

EARLY voting begins in Portugal on Sunday for a snap general election, with polls showing the incumbent Socialists still ahead though with their lead over their nearest centre-right rivals narrowing.

Over 300,000 voters have signed up to vote a week early with polls due to open at 8:00 am (0800 GMT).

The early voting option was provided this year to reduce crowding on election day, next Sunday, due to the pandemic.

Prime Minister Antonio Costa, who has led two consecutive minority Socialist governments since 2015, is among those set to

cast his ballot early.

The snap polls were called after he failed to secure support for his 2022 budget from the two smaller far-left parties that had been propping up his government.

It was the first time a budget was voted down since the EU member returned to democracy in 1974.

The Socialists have around 38 percent support, compared to just over 30 percent for the main opposition centre-right PSD, which would leave Costa once again without a working majority in parliament, according to a poll of polls compiled by Radio Renas-



An early voting option has been provided this year to reduce crowding on election day due to Covid-19. PHOTO: AFP

cenca. But surveys carried out in recent days have shown the gap narrowing, with at least one put-

ting the two parties in a statistical tie when the margin of error is taken into account. —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 to play South Korea today in AFC Women's Cup Group B

THE second day of the 2022 AFC Women's Cup Group B matches will be held in India today and the Myanmar women's team will play against South Korea.

The team Myanmar will take on the Asian powerhouse starting from 2 pm.

The Myanmar squad is different from South Korea in terms of ability, so it may be difficult to

get points, but the main effort must be to reduce the number of goals.

Some of the Myanmar coaching staff and players have been infected with the COVID-19 virus and will miss chance to play the match against South Korea again.

On the second day of Group A on 23 January, China beat Iran

7-0 to win two matches in a row.

The Philippines beat ASEAN top-seeded Thailand 1-0 in their group match of the tournament, and it remains to be seen whether there will be any unexpected results in today's match.

After the second day of the group, some teams will be able to advance to the quarter-finals.— Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM ■

Filipino Magsayo captures WBC featherweight title



Filipino boxer Mark Magsayo celebrates after defeating Gary Russell to win the WBC world featherweight crown. **PHOTO: AFP**

FILIPINO Mark Magsayo dethroned WBC featherweight champ Gary Russell on Saturday with a majority decision to end the longest championship reign in professional boxing.

The 26-year-old undefeated Magsayo won on points on two of the three judges' scorecards as he handed Russell his first defeat since 2015. Two judges had 115-113 for Magsayo while

the other scored it even, 114-114. "This is my dream since I was a kid," said Magsayo. "I am so proud of my country. Thank you for the support from Filipino fans. Now I became a world champion." Magsayo, who is promoted by fellow Filipino Manny Pacquiao and trained by Freddie Roach, improved to 24-0 with 16 knockouts with his upset win.— AFP ■

Rashford sends Man United into Premier League top four

MARCUS Rashford struck with virtually the last kick of the game to take Manchester United into the Premier League top four at West Ham's expense with a 1-0 win on Saturday.

United were insipid as an attacking force for 93 minutes at Old Trafford, but found the breakthrough at the death as all three of Ralf Rangnick's substitutes combined when Anthony Martial and Edinson Cavani teed up Rashford for a tap in at the back post. Victory lifts United a point above the Hammers and sees the Red Devils leapfrog

Tottenham and Arsenal in the battle for Champions League football next season. Rangnick has lost just one of his 10 games since taking temporary charge till the end of the season, but once again the result was more impressive than the performance from the German's side. Bruno Fernandes looked back to his best with two goals and two assists in the past week and the Portuguese nearly created the opener with a fiercely struck cross that just evaded Cristiano Ronaldo in the most dangerous moment of the first half.— AFP ■

Opening ceremony rehearsal conducted ahead of Beijing 2022



The Beijing 2022 opening ceremony rehearsal is conducted at the National Stadium on 22 January 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

THE Beijing 2022 opening ceremony rehearsal was conducted at the National Stadium, or the "Bird Nest," on Saturday night. About 4,000 participants were involved in the all-factor rehearsal, preparing for the opening ceremony to be held on February 4. With its length shortened to about 100 minutes due to cold weather and the COVID-19 pandemic, the opening ceremony, featuring low-carbon, scientific and technological innovations, aims to express the aspiration of building a community with a shared future for mankind and delivering a "simple, safe and splendid" Games, according to the organizers.

Zhang Yimou, who directed the Beijing 2008 opening and closing ceremonies, is to become the first man to direct the ceremo-

nies of both Summer and Winter Games as Beijing makes history as the first "dual Olympic city." The Winter Olympics will open on February 4, which coincides with "Lichun," the first of the 24 solar terms in the traditional Chinese lunar calendar, indicating the start of spring. According to Zhang, "Lichun" will also become an important element at the opening ceremony, in an endeavor to present a warm and fascinating gala. Chang Yu, director of the opening and closing ceremonies department at the Beijing 2022 organizing committee, said the plans for the Olympics and Paralympics opening and closing ceremonies were confirmed by March 2021, and the rehearsal now is in the final stretch after months of preparation.— Xinhua ■