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

15th Waning of Pyatho 1383 ME
31 January 2022

AS it is necessary to continuously control the infection of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), it is hereby announced that public requests, orders, notifications and directives (except for easing the restrictions) released by the Union-level organizations and Union ministries up to 31 January 2022 have been extended until 28 February 2022 for prevention, control and treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

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.

National Defence and Security Council of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar holds meeting 1/2022



The meeting 1/2022 of the National Defence and Security Council of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is convened in Nay Pyi Taw on 31 January 2022.

THE National Defence and Security Council of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar held the meeting

1/2022 at the Office of the State Administration Council Chairman in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Present at the meeting were Pro Tem President U Myint Swe, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U T Khun Myat, Command-

er-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Command-

er-in-Chief (Army) Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Union Minister for Defence General Mya Tun Oo,

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Republic of the Union of Myanmar
National Defence and Security Council
Announcement No 1/2022

15th Waning of Pyatho 1383 ME
31 January 2022

1. The meeting of the National Defence and Security Council took place at the meeting hall of the National Defence and Security Council at 9:30 am today. At the meeting, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said that it was necessary to set the right track for the genuine, disciplined multiparty democracy and continuously carry out the holding of the multiparty democracy general election under Section 429 of the Constitution (2008) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar due to situations on political, economic and social progress, emphasis on stability of the State, peace and tranquillity, desires of internal and external saboteurs and their supporting persons and organizations leading to the utter devastation rather than the democracy based on overview remarks over the current situations, terrorist attacks and destructions in some parts of Chin State and Sagaing Region at present, and needs to appoint ward and village administrators in some townships of the country after the State of Emergency was politically declared across the nation. As such, the Senior General submitted a report to extend the declared period for the State of Emergency across the nation under Section 425 of the Constitution (2008).
2. Members of the National Defence and Security Council seconded the submissions of the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services. Then, all members of the National Defence and Security Council, including the Pro Tem President, unanimously decided to extend further six months of the declared period of the State of Emergency across the nation under Section 425 of the Constitution (2008).
3. The information was hereby released that the meeting was attended by Pro Tem President U Myint Swe, Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U T Khun Myat, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Vice-Senior General Soe Win, Union Minister for Defence General Mya Tun Oo, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Soe Htut, and Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung.

Sd/
Myint Swe
Pro Tem President

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No 7/2022

15th Waning of Pyatho 1383 ME
31 January 2022

Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the
Union allowed for retirement from duty

THE State Administration Council allowed the Chairman of the Constitutional Tribunal of the Union U Than Kyaw to take retirement from the duty of his own accord for health conditions under Section 419 of the Constitution.

By Order,
Aung Lin Dwe
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Order No 8/2022

15th Waning of Pyatho 1383 ME
31 January 2022

Chief Ministers of Region or State allowed for
retirement from duties

THE State Administration Council allowed the following Chief Ministers of Region or State to take retirement from the duties under Section 419 of the Constitution.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| (1) U Khin Maung Oo (aka) Bu Rei | Kayah State |
| (2) U Hla Soe | Yangon Region |

By Order,
Aung Lin Dwe
Lieutenant-General
Secretary
State Administration Council

Government personnel get booster shots to
participate in 75th Union Day ceremony

THE government personnel who are joining Diamond Jubilee Union Day which falls on 12 February 2022 received third shots (additional dose of the COVID-19 vaccine) on 31 January at Transit Centre in Nay Pyi Taw.

There are five sites to get the booster dose and this programme is running with 10 vaccination teams at the Transit Centre. Those who have been vaccinated two times for the COVID-19 in the last six months and aged 18 are eligible for the booster dose.



Booster doses can mitigate neutralizing antibody fading and help improve the protection against the severe outcome of the COVID-19 by raising the antibody level. —MNA

Motto of 75th Anniversary Union Day 2022

* Let's forge Union Spirit
to bring about peace and
tranquillity!

278 new cases of COVID-19 reported on
31 January, total figure rises to 535,532

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **535,532** after **278** new cases were reported on 31 January 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **513,273** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll still stands at **19,310** without casualties for eight consecutive days. However, the positivity rate becomes high.—MNA

Efforts are being made to develop the education sector

AS the development of a country depends on a larger number of educated persons, officials of the education sector must strive for an increasing number of educated persons. Some three million people among 55 million are graduates. Hence, it can be seen that less than 10 per cent of people can learn higher education. More than 18 million of the population could join the primary and middle school education. As education is crucial for the development of the nation, efforts are being made to develop the education sector during the period when the Tatmadaw took the State responsibilities.

(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.)

National Defence and Security Council of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar holds meeting 1/2022

FROM PAGE-1

Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Soe Htut, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin, Union Minister for Border Affairs Lt-Gen Tun Tun Naung, specially invited Secretary of the State Administration Council Lt-Gen Aung Lin Dwe and Joint-Secretary Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo. Vice-President U Henry Van Thio asked for a leave of absence from the meeting.

The Member of the Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services asked for extending the declared period of the State of Emergency with reasons.

With regard to the State responsibilities taken by the Tatmadaw related to the political situation on one-year responsibilities of the State Administration Council, the Senior General said that the Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services expressed the wish to be a free and fair election related to the 2020 election for 24 times at the State level ceremonies, meeting with political parties, diplomats and international representatives and media as well as military families. At the election held on 8 November 2020, 10,482,116



The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services reports on the extending of the State of Emergency at the National Defence and Security Council meeting 1/2022 yesterday.

voting frauds (more than one-fourth of the voters) were found in the scrutiny of the Tatmadaw, worsening the multiparty democracy. So, the Tatmadaw and political parties requested the UEC, the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw and the government to address the voting frauds under the law.

Without daring to address the voting frauds, the attempts to convene the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw on 1 February 2021 were designed to forcefully seize the State responsibilities under Section 417 of the Constitution. Consequently, these may cause unprecedented difficulties on the path of democracy of the State. So, the State of Emergency was declared and the State responsibilities were taken in accord with Sections 417, 418 and 419 of the Constitution.

Multiparty democracy general election is the foundation of Myanmar's democracy and political system as heads and participants of the legislative, executive and judicial estates were elected through the election in direct and indirect manners.

After taking the State responsibilities, the Senior General explained addressing the current political situations under the law to the Hluttaw representatives under monitoring at

the Sibin Yeiktha in Nay Pyi Taw and allowed them to be released to their respective regions from 2 to 4 February 2021. It was an act of giving them the right to do things under the law. The State Administration Council was equally constituted with Tatmadaw members and civilians to lead the region/state, townships, ward and village level administration bodies.

The National Unity and Peace Restoration Coordination Committee, the Work Committee and the Coordination Committee were formed with the adoption of a five-point policy on 3 March. The coordination committee has met NCA signatory ethnic armed organizations 16 times, non-NCA signatory EAOs nine times, political parties seven times and the religious leaders and peace negotiators two times, totalling 34.

A joint declaration between Myanmar and Cambodia was released after holding a meeting with the Cambodian Prime Min-

ister in early 2022 with a plan to extend the ceasefire till the end of this year.

The Senior General then explained the tasks to be prioritized. He said: "Myanmar is the least development country. Seventy per cent of the population of the country reside in rural areas and some 30.4 per cent of them are poor. So, it is necessary to carry out solving the issues of the nation and beef up the tasks for the development of the State economy. If we are delayed to do so, we will lag development behind others. So, it is necessary to carry out two national political tasks for prosperity and food sufficiency of the nation, two political tasks for strengthening of genuine, disciplined multiparty democracy, building the Union based on democracy and federalism, and restoration of peace and federalism. The year 2022 is of importance.

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Multiparty democracy general election is the foundation of Myanmar's democracy and political system as heads and participants of the legislative, executive and judicial estates were elected through the election in direct and indirect manners.

National Defence and Security Council of the Republic ...

FROM PAGE-3

Coming 12 February is Diamond Jubilee Union Day and the 4th January 2023 is Diamond Jubilee Independence Day. Hence, it is necessary to strengthen the sovereignty of the State and the country must be fruitful for development. So, we must start new steps for peace. As it has been mentioned in the five-point Road Map, I always invite all to talk about the peace issue. The government of the State Administration Council is ready to open all to hold the peace talks.”

In the security sector before the Tatmadaw took the State responsibility, generally, engagements happened in EAO areas as usual but clashes with AA armed groups in Rakhine State were very violent.

The matters related to changing of peaceful demonstration to the armed insurrection after the Tatmadaw has taken the State responsibilities, those who do not have right to stand as Hluttaw representatives illegally formed the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) on 5 February 2021 and committed riots and anarchic mobs. They attacked security forces in late February. So, security forces performed the least strengths at the lowest level in controlling the insurrections. Then, martial law was imposed on six townships of Yangon Region on 15 March 2021 as the CRPH terrorist group committed terrorist acts. The CRPH formed a parallel government.

CRPH, NUG and PDF terrorist groups committed war crimes in Thantlang and Mindat of Chin State, some parts of Sagaing Region, Kinma Village in Magway Region, Loikaw and Demawhso townships in Kayah State and Pekhonn and Moebye of Shan State. Hence, martial law was imposed on Mindat Township of Chin State on 13 May 2021 to control the terror acts. Within one year period, there were 9,437 times of terror acts, and 5,606 assorted arms, 161,556 rounds of ammunition, 1,890 grenades and 11,424 homemade mines and

According to the statistics on 29 January, there remains one per cent of infection rate of the pandemic in the nation. The government spent US\$276.64 million on the purchase of COVID-19 vaccines and also accepted the donated vaccines worth US\$121.12 million from China, India, Russia and Nippon Foundation. Vaccination has been given to the people, accounting for 53 per cent at present.

bombs were seized in addition to arresting 4,338 terrorists.

In the economic sector after the Tatmadaw has taken the State responsibilities and sanctions of the international community, the Senior General said direct and indirect sanctions were imported on relevant foreign partners to dip the foreign investments and trade of Myanmar. The value of the Myanmar kyat was down and transport charges, fuel and cooking oil prices were hiking. And, the demand plunged in the market.

In the banking sector, the government sold US\$508.8 million through a special foreign exchange auction till 21-1-2022 to import entrepreneurs to meet the US dollar demands so as to stabilize the exchange rate.

In the trade sector, in the time of the State Administration Council government, the country has more than US\$677 million of trade surplus. But, local and foreign loan amounts reached K52,488 billion in 2020-21 FY. Hence, it is necessary to calculate the loan resilience in the long run. The government of the State Administration Council arranges to resume operations of the iron and steel mills suspended in the past. Iron rods and bars will be produced in all parts of the nation.

In 2021, a total of 858,685 tonnes of cooking oil worth US\$866.711 million were imported. So, a plan is underway to reduce the import volume of cooking oil abroad while efforts will be made for ensuring cooking

oil sufficiency at home.

In 2021, more than 4.12 million tonnes of fuel worth US\$2,496.652 million was imported. Hence, ethnic people need to efficiently use the fuel for the development of the nation as much as possible. If solar power can be generated in rural areas, it will contribute to the electricity demand of the State, urban projects, operation of electric buses and train projects.

Regarding destruction of religion and language before the Tatmadaw has taken State responsibilities, the organizations related to religious affairs such as Ma Ba Tha organization were cancelled. The rights of paying homage to the pagodas and paying worship in the religious buildings were banned. Propaganda was disseminated for the decline of the State economy because of members of the Sangha. The Senior General also explained the prohibitions adopted for cultural measures of Myanmar.

Maravijaya Marble Sitting Buddha image is being carved to be kept in Buddha Park of Dekkhinathiri Township in Nay-Pyi Taw. So far, the parts of the throne have been placed. Pitaka treatises will be carved in Romanized language and Pali language on the stone plaques. Generation-Z youths killed 37 teachers and caused injuries to 30 more teachers. They also killed 20 members of the Sangha and set fire to schools for 504 times. The government granted pardon for 47,879 inmates and

prisoners for participation in the nation-building tasks

In implementing the five-point road map and nine objectives, the State Administration Council formed a new Union Election Commission on 2 February 2021. The commission members inspected ballots of 315 townships where the general election was held in 2020. As more than 4.6 million voters did not have citizenship scrutiny cards in the previous election, the Pankhinn project is being implemented to issue the CSC to the people. So far, the CSCs have been issued to some two million people, accounting for 55 per cent.

The Senior General explained the electoral system. He said: “As the current election system is FPTP system, it is not in conformity with the democracy and federalism of Myanmar formed with 135 ethnic nationals. So, the Union Election Commission held meetings political parties four times to change the electoral system suitable for Myanmar. According to the papers of six political parties, all groups discussed practising Proportional Representation (PR). The multiparty democracy elections of Myanmar were held on 8 November 2010 in 325 townships and 323 townships on 7 November 2015. Electoral complaints were solved. The 2020 election was held in 315 townships on 8 November. The multiparty democracy general elections are general elections to select

representatives for Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyotha Hluttaw and region and state Hluttaws. In the 2020 multiparty general elections, relevant organizations and persons did not dare to solve the voting frauds. It caused the downtrend of trust for the implementation of the democracy, tarnishing the image of the State. So, action is being taken against those who harmed the election under the law. At a time when the State of Emergency has completed, the government is striving for holding the election in accord with its pledge. The election will be free and fair when the situation is peaceful and stable. To hold the elections in all regions and states, all the ethnic people need to join hands with the government in realizing the peace and stability.”

In fighting the COVID-19, a total of 1,674 treatment centres in addition to the hospitals and clinics were established for promptly controlling the pandemic. The government built 225 oxygen plants and the private sector 242 plants, totalling 446 for providing healthcare services to the people. According to the statistics on 29 January 2022, there remains one per cent of infection rate of the pandemic in the nation.

The government spent US\$276.64 million on the purchase of COVID-19 vaccines and also accepted the donated vaccines worth US\$121.12 million from China, India, Russia and Nippon Foundation. Vaccination has been given to the people, accounting for 53 per cent at present.

As some medical staff from hospitals and health centres left their duties across the nation, members of the military medical corps performed healthcare services to 329,759 outpatients, 98,328 inpatients and surgical operations on 19,526 pregnant women and other patients with various diseases. Retired military and civilian medics also joined the healthcare services for the people to secure success in battling the COVID-19.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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Announcement on Extension of the Precautionary Restriction Measures Relating to Control of the COVID-19 Pandemic until 28 February 2022

1. WITH a view to ensuring further strengthening of measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has issued the following announcements regarding temporary entry restrictions for visitors from all countries. All those restrictions were extended until 31 January 2022 by the Ministry’s announcement dated 1 January 2022.
 - (a) Announcement dated 15 March 2020 regarding precautionary measures for all travellers visiting Myanmar;
 - (b) Announcement dated 20 March 2020 regarding additional precautionary measures for travellers visiting Myanmar and temporary suspension of issuance of visa on arrival and e-visa;
 - (c) Announcement dated 24 March 2020 regarding additional precautionary measures for travellers from all countries visiting Myanmar;
 - (d) Announcement dated 28 March 2020 regarding temporary suspension of all types of visas (including social visit visas) and visa exemption services.
2. In order to continue its effective response measures to protect the population of the country from the risks of importation and spread of the COVID-19, the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has decided to extend the afore-mentioned entry restriction measures until 28 February 2022.
3. In case of urgent official missions or compelling reasons, foreign nationals, including diplomats and United Nations officials, who wish to travel to Myanmar by available relief or special flights, may contact the nearest Myanmar Mission for possible exception with regard to certain visa restrictions. However, all visitors must abide by existing directives issued by the Ministry of Health relating to the prevention and control of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Nay Pyi Taw
Dated. 31 January 2022

Release of information on recurrence of SARS-CoV-2 Omicron Variant

1. The Ministry of Health is continuously monitoring the COVID-19 virus and providing timely information on the detection of the SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variant among those returning to Myanmar by relief flights.
2. Laboratory samples of the returnees were tested for suspected COVID-19 mutation at the National Health Laboratory on (31-1-2022) and the SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variant was confirmed in 27 laboratory samples.
3. Twenty-three Myanmar nationals and four foreigners, including 14 from Singapore, five from Malaysia, four from Thailand, three from South Korea and one from India by the relief flights were diagnosed with the Omicron variant.
4. Strict quarantine and laboratory tests are being carried out to isolate and treat those who have been diagnosed with the Omicron variant.
5. To date, a total of 310 people has been positive with the SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variant.
6. Therefore, the Ministry of Health is monitoring the COVID-19 mutagenic surveillance programme and control and treatment activities are being intensified.

Ministry of Health

Motto of 75th Anniversary Union Day 2022

* Let’s strive for forging unity of the State through Union Spirit!

Upgrading of Chindwin riverbank landslide protection project underway

UPGRADING of Chindwin riverbank landslide protection project is being carried out spending over K639 million, said U Htet Zaw Oo, Assistant Director of the Sagaing Region Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems.

“As part of the project, the construction of stone slabs, reinforced concrete retaining walls based on bored pile and slabs retaining wall based on bored pile are being carried out spending over K639 million from the union budget in Phaungbyin, Kalewa and Kani townships. More than 20 per cent of the project has been completed so far. We are also conducting field inspections to complete the landslide prevention task in time,” U Htet Zaw Oo clarified.

For the Chindwin River landslide protection project, the construction of reinforced concrete retaining walls based on bore pile and stone slabs measuring 340 feet in Strand road, Phaungbyin township, slabs retaining wall based on bored pile and stone slabs measuring 300 feet in Zeedaung village, in Kalewa township and slabs retaining wall based on bore pile and stone slabs measuring 480 feet in Kane village, Kani township are being developed. Those projects will be carried out by 20 March 2022.

In the financial year 2021-22, the winning bidders started implementing those projects regarding the riverbank landslide protection in the last week of December 2021 in Phaungbyin, Kalewa and Kani



In the financial year 2021-22, the winning bidders started implementing those projects regarding the riverbank landslide protection in the last week of December 2021 in Phaungbyin, Kalewa and Kani townships, spending K639.625 million of the Union budget.

Besides the Chindwin riverbank landslide protection, the Sagaing Region Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems is conducting the development of the Chindwin River waterway system in Mawlaik and Monywa townships spending K493.277 million of the Union funds.—Lulay/GNLM

Youth and Literature Festival successfully concludes in Nay Pyi Taw

YOUTH and Literature Festival to commemorate Diamond Jubilee Union Day continued its third day at 9:30 am on 31 January 2022 and came to a successful conclusion with the strong participation of government personnel and families, students, youths and enthusiastic people.

On the last day of the festival, booths featuring science and technology, aviation technology, marine technology and health awareness, literature, biography of famous writers, historical treaties, arts and galleries, awareness of COVID-19 pandemic and physical sporting activities exhibited by the Ministry of Information, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Planning and Finance in each sector



Youths are attentively viewing exhibits.



Picture puzzle game. **PHOTOS: KO KO NAW**

drew the attention of the visitors. Additionally, the visitors can also enjoy the performance of a herd of Nyan Lin Htet elephant with modern songs, elephant tricks and dance. This entertainment programme was applauded by the students and youths.

Moreover, in order to make

people aware of the legacy of tangible and intangible heritage assets, the cartouche that General Maha Bandoole delivered to the Prince of Manipura, the independence declaration, Panlong Treaty, Yandapo treaty, the Aung San-Attle Agreement, the Nu-Attle Agreement, literature, archaeological artefacts and histor-

ical archives were displayed at the booth of the National Archives Department. The students and young people explored historical aspects and showed enthusiasm for cultural heritage preservation.

In a bid to effectuate the development in the sports sector, the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs exhibited a

sports theme that can offer tremendous mental and physical health benefits. Documentary photos of the 27th Southeast Asian Games and other sports activities between 2016 and 2020 drew the attention of young people and recognized the importance of sports in national building.

SEE PAGE-7



Drugs education booth.



The exhibition booth of the Ministry of Science & Technology.



Youths throng at the Youth and Literature Festival.



Youth and Literature Festival successfully..



The exhibition booth of the Ministry of Education. **PHOTOS : KO KO NAW**



Miniature aircraft flying demonstration.

FROM PAGE-6

Sarpay Beikman and other private books stores sold the books abound with different genres, including awarded translation works and motivational, health, educational, management and historical books at fairer prices in a bid to promote literary works among young people. This booth was packed with book lovers.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Health ensured the COVID-19 preventive measures for the visitors, by distributing face masks and face shields and health awareness pamphlets. Health awareness talks to prevent the COVID-19 were also conducted.

Besides, the students also explored matters regarding science and technology, aviation technology and marine technology. They gathered at the simulator booths for plane and ship driving as well.

Nay Pyi Taw Police Force also exhibited documentaries

of anti-human-trafficking activities, anti-narcotics task force and crimes. Awareness campaigns of traffic rules for road safety were also showcased to the students and youths.

The students also watched the videos of the quality training of national athletes for the 31st Southeast Asian Games at Wunna Theikdi Gymnasium B.

On top of that, the festival seemingly came alive with the participants in painting events and other fun physical activities such as building games and proverb quizzes. Myanma Radio and Television (MRTV) staff, artistes and students happily joined the entertainment programme as well.

The Ministry of Health ensured the COVID-19 preventive measures for the visitors to have a safe and sound excursion and also prepared for the emergency health care service.

In the afternoon, Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn and



The exhibition booth of the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

officials concerned inspected the booths and warmly greeted the visitors.

The objectives of this literature and youth festival are to improve the students' knowledge,

develop critical thinking skills, raise the importance of funfairs and encourage them to engage in group work, help students innovative and creative, build study habits and boost Intelligence

Quotient, Emotional Quotient, Physical Quotient, Social Quotient and Adversity Quotient and involve young people in shaping a better future. — Myo Set Thit/ GNLM

Myanmar intends to ship over 1.5 mln tonnes of corn to Thailand this corn season

MYANMAR targeted to deliver 1.5 million tonnes of corn to the external market in the current 2021-2022 corn season, U Min Khaing, Chair of the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association said.

Last 2020-2021 financial year, the country conveyed more than 2.3 million tonnes to the external market and over 1.7 million tonnes of corns were sent to Thailand. The remaining went

into China, India and Viet Nam.

Thailand gives green light to corn imports through Mae Sot under zero tariff (with Form-D), between 1 February and 31 August.

Thailand has granted tax exemption on corn imports between February and August. However, Thailand imposed a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn import to protect the rights of their growers if the

corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand.

As a result of this, Myanmar traders are pepping to export the corn to Thailand starting from 1 February. They have full inventory in the warehouses in Myawady border city, U Min Khaing continued.

"Majority of the warehouses in Myawady is completely packed with corn stocks. Some traders have already signed an

agreement. Trading activity commences for now," he added.

The price is pretty high on account of foreign demand and Kyat depreciation on the US dollar.

The prices of corn moved in the range of K760-K780 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) in Yangon, slid to K720-K725 per viss in Mandalay and touched a high of K820-K840 per viss in the Myawady market, market's

data showed.

This year, the drop in sowing acreage led to the decline of production.

At present, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. Myanmar has winter, summer and monsoon corn seasons. The country yearly produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn.—NN/ GNLM

Daily newspapers available online

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

Sufficiently generate hydropower, efficiently consume electricity

MYANMAR is teeming with various types and sizes of water sources throughout the nation. These water sources are essential for generating electricity for public consumption and industrial use.

Electricity can be generated from water sources, windmills, mini-grids of solar power and diesel generators. Among them, hydropower projects mushrooming not only in hilly regions but also beside the speedy current rivers and creeks can be seen the length and breadth of the nation.

On his inspection tour of the Yeywa hydropower plant, Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing said Upper and Middle Yeywa and Deedok hydropower projects must be continued. Generating electricity with the use of LNG is very expensive. Priority must be given to generating renewable energy such as hydropower and solar power. It is necessary to invite local and foreign companies to generate solar power.

In the term of democratic governments, they strived for generating hydropower but they politically utilized the environmental impacts caused as problems in the implementation of the hydropower projects, the Prime Minister added.

Implementation of hydropower is based on larger investment and expenditure can be calculated, its benefit is invaluable. Up to now, the cost of the Yeywa hydropower plant has been covered. As generating electricity is still in progress, its surplus benefits have contributed much to the socio-economy of the people and the development of the State. Truly, the generation of hydropower costs cheaper among other ways of generating electricity. Missing the chance of generating hydropower at full capacity brings a loss to the State. Efforts must be made for the hydropower projects as quickly as possible to electrify the people. One day earlier completion of the project will benefit the people and the State one day ahead of the target.

Hydropower plants need to be attached to the irrigation facilities not only to irrigate the cultivable lands but to electrify the people. Saving the electricity consumption by individuals can reduce the production charge of the work process. Moreover, surplus electricity from reduced consumption can be provided for others. So, such a plan will be a win-win situation between reduction and consumption of electricity.

Power stations are running their functions to generate electricity day after day. But, the electricity consumption rate is higher and higher. The practice of individually saving electricity will benefit both the State and the people.

Almost 1 in 7 COVID patients in ICU experienced severe bleeding when given full-dose blood thinners: Study

A recent study led by University at Buffalo has said that patients with COVID-19 in the intensive care unit (ICU) prescribed full-dose blood thinners were significantly more likely to experience heavy bleeding than patients prescribed a smaller yet equally effective dose.

The results, published in 'Hospital Pharmacy', which compared the safety and effectiveness of blood clot treatment strategies for more than 150 critically ill COVID-19 patients at two hospitals, found that almost all patients who experienced significant bleeding were mechanically ventilated and receiving full-dose anticoagulants (blood thinners).

The results may inform treatment guidelines for blood clots in hospitalized COVID-19 patients, who are at an increased risk for both blood clots and severe bleeding. Previous reports have found that 17 per cent of hospitalized COVID-19 patients experience blood clots, said first author Maya Chilbert, PharmD,

clinical assistant professor in the UB School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences.

"A wide variety of practice exists when it comes to approaching blood clots in hospitalized patients with COVID-19, and there is little data to suggest improved outcomes using one strategy versus another," said Chilbert. "Caution should be used in mechanically ventilated patients with COVID-19 when selecting a regimen to treat blood clots, and the decision to use full-dose blood thinners should be based on a compelling indication rather than lab markers alone."

Additional investigators

Additional investigators in the UB School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences included Collin Clark, PharmD, clinical assistant professor, and Ashley Woodruff, PharmD, clinical associate professor. The research was also conducted by investigators at the Buffalo General Medical Centre, Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital and Erie

County Medical Centre.

The study analysed the outcome of blood clot treatments and the rate of bleeding events for more than 150 patients with COVID-19 who received either of two blood thinner regimens: a full-dose based on patient levels of D-dimer (a protein present in the blood after a blood clot dissolves), and the other a smaller but higher-than-standard dosage.

The average patient age was 58, and all experienced elevated levels of D-dimer, fibrinogen (a protein that helps the body form blood clots), and prothrombin time (a test that measures the time it takes for blood plasma to clot).

Nearly 14 per cent of patients who received full-dose blood thinners experienced a significant bleeding event, compared to only 3 per cent of patients who received a higher-than-standard dosage. All patients who experienced bleeding events were mechanically ventilated. No difference was reported



A recent study led by University at Buffalo has said that patients with COVID-19 in the intensive care unit (ICU) prescribed full-dose blood thinners were significantly more likely to experience heavy bleeding than patients prescribed a smaller yet equally effective dose. **PHOTO: AFP**

ed in the regimens' effectiveness at treating blood clots.

Further investigation is

needed to determine the optimal strategy for treating blood

clots and bleeding in hospital-

ised COVID-19 patients, said Chilbert.

Source : ANI

Hyperimmune intravenous immunoglobulin doesn't help COVID-19 patients: Study



Remdesivir was originally developed for infectious viral diseases and is not yet licensed or approved anywhere to treat Covid-19. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE combination of remdesivir plus a highly concentrated solution of antibodies that neutralize SARS-CoV-2 is not more effective than remdesivir alone for treating adults hospitalised with COVID-19, according to recent research.

The study has been published in the 'The Lancet Journal'.

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), part of the

National Institutes of Health, sponsored and funded the trial, called Inpatient Treatment with Anti-Coronavirus Immunoglobulin, or ITAC. The trial was conducted by the NIAID-funded International Network for Strategic Initiatives in Global HIV Trials (INSIGHT).

The trial

Mark Polizzotto, M.D., PhD, head

of the Clinical Hub for Interventional Research at the College of Health & Medicine of The Australian National University in Canberra, led the trial.

The antibody solution tested in the ITAC trial was anti-coronavirus hyperimmune intravenous immunoglobulin or hIVIG. The antibodies in anti-coronavirus hIVIG came from the liquid portion of blood, or plasma, donated by healthy people who had recovered from COVID-19.

These antibodies were highly purified and concentrated so that the anti-coronavirus hIVIG consistently contained several times more SARS-CoV-2 neutralizing antibodies than typically found in the plasma of people who have recovered from COVID-19.

"In our quest to find safe and effective treatments for COVID-19, we had hoped that adding anti-coronavirus hIVIG to a remdesivir regimen would give the immune system a boost to help suppress the virus early in the course of hospitalization," said NIAID Director Anthony S. Fauci, M.D.

"Unfortunately, the ITAC trial demonstrated that this strategy did not improve the health of adults hospitalized with COVID-19 and may be harmful

to a certain subset of patients. Studies testing this strategy in non-hospitalized adults earlier in the course of infection are underway," he added.

Anti-coronavirus hIVIG

Four companies collaborated to provide anti-coronavirus hIVIG for the trial: Emergent BioSolutions of Gaithersburg, Maryland; Grifols S.A. of Barcelona; CSL Behring of King of Prussia, Pennsylvania; and Takeda of Tokyo.

Remdesivir is a broad-spectrum antiviral currently approved by the US Food and Drug Administration and recommended for treating certain patients with COVID-19 based on data from several randomized clinical trials, including the NIAID-sponsored Adaptive COVID-19 Treatment Trial (ACTT-1). FDA granted the approval to Gilead Sciences, Inc. of Foster City, California.

The ITAC study team enrolled nearly 600 hospitalized adults aged 18 years or older who had COVID-19 symptoms for up to 12 days and did not have life-threatening organ dysfunction or organ failure. Enrollment took place at 63 sites in 11 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and South America between October 2020 and February 2021.

Study participants were assigned at random to receive infusions of either anti-coronavirus hIVIG and remdesivir or a placebo and remdesivir. Neither the participants nor the study team, except for pharmacists who prepared the infusions, knew who received which treatment regimen until the end of the trial. All participants also received supportive care reflecting local practice and national guidelines.

The main goal of the trial was to compare the health status of participants seven days after beginning treatment with hIVIG plus remdesivir with that of participants seven days after beginning treatment with remdesivir alone. The primary endpoint was an ordinal outcome with seven mutually exclusive categories ranging from no limiting symptoms due to COVID-19, to death.

Composite outcome

Safety was assessed at day seven with a composite outcome that included death, serious adverse events including organ failure and serious infections, and severe events that made performing basic functions impossible.

Source : ANI

National Objectives of Diamond Jubilee Union Day 2022

- (1) All ethnic nationals to safeguard non-disintegration of the Union, national unity and sovereignty forever
- (2) To perpetually ensure strengthening dynamic Union Spirit which is a genuine patriotic spirit
- (3) To further strive for the perpetual existence of the country through strong and united strength of all ethnic national brethren
- (4) To build the Union based on democracy and federalism in the realization of genuine, disciplined multiparty democracy
- (5) To equalize development of all regions and states while making efforts for the enhancement of health, education and job opportunities of the ethnic nationals

Motto of 75th Anniversary Union Day 2022

*** United strength across Myanmar focuses on Union affairs forever**

MYANMAR Daily Weather Report

(ISSUED at 7:00 pm Monday 31 January, 2022)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 1 February, 2022: Light rain or thundershowers are likely to be isolated in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (60%). WEATHER will be partly cloudy in Mandalay and Taninthayi regions and Northern Shan State 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 (4-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin State.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 February, 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 February, 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 1 February, 2022: Generally fair weather.

International flight restrictions extended until 28 February

THE Ministry of Health has issued a directive on the temporary restriction of international commercial passenger flights to Myanmar since it is crucial to control the spread of the COVID-19 disease in Myanmar.

With the permission of the Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), “Temporary Measures to Prevent Importation of COVID-19 to Myanmar through Air Travel” was revised as “Temporary Measures to Prevent Importation of COVID-19 to Myanmar through Air Travel Issue-2” on (31-12-2020) till 23:59 hours on (31-1-2022) of Myanmar Standard Time.

Until now, the prevalence of the COVID-19 epidemic has risen in most parts of the world. With the permission of the Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the effective period of the above directive has been extended to 23:59 hours of Myanmar Standard Time on 28 February 2022 to further prevent the risk of COVID-19 transmission via international air passengers into Myanmar.

Ministry of Transport and Communications

Opening ceremony of traditional boat race 2022 held

AN opening ceremony of states and regions traditional boat race 2022 was held by the Myanmar Rowing and Canoeing Federation in Inya Lake in Yangon yesterday at 8 am.

At the opening ceremony, the chief minister of the Yangon Region government said that a total of 355 athletes from 13 male teams and nine female teams participated in the traditional boat race in 2022. Rowing is a sport that uses strength, so, only those who are physically fit and healthy will become a good athletes. He also urged the athletes to behave and train themselves to become national honours athletes to raise the country’s reputation through rowing.

Besides, Deputy Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs U Myo Hlaing said that the rowing sport has successfully achieved

among other Southeast Asian countries. This achievement needs to be maintained.

At the ceremony, the athletes took the four-point sports oath. Then, the Yangon region chief minister, Commander of Yangon Command Maj-Gen Nyunt Win Swe, Deputy Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs U Myo Hlaing, the Yangon region government ministers and officials are kindly greeting to the team members.

A total of 355 athletes from Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Sagaing, Bago, Taninthayi, Ayeyawady regions and Kachin, Kayin, Mon, Rakhine, Shan states will participate in the boat race. They will take place until 1 February in the evening and the award-giving ceremony will be held after the competition. — MNA



The Myanmar Rowing and Canoeing Federation holds traditional boat race 2022.

CRIME NEWS

Authorities seize illegal timbers, cycle, vehicle, consumer goods in Mon State



Seized teak logs.

UNDER the guidance of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, the Customs officials inspected the cargo on vehicles at Mayanchaung checkpoint in Mon State on 31 January and seized two trucks loaded with illegal consumer goods and household electrical appliances worth K6.83 million. They are taking action under the Customs Law.

Similarly, under the man-

agement of the Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force in Kayin State, a combined team led by the Customs authorities conducted a surprise search on vehicles at the Kawkareik checkpoint and confiscated K2.55 million worth of illegal clothes and the smugglers are facing legal actions under the Customs Law.

Furthermore, under the instruction of the Bago Region Illegal Trade Eradication Special

Task Force, a team led by the Forest Department investigated forest reserves in Toungoo and Thayawady districts acting on tips-off and the authorities seized about 5.09 tonnes of illegal timbers, at an estimated value of K783,900. They proceed to file the cases under the Forest Law.

In addition, supervised by the Sagaing Region Illegal Trade Eradication Task Force, a combined team led by the Myanmar Police Force carried out investigation and arrested unregistered motorcycle (Kenbo-125) valued at K100,000 in Homalin Township and unregistered Hilux Surf worth K3.5 million in Sagaing Township, totalling K3.6 million worth of illegitimate goods. Actions are to be taken under the Export and Import Law.

On the same day, the committee reported six cases of illegal seizure at an estimated value of K13.767 million. — MNA

Drugs worth K2.25 bln seized in Thazi

ABOUT K2.25 billion worth of narcotic drugs were seized in Thazi Township, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

A combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Narcotic Police Force inspected a 12-wheel vehicle heading to Thazi from Taunggyi driven by Wai Phyo Kyaw (aka) Ah Nge Lay, 32, with San Win, 31, onboard and a six-wheel Fuso vehicle driven by Wunna Kyaw (aka) Dwe Nge, 26, at Kywe Tat Sone checkpoint on Taunggyi-Thazi road, Thazi Township, Mandalay Region on 29 Janu-

ary at 2 pm.

Then, the team found 700,000 stimulant tablets on a 12-wheel vehicle and 800,000 stimulant tablets on a six-wheel Fuso vehicle worth K2.25 million.

According to the investigation, the seized stimulant pills were transported from Shan State (South) to the Mandalay region. The police took legal action against three of them and further investigation is being conducted to expose other perpetrators involved in the cases. — MNA



NEWS
IN BRIEF

Laos hopes to
vaccinate 80 pct of
population by
year end

THE Lao Ministry of Health hopes to vaccinate 80 per cent of the population in every district and province by the end of 2022 before the country can reopen for tourism to revitalize its economy.

Local daily Vientiane Times on Monday quoted Rattanaxay Phetsouvanh, director-general of the Department of Communicable Disease Control under the Lao Ministry of Health, as saying that the ministry hopes to vaccinate 80 per cent of the population by the end of 2022, and there are hopeful signs that the goal will be achieved.

As of Thursday, more than 4.7 million people (64.19 per cent of its population) have received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and more than 4 million (54.8 per cent) have been fully vaccinated. "We observe that the public realizes the importance of vaccination because people are turning up at vaccination centres every day," Rattanaxay said. — Xinhua ■

Vietnam reports
12,674 new
COVID-19 cases,
2,275,727 in total

VIETNAM reported 12,674 new COVID-19 cases on Monday, including 12,637 locally transmitted and 37 imported, according to its Ministry of Health.

The Vietnamese capital Hanoi remained the locality with the highest number of infections on Monday with 2,728 cases, followed by central Da Nang city with 877 cases and northern Bac Ninh province with 781 cases.

The infections brought the country's total tally to 2,275,727 with 37,777 deaths. Nationwide, as many as 2,022,450 COVID-19 patients have so far recovered.

Some 181.3 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, including 28.1 million third shots, have been administered, according to the ministry.

Vietnam has by far gone through four coronavirus waves of increasing scale, complication, and infectivity. — Xinhua ■

Coronavirus: Latest global developments



Supporters of the Freedom Convoy protest Covid-19 vaccine mandates and restrictions on 29 January 2022 in Ottawa, Canada. Hundreds of truckers drove their giant rigs into the Canadian capital Ottawa on Saturday as part of a self-titled "Freedom Convoy" to protest vaccine mandates required to cross the US border. PHOTO: AFP

HERE are the latest developments in the coronavirus crisis:

Spotify U-turn

Music streaming giant Spotify says it will link content on Covid-19 to facts about the virus amid growing demands from music stars to drop top podcaster Joe Rogan for spreading misinformation about vaccines.

Truckers block Canada capital

Anti-vaxxer truckers threaten chaos in Ottawa for a third day with their "Freedom Convoy" against vaccine mandate amid fury at some protesters dancing on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in the Canadian capital.

Beijing's record cases

Beijing records its highest number of new cases for a year and a half as the Chinese capital gears up to host the

Winter Olympics in five days.

'Mark of the Antichrist'

Greek Orthodox monks are fuelling anti-vax sentiment in the north of the country with some clerics saying the jabs are the "mark of the Antichrist".

Cyprus to suspend unjabbed priests

The leader of the Cyprus Orthodox Church warns he will suspend a dozen unvaccinated priests and those preaching against jabs.

Ryanair cuts losses

Ryanair slashed its losses sharply in the third quarter of 2021 despite the Omicron variant, with net losses of 96 million euros (\$107 million), a third of the figure for the same period in 2020.

Rare Bhutan death

Bhutan mourns only its fourth death from the virus which its premier says he felt like "a bullet-hit". The remote Himalayan kingdom has one of the lowest death tolls in the world.

Over 5.6 million dead

The coronavirus has killed at least 5,661,274 million people since the outbreak emerged in China in December 2019, according to an AFP tally compiled from official sources on Monday.

The US has recorded the most Covid deaths with 884,260, followed by Brazil with 626,854 and India on 495,050.

Taking into account excess mortality linked to Covid-19, the WHO estimates the overall death toll could be two to three times higher. — AFP ■

Japan reopens mass vaccination centre for
COVID booster shots

THE Japanese government re-opened a mass COVID-19 vaccination centre in Tokyo on Monday to speed up administering third shots to cope with the new wave of infections driven by the highly transmissible Omicron variant.

The centre, which opened amid criticism that the government has been slow to offer booster shots, is being run by the Self-Defence Forces and will offer people aged 18 or above US pharmaceutical firm Moderna Inc's vaccine.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who visited the site on Monday, said his administration

"will explain in detail about the importance of booster shots and the effectiveness of mixing and matching vaccines" to the public.

Kishida urged people to get jabbed speedily after receiving their vaccine tickets from local municipalities.

The centre, however, is unlikely to contribute drastically to accelerating the pace of inoculations. Capacity is initially limited to 720 slots per day, much fewer than the 10,000 available at the same venue from May to November last year, with the malfunctioning of an elevator in the aging facility reducing available space to one floor. — Kyodo ■



COVID-19 mass vaccinations operated by the Japan Self-Defence Forces begin at a facility in Tokyo's Otemachi business district on 31 January 2022, for people aged 18 or older getting their third shots. PHOTO: KYODO

India forecasts world-beating growth on Covid recovery

INDIA expects to lead the world in economic growth this year in a post-pandemic bounceback, government forecasts showed Monday, but with expansion slowing despite widespread vaccine coverage and recovering exports.

Covid pummelled Asia's third-largest economy, which suffered its worst recession

since independence in 1947 after a drastic lockdown brought factories and consumer spending to a standstill.

Last year saw the economy bounce back to pre-pandemic levels despite a devastating virus outbreak that overwhelmed hospitals, with 9.2 per cent growth estimated for the 12 months to March 2022.

But with the recovery now tapering, India expects slower growth of 8.0-8.5 per cent for the following financial year, according to the annual economic survey presented to parliament on Monday.

"The economy is in a good place to grow strongly into the next year or two and all the macro stability indicators suggest

that there is a fair amount of buffer," said Sanjeev Sanyal, the finance ministry's principal economic advisor.

The report puts India well ahead of the International Monetary Fund's 2022 calendar year forecasts for other major economies, with neighbouring China expected to grow 4.8 per cent in the year to December. — AFP ■

‘Mind the (funding) gap!’ London’s ‘Tube’ seeks post-Covid cash

THE pandemic, which left London’s transport system deserted for months on end, has decimated revenues and sparked an ongoing feud between the city’s mayor and the UK government over funding current shortfalls.

Transport for London (TfL), which runs the British capital’s underground “Tube” network and buses, has received billions of pounds from central government in the last two years to stay afloat.

That followed passenger numbers across the network slumping as people were repeat-

edly told to stay home to stop the spread of Covid-19.

Now, as numbers pick up again with the easing of all restrictions, the Conservative government has urged London’s Labour mayor to find a sustainable funding model for state-owned TfL.

The issue has come into sharper focus as central government subsidies maintaining the current level of service are set to expire without renewal on 4 February.

Mayor Sadiq Khan has raised the spectre of service cuts

or even the closure of a tube line without new funding support, arguing TfL is “fundamental to the success of the capital”.

“It is so important that the government urgently comes forward with the long-term funding TfL desperately needs so we can keep services running and deliver much-needed improvements to our transport infrastructure,” he warned earlier this month.

The Labour party mayor, re-elected last year for a second term, is reluctantly proposing to raise the compulsory housing tax in the next budget, which

he has said would “unfairly punish Londoners for the way the pandemic has hit our transport network”.

He wants the government to inject around £1.7 billion to fund TfL until April 2023.

‘Devastated’

However, the Department for Transport has said Khan is responsible for getting the system “back onto a sustainable financial footing in a way that is fair to taxpayers, rather than continuing to push for bailouts”.

“We will continue to discuss further funding requirements

with TfL and the Mayor,” a spokesperson told AFP.

The standoff reflects the inevitable rivalry between Khan, touted as a potential future Labour leader, and the government of Prime Minister Boris Johnson, himself a former London mayor. Both have accused each other of mismanaging the capital’s extensive transport system.

TfL notes the pandemic has “devastated” its accounts, with fares revenue falling by 95 per cent at the height of the first coronavirus wave in 2020. — AFP ■

Ukraine crisis adds to inflation jitters as ECB meets



The tower of the European Central Bank (ECB) main building is pictured by night showing the illuminated euro currency symbol in Frankfurt/Main, western Germany, on 30 December 2021, during a preview of the illumination for the anniversary of the euro cash. **PHOTO: AFP**

SOARING inflation will be in focus when European Central Bank governors meet on Thursday, as the threat of war in Ukraine risked further fuelling already sky-high energy prices in the region. Prices rose in the eurozone at an annual rate of five per cent in December, the highest value on record for the currency bloc, which began keeping track of inflation in 1997.

New figures for January are set to be published by Eurostat on Wednesday, ahead of the meeting, with policymakers looking for indications as to whether inflation will come off the boil in 2022, as the ECB has said it expects to happen.

The Frankfurt-based institution projected a gradual return to inflation under its target of two per cent when it

published its most recent forecasts in December.

The forecast grounds the ECB’s decision to initiate a “step-by-step” reduction in its asset-purchasing stimulus programme, a more cautious approach than its peers in the United States and the United Kingdom. The massive bond-buying programme has been the ECB’s main crisis-fighting tool, aimed at keeping borrowing costs low and stoking economic growth in the 19-nation euro club.

The meeting on Thursday was “unlikely to bring any policy changes”, said Carsten Brzeski, head of macro at ING.

The 25 members of the governing council were increasingly sensitive to the risk that inflation could be higher than

expected, Brzeski said, but would seek to “steer market expectations cautiously”.

Difficult balance

The debate over future monetary policy at the ECB is closely linked to the progress of inflation and its return to the bank’s target.

As such, “the current spike in inflation seems to be challenging its commitment to leave interest rates unchanged throughout 2022”, Elga Bartsch, head of macro research at Blackrock Investment, told AFP.

But the surge was driven by the persistence of supply bottlenecks and changes in consumer preferences, Bartsch said, “not by excessive demand or an overheating economy”. — AFP ■

Qatar emir meets Biden in shadow of Ukraine tensions

US President Joe Biden will build on attempts to ensure energy back-up for European allies when he hosts Qatar’s emir Monday in a White House meeting overshadowed by fears that Russia could cut exports over the Ukraine crisis.

Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani will be the first Gulf state leader to visit Biden since he became president just over a year ago and the Oval Office talks will cement the tiny country’s status as a major international player.

In addition to meeting Biden, the sheikh will meet with Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, members of Congress and other officials, the White House said.

The most urgent agenda item is a scramble by the United States and the EU to ensure that European nations, already hit by soaring energy

prices, can weather disruption in Russian exports if Moscow decides to cut supplies.

Western capitals are threatening unprecedented economic sanctions if Russia attacks Ukraine, where it has placed more than 100,000 combat troops on the border.

However there are fears that the oil- and gas-producing giant could retaliate against the European Union, which imports 40 per cent of its natural gas from Russia.

Announcing the visit, Press Secretary Jen Psaki said the emir and Biden would be discussing “the stability of global energy supplies”.

Qatar is one of the world’s biggest liquid natural gas exporters, along with the United States and Australia, and there are hopes in Washington and Europe that Doha can temporarily redirect exports destined for Asian markets. — AFP ■



(COMBO) This combination of pictures created on 25 January 2022 shows Qatar’s Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani in the Qatari city of Al-Khor on 18 December 2021 and US President Joe Biden in the East room of the White House, in Washington, DC on 24 January 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

Most Asian markets rise in thinned trade after Wall St rally

MOST Asian markets rose Monday after a late afternoon rally on Wall Street capped a volatile week for global equities, though traders remained nervous about the Federal Reserve’s plan to hike interest rates as it battles surging inflation.

The Nasdaq led the strong finish for US equities thanks to a seven per cent bump for heavy-weight Apple, which posted eye-watering fourth quarter profits that lifted optimism about consumer spending and the economic recovery.

And the strong performance — which was also helped by strong US economic data — filtered through to Asia, where trade was thinned by investors winding down ahead of the three-day Lunar New Year break that starts Tuesday.

Tokyo, Hong Kong, Manila and Mumbai jumped more than one per cent, while there were also gains in Singapore, Wellington, Bangkok and Jakarta, though Sydney edged down. Shanghai, Seoul and Taipei were closed for holidays.

The gains followed a period of upheaval across world markets as the Fed readies to withdraw the vast financial support put in place at the start of the pandemic, which has been a key driver of a near two-year equity rally.

And while further volatility is expected as the bank lifts borrowing costs, commentators remain upbeat.

The recent selloff “marks a long overdue



An electronic quotation board displays closing numbers of the Nikkei 225 index of the Tokyo Stock Exchange in Tokyo on 27 January 2022. PHOTO: AFP

correction rather than the start of a bear market”, said analysts at BCA Research Inc.

They added: “Stocks usually bounce back as long as yields do not move into economically restrictive territory.” — AFP ■

High gas prices to hit demand in 2022: IEA

DEMAND for natural gas is expected to fall sharply in Europe and slow in Asia this year as prices have rocketed to record heights, the International Energy Agency said Monday.

Gas demand rebounded last year as the world economy recovered from the Covid pandemic and restrictions were eased, while an unusually cold winter also drove up consumption, the Paris-based IEA said.

“Supply did not keep pace which, combined with unexpected outages, led to tight markets and steep price increases, putting the brakes on demand growth in the second half of 2021,” the agency said in a report.

Consumption grew by 4.6 per cent last year, more than double the decline experienced as the pandemic emerged in 2020, said the agency, which advises governments. How demand will fare in the short-term will depend on the weather during the northern hemisphere’s heating season, the report said.

“Assuming normal temperatures, growth of the natural gas market is expected to be slowed by higher gas prices and softer economic expansion, while supply tensions may ease as offline capacity gradually returns,” the IEA said.

Global demand is expected to grow by a more modest 0.9 per cent this year to stand at 4.1 trillion cubic meters after surging by 4.6 per cent in 2021.

Global production, meanwhile, is expected to increase by 1.6 per cent to 4.2 trillion cubic meters.

Demand is expected to fall by more than four per cent in Europe while it would slow in Asia, from a “robust” seven per cent in 2021 to five per cent this year.

Fears of a potential Russian invasion of Ukraine could further fuel Europe’s already sky-high energy prices. — AFP ■

Ministry of Transport and Communications

Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems

Invitation to Open Tender for Dredging and Waterway Improvement of Tanintharyi River

1 Directo ate 6 Water Reso ces ad Imp o men 6 Ri r Sy tems (DWIR) is p an g to award th c n ract fo d e g g acro s th water-way 6 Tan n h r y Ri r in th Tan n h r y Div s ip and for sand export, in order to improve the waterway and navigation channel and protect flood id tin alg th ri r sid as th sed men atin cas es sh llw water-d p h ad il srp s p t p rati n DWIR, in th s reg rd wh d lik to iu te b h lo al ad in era tia l cm p nes to p rticip tei a 0 p n Ted r.

2 Uh ik a cm mercial d e g g su h d e g g a ed to es ne a) b to io n ay d mag to th environment and ecosystem, by dredging at the specific shallow-water areas designated by the DWIR to reach the targeted water-depth, b) not to disrupt the socio-economic conditions of the local people, ad c) to assist ad sp t to lo al d e l p n en wo k ad lo al a ed if necessary. Ad th , th potential bidders must present qualification in terms of work- and technical experience, and the strength of expert team and equipment as well as strong financial capability. (International companies may need to form a JV with a local company or have a branch office in Myanmar.)

3 Th refo e, ay in ersed cm p nes (b h lo al ad in era tia l) th t meet th ab men io d technical and financial requirements are invited to enter the tender. Tender Application and forms can b p ch sed frm th fb lw ig ad ess ad th d tes ad time 6 th ted r p ocess are as fb lw :

(a) Ad esst o purch se Ted r Fo ms - Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems (Head Office) (Civil Engineering Section).
No. 400, Lower Pazuntaung Road, Pazuntaung Township, Yangon, Myanmar.

(b) Date & Time to purchase - 1-2-2022 to 21-2-2022, Office Hour (10:00-15:00)

(c) Ad ess f o Ted rs tn issin - Directo ate 6 Water Reso cesa il mp o men 6 River Systems, Head Office

and Date & Time - 1 3 0 0

(d) Ted r O p n 0 ate & Time - 1 3 0 0

o f n th rd tailp easesc b actt h f b lw ig b r:

(a) 0 0

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NUUK MAERSK VOY.NO. (203W/204E)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V NUUK MAERSK VOY.NO. (203W/204E) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1-2-2022 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of MITT/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 SEALAND MAERSK AISA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MTT SEMPORNA VOY.NO. (13W)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MTT SEMPORNA VOY.NO. (13W) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 1-2-2022 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 SHIPPING LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V QUANG HAI 09

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V QUANG HAI 09 VOY.NO. (1) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 2-2-2022 and cargo will be discharged into the premises of SPW-7 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: 2301928

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES (S'PORE) PTE LTD

Security Council to meet on Ukraine as US warns of Russia sanctions

THE UN Security Council meets Monday to discuss the Ukraine crisis, with Washington vowing to hold Moscow to account as it works with NATO allies to beef up sanctions should Russia invade its neighbour.

Fears of an imminent incursion have grown in recent days, despite denials from Moscow and pleas from Ukraine's president to avoid stirring "panic" over the massive Russian military build-up on the border.

The United States and Britain on Sunday flagged new and "devastating" economic

sanctions against Russia, as Washington and its allies step up efforts to deter any invasion of Ukraine.

With tensions soaring, the United States said it was prepared to push back against any "disinformation" Moscow put forward in what is expected to be one of the most closely watched United Nations sessions in years.

Russia on Monday is likely to try to block the 15-member council from holding its US-requested meeting, "but the Security Council is unified. Our

voices are unified in calling for the Russians to explain themselves," Washington's UN envoy Linda Thomas-Greenfield told ABC News. "We're going to go in the room prepared to listen to them, but we're not going to be distracted by their propaganda," she said Sunday. "And we're going to be prepared to respond to any disinformation that they attempt to spread during this meeting."

Amid a flurry of diplomatic contacts, US Undersecretary of State Victoria Nuland told CBS a proposal on security issues

presented last week by the US and NATO to Russia may have stirred interest in Moscow.

The proposal includes the likelihood of new talks this week between Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

The chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, meanwhile, took a tough stance, saying it was crucial Washington send a powerful message to Russian President Vladimir Putin that any aggression against Ukraine would come at a very high cost. "We cannot have a

Munich moment again," Senator Bob Menendez said on CNN. "Putin will not stop with Ukraine."

He indicated some penalties could be levied over actions Russia has already taken in Ukraine, including cyberattacks, but there would be "devastating sanctions that ultimately would crush Russia" should Moscow invade.

Nuland said the White House was working closely with the Senate, and that any sanctions measures would be "very well-aligned" with those coming from European allies. — AFP ■



In this family handout photo Stephanie Hedrick exercises inside her home in Roanoke, Virginia on 26 January 2022. **PHOTO: HANDOUT / FAMILY HANDOUT / AFP**

Long haul Covid patients find hope in recovery clinics

WHEN Stephanie Hedrick realized she was still suffering from shortness of breath, blurry vision and brain fog months after recovering from Covid-19, she knew she needed more help than her primary care doctor alone could provide.

"Not every doctor knows everything," said the 62-year-old, a retired teacher from the US state of Virginia.

After months of rehabilitative therapy at a specialized

clinic in the nearby capital Washington, Hedrick was finally able to play in the waves with her five grandkids this summer.

The MedStar Covid Recovery Programme that she turned to is part of a new wave of clinics specifically treating patients suffering from long Covid — a post-infection syndrome that can affect nearly every system in the body, causing sometimes debilitating symptoms.

"The clinic gave me hope

that life was going to go on," Hedrick said.

Similar clinics have popped up across the United States as thousands of people who recovered from coronavirus infections — even mild ones — have found themselves still struggling.

Doctors have known for years that some patients who recover from viral infections go on to develop post-viral syndromes, but the exact cause is unknown. — AFP ■

UK vows 'Brexit Freedoms Bill' to scrap EU laws

THE UK government will introduce new legislation allowing it to change or scrap retained European Union laws, Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced Monday to mark two years since Brexit.

The new "Brexit Freedoms Bill" will make it easier to amend or remove what he called "outdated" EU laws that London has kept on its statute books as a "bridging measure" after leaving the bloc.

It will be part of what the British leader dubbed a "major cross-government drive to reform, repeal and replace" the European laws retained and cut red tape for businesses.

"The plans we have set out today will further unleash the benefits of Brexit and ensure that businesses can spend more of their money investing, innovating and creating jobs," Johnson said in a statement.

"Our new Brexit Freedoms Bill will end the special status of

EU law in our legal framework and ensure that we can more easily amend or remove outdated EU law in future."

The move is part of a flurry of announcements expected imminently from the government in key policy areas, as it also grapples with the growing international crisis over Russia's military build-up near Ukraine.

However, critics have accused Johnson of rushing out half-baked plans and so-called "red meat" policies to shore up support among his own increasingly disgruntled Conservative MPs.

That follows persistent calls for him to resign over claims of lockdown-breaching parties in Downing Street and several other recent scandals.

Britain left the EU on 31 January, 2020, but continued to abide by most of its rules and regulations until the start of 2021 under the terms of its withdrawal deal. — AFP ■

Top oil producers to meet amid record crude prices

THE world's top oil-producing countries will meet on Wednesday to discuss a further increase in output, while crude prices have reached seven-year highs rattled by geopolitical tensions.

Part of their regular meetings since the Covid-19 pandemic shook markets, the 13 members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and their 10 allies convene by videoconference to set output. Many analysts expect the grouping, including Saudi Arabia and Russia, to decide to continue to boost output by 400,000 barrels per day in March.

This will be in line with their strategy to slowly re-open the taps since May last year, after drastic cuts to curb slumping prices when the coronavirus first started spreading. "With that said, we wouldn't completely rule out a larger increase, given high oil prices and recent OPEC+ underproduction," Capital Economics analysts said.

Brent oil on Wednesday surpassed \$90 per barrel, attaining a level last seen in October 2014.

The price of West Texas Intermediate (WTI)

crude hit its highest level in more than seven years earlier this month, fuelled by easing concerns about the Omicron Covid variant and geopolitical tensions.

The United States and Britain on Sunday flagged new and "devastating" economic sanctions against Russia, as Washington and its NATO allies step up efforts to deter any invasion of Ukraine. Fears of an imminent invasion have grown in recent days, despite denials from Moscow and pleas from Ukraine's president to avoid stirring "panic" over the massive Russian military build-up on the border. — AFP ■



The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) logo is pictured at OPEC's headquarters in Vienna, on 22 September 2017. **PHOTO: AFP**

North Korea confirms most powerful missile test since 2017

NORTH Korea confirmed Monday it had fired its most powerful missile since 2017, capping a month-long blitz of launches that has raised the spectre of leader Kim Jong Un restarting nuclear tests.

Pyongyang conducted a record seven weapons tests in January, the most ever in a calendar month, as it threatened to abandon a self-imposed moratorium on launching long-range and nuclear weapons, blaming US “hostile” policy for forcing its hand.

North Korean state media said Monday that the country had test-fired a Hwasong-12 intermediate-range ballistic missile, last launched in 2017, which is powerful enough to put the US territory of Guam in range.

South Korea and the United States responded to the launch with concerns that long-range missiles and nuclear tests could be next on Kim’s agenda.

Pyongyang has “come close to destroying the moratorium declaration,” South Korean President Moon Jae-In said after an emergency National Security Council meeting Sunday.

He noted the North was showing a “similar pattern” to 2017, when it raised regional tensions by launching intermediate-range missiles and following them up with intercontinental ballistic missile tests.

A senior Biden administration official said Washington shared the concern.



North Korea test-fires a Hwasong-12 “intermediate- and long-range ballistic missile” on 30 January 2022. Bottom section shows images of the earth taken from a camera installed on the warhead. PHOTO: KCNA/KYODO

“It’s not just what they did yesterday, it’s the fact that this is coming on the heels of quite a significant number of tests in this month,” he said.

“We obviously don’t want to see further testing and we’ve called upon to DPRK to refrain from further tests,” he added, referring to North Korea by the initials of its official name. — AFP ■

Thai fishing crews fear five-year recovery after oil spill



This handout from the Royal Thai Navy taken and released on 27 January 2022 shows the clean-up operation underway for a crude oil spill caused by a leak from an undersea pipeline owned by Star Petroleum Refining Public Company Limited in the Gulf of Thailand, near Rayong. PHOTO: HANDOUT / ROYAL THAI NAVY / AFP

THE nightly armada of bobbing green lights from squid boats has all but disappeared near the site of an oil spill in the Gulf of Thailand, as devastated local crews brace for lost income and

damaged fish stocks.

The Thai navy is scrambling to clean up Tuesday night’s spill from a pipeline that leaked at least 60 tonnes of crude oil 20 kilometres (12 miles) off the coast of Rayong province.

Authorities have declared Mae Ram Phueng Beach a disaster zone and closed it to swimmers as crews in yellow plastic protective suits begin the clean-up.

Rayong resorts and seafood restaurants say the spill is a “nail in the coffin” for their businesses after the tourism industry’s continued pandemic downturn.

For long-time fishermen who have been asked to halt their catches for at least a month in exchange for emergency payments, there is a feeling of *deja vu*.

They recall the long road to environmental and economic recovery after another pipeline leak in the same area in 2013.

Initial compensation for that accident was around \$900, but fisherman Tuem 46, says it is no substitute for regular work.

“I don’t want compensation. I want a healthy sea that I can work in for my livelihood,” he told AFP.

“The sea can give us money every day. The sea was good in the past few years. I do not know how many years before it becomes good again.”

Tuem usually makes around \$30 a day from a 7-10 kilogramme (15-22 pound) haul but he says now he will struggle to cover the cost of petrol to retrieve his fishing nets.— AFP ■

Taliban killed 100 ex-Afghan govt officials, others: UN report

A United Nations report seen Sunday says the Taliban and its allies allegedly killed more than 100 former Afghan government members, security personnel and people who worked with international forces.

The report, an advance copy of which was seen by AFP, describes severe curtailing of human rights by Afghanistan’s new fundamentalist rulers. In addition to the political killings, women’s rights and the right to protest have also been curbed.

“Despite announcements of general amnesties for former members of the Government, security forces and those who worked with international military forces, UNAMA continued to receive credible allegations of killings, enforced disappearances, and other violations towards these individuals,” UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres’s report said.

Since the Taliban seized Kabul on 15 August, the UN mission in Afghanistan has received more than 100 reports of such killings that it deems credible, the report said.

More than two-thirds of

those killings were “extra-judicial killings committed by the de facto authorities or their affiliates.”

Additionally, “human rights defenders and media workers continue to come under attack, intimidation, harassment, arbitrary arrest, ill-treatment and killings,” it said.

The report also detailed a government clampdown on peaceful protests, as well as a lack of access for women and girls to work and education.

“An entire complex social and economic system is shutting down,” Guterres said in the report.

Afghanistan is in the grip of a humanitarian disaster, worsened by the Taliban takeover that prompted Western countries to freeze international aid and access to billions of dollars’ worth of assets held abroad.

The country was almost entirely dependent on foreign aid under the previous US-backed government, but jobs have dried up and most civil servants haven’t been paid for months.— AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Torrential rains leave at least 18 dead in Brazil

TORRENTIAL rains in Brazil’s Sao Paulo state between Friday and Sunday left at least 18 people dead, authorities said.

“Since last Friday, the turmoil caused by the bad weather caused 18 deaths, including seven children and left around 500 people without homes or displaced,” said the Sao Paulo state government, citing the Civil Defence body.

After flying over affected areas, governor Joao Doria announced he was releasing 15 million reales (\$2.7 million) to help the 10 most affected cities and 645 municipalities in Brazil’s most populous state — home to 46 million people. Doria expressed “solidarity” with the families of the 18 victims.

Of the victims, 11 died on Sunday after landslides buried several homes in cities in the interior of the state, local press said. The Civil Defence said there were also “nine injured and five missing.” — AFP ■

UAE intercepts Yemen rebel ballistic missile: defence ministry

THE UAE said Monday it intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile launched by Yemen’s Huthi rebels towards the Gulf country with no casualties reported, the third such incident this month.

The defence ministry said in a statement that United Arab Emirates “air defences intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile launched by the Huthi terrorist group towards the country”.

It added that debris fell in an unpopulated area and there were no casualties. The incident on Monday marks the third attack on the Emirates this month, with three foreign workers killed in the first assault on 17 January and the second a week later that was intercepted.

The Huthis have yet to comment on Monday’s attack but said they will release “in the coming hours” a statement about an operation in the UAE.

The UAE is part of a Saudi-led military coalition that supports Yemen’s government against the Iran-backed Huthis.— 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 female referee serves in AFC Women's Asian Cup

MYANMAR women's referee Daw Thein Thein Aye, who has been selected to officiate the 2022 AFC Women's Asian Cup in India, was in-charge of two matches in the tourney.

Daw Thein Thein Aye served as a referee in a group match and

a quarter-final match of the AFC tourney on 27 and 30 January.

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has selected 16 referees for the tournament, with Daw Thein Thein Aye from Myanmar and three from South East Asia.

The quarter-finals of the AFC

Women's Cup are over but there will be one final and three more play-offs for the 2023 Women's World Cup qualifiers.

Following on the quarter-finals, defending champions Japan, South Korea, China and the Philippines have qualified for the

semi-finals, with all four qualifying for the 2023 Women's World Cup.

Thailand, Viet Nam and China Taipei who have lost in the quarter-finals will join a play-off match for the 2023 Women's World Cup, while Australia will

now co-host the 2023 Women's World Cup.

Daw Thein Thein Aye has been in charge of women's football at the World-Class tourneys, including 2016 FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup in Puebla, New Guinea. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM



(FILES) In this file photograph taken on 12 June 2021, Denmark's midfielder Christian Eriksen warms up before the UEFA EURO 2020 Group B football match between Denmark and Finland at the Parken Stadium in Copenhagen. PHOTO : JONATHAN NACKSTRAND / AFP / POOL

Eriksen signs for Brentford months after cardiac arrest at Euro 2020

CHRISTIAN Eriksen has completed a remarkable return to the Premier League, signing for Brentford just seven months after suffering a cardiac arrest at last year's European Championship.

The Denmark international left Inter Milan in December by mutual consent as the implantable cardioverter defibrillator, or ICD, he had fitted meant he was not allowed to play in Italian football.

But the Premier League does not have the same rule and Brentford issued a statement on Monday confirming they had signed the former

Tottenham playmaker until the end of the season, subject to international clearance. Eriksen, 29, who has been training with young players at another of his former clubs, Ajax, said he was raring to go in a short video on Brentford's Twitter feed.

"Hi everyone, it's Christian Eriksen," he said. "I'm happy to announce that I've signed for Brentford Football Club and I can't wait to get started and hopefully I'll see you all very soon."

Brentford manager Thomas Frank, who worked with Eriksen while in charge of Denmark's Un-

der-17s squad early in his coaching career, welcomed his compatriot, saying it was an "unbelievable opportunity" to bring a world-class player to the club.

"He is fit but we will need to get him match-fit and I am looking forward to seeing him work with the players and staff to get back towards his highest level," he said.

"At his best, Christian has the ability to dictate games of football. He can find the right passes and is a goal threat.... I expect him to have an impact in the dressing room and at the training ground." — AFP ■

Canada stun US to close in on World Cup berth

CANADA took a giant step towards their first World Cup qualification in 36 years on Sunday after scoring an upset 2-0 victory over arch-rivals the United States in CONCACAF qualifiers.

A Cyle Larin goal after just seven minutes and an injury time effort from Sam Adekugbe secured all three points for the Canadians at a frigid Tim Hortons Field in Hamilton to extend the home side's lead at the top of the CONCACAF standings.

The unbeaten Canadians now have 22 points from four games with four fixtures remaining, pulling four points clear of the USA who are second with 18 points.

Canada have emerged as the surprise package from the Central America, North America and the Caribbean qualifying region, and are now firmly on course for only their second trip to the World Cup after reaching the Mexico finals in 1986.

"We're turning into a football country," Canada's jubilant English coach John Herdman said afterwards.

"(The USA) are a great team, a very good team, they had great quality today. But we matched their spirit. "And that's what I said to our lads – we've got our own quality, and it came through."

Goalscorer Larin admitted a World Cup berth was within reach. — AFP ■



Canada's Mens National Soccer team celebrates their win over the United States in their World Cup qualifying match in Hamilton, Ontario, on 30 January, 2022. PHOTO : GEOFF ROBINS / AFP