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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Thursday, 17 February 2022

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.

All Tatmadaw members need to control themselves with good leadership and good followership: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets Tatmadaw members and families of the Mongyawng Station in the Triangle Region Command on 16 February 2022.

OBEYING the orders and having good military disciplines are important for the Tatmadaw members, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence

Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in meeting with Tatmadaw members and families of Mongkhat and Mongyawng stations of the Triangle Region Command separately yesterday.

In his speech, the Senior General noted that officers, other ranks and their wives need to understand the Tatmadaw's situation to take State responsibilities under the Constitution (2008).

Before the previous government, some persons urged ethnic armed organizations not to sign the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement-NCA. So, the peace process was weak. Moreover, no encouragement to domestic

production and emphasizing importation caused a large amount of trade deficit. As some projects implemented through foreign loans were halted, it caused terrible losses.

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Market-based avocado farming in PyinOoLwin recorded to create market expansion

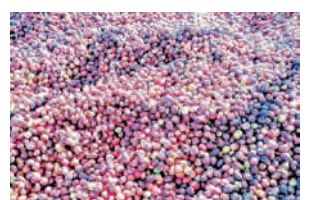
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LOCAL BUSINESS

Raw coffee bean fetches handsome prices despite low yield in Thandaunggyi Tsp

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Objectives of 77th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

1. THE Tatmadaw to participate in the leading role of national politics for the emergence of the Union based on democracy and federalism while safeguarding the Constitution (2008) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
2. The Tatmadaw to take responsibility for substantial contribution to measures of peace and prosperity of the country and food sufficiency as a national task the government primarily emphasizes
3. The Tatmadaw to join hands with all ethnic national people in the national reconciliation and peace processes
4. The Tatmadaw to provide necessary assistance for convening a free and fair multiparty democracy general election for ensuring the emergence of the Union based on democracy and federalism upon completion of endeavours in accord with the provisions of the State of Emergency
5. To build a powerful, capable and modern patriotic Tatmadaw to protect the national interest of the State

Public Notice

15 February 2022

THE Rapid Response Teams (RRT) have been set up in each district of Yangon to provide COVID-19-related information and places for lab tests.

The district RRTs are organized for 24-hour information for the people living in Yangon Region who suffer from COVID-19 symptoms and have close contact with the positive patients, and the people can contact the following phone numbers of the districts.

Daily COVID-19 tests

Those who want to take a test for COVID-19 can contact the district RRT and undergo the COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Test (RDT) at the places recommended by the RRT from 9 am to 4 pm daily.

District Bed Management Commit-

tees help for medical services at hospital/COVID-19 treatment centre

The district Bed Management Committees will help assist the patients who need to be treated at the hospital/COVID-19 treatment centre among the COVID-19 confirmed patients.

Teleconsultation Programme launched

Teleconsultation teams have been set up in each district in Yangon Region to provide direct communication with COVID-19 Infectious Diseases (Home Isolation) and Teleconsultation Programme (CDC). Please be informed that the following telephone numbers of these professional groups can be contacted in each district.

24-hour COVID-19 service numbers for Yangon people

District	RRT (COVID-19 related information)	Teleconsultation Team (Direct communication for COVID-19 confirmed patients with the professional doctors)
Southern District	09 882555067	09 88 255 3605
	09 882555068	09 88 255 3606
	09 882555069	
Northern District	09 882555071	09 8825540 08
	09 882556338	09 8825540 09
	09 882556340	
Western District	09 882555063	09 8825540 10
	09 882555064	09 8825540 11
	09 882555065	
Eastern District	09 882555049	09 8825540 05
	09 882555061	09 8825540 06
	09 882555062	

Ministry of Health

Winners of 12th Mekong Literary Award announced

THE 12th Mekong Literary Award Selection Committee of the Myanmar Writers' Association has finalized the entries.

The Short Stories Award was won by The Anthology of Ruined Eras written by Agyi Ko Ko (Katha) (U Zaw Win Aung) and the Poetry Award was won by Spring Opera Poems composed by Salin Bhone Kyaw (U Than Aye).

The 12th Mekong Literary Award Presentation Ceremony for Cambodia, Myanmar, Viet Nam, Thailand, Laos and China (Yunnan Province) will be hosted by Laos, the rotating host country. — MNA

Dockyard in Kyimyindine to be rented under B.O.T system

A dockyard business near Jaungwyne village, Kyimyindine township, Yangon region will be rented on a long-term basis under a B.O.T system, according to the Fisheries Department under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation.

The dockyard in Jaungwyne village is 27.97 acres. Now, the Fisheries Department has invited the tender to business people to rent the dockyard for the long term under the B.O.T system.

Earlier, we didn't rent

the yard because it is owned by the department. Now, the tender has been called for via newspapers. Those, who would like to know more detailed information about the tender, can buy the application," said an official from the tender acceptance and scrutiny committee under the Fisheries Department (Head Office).

The tender application form and terms and conditions will be available from 25 January to 25 February at No 36, Administration Section of

the Fisheries Department in Nay Pyi Taw. The open tender can be submitted between 26 February to 16 March at the Fisheries Department (Head Office), according to the committee.

To rent the shipyard business to entrepreneurs for the long term, the open tender will be announced on 18 March at the Fisheries Department (Head Office), according to the announcement of the tender acceptance and scrutiny committee. — Ko Naing/GNLM

2,740 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 16 February, total figure rises to 553,564

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **553,564** after **2,740** new cases were reported on 16 February 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **520,092** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **19,318** after **4** died.

COVID-19 vaccine is being injected to those of priority groups in regions and states for prevention and control of the disease. Up to 15-2-2022, a total of **23,154,574** people have been vaccinated. Of them, **20,378,445** people have been fully vaccinated and **2,776,129** people are yet to get the second shots.—MNA

Daily newspapers available online

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

News and Periodicals Enterprise

Further State Responsibilities to be discharged

- When the government declared State of Emergency and took State responsibilities under Section 417 of the Constitution, we put all our hearts and souls into the State responsibilities but we encountered domestic/foreign interferences.
- Individual human rights include respect for each other; Appreciation is the most important thing. Citizens can also claim their rights if they have a country.
- Despite the destruction of the country, there is no example in the world that protects the rights of individual citizens. The right of citizens can only be claimed unless there are destructive elements.
- The idea that one must prioritize than their own sake the interests of other people is such hypocrisy for democracy.
- The actions against the government seem to be an opinion that is also against the citizens who are working for the country conscientiously.
- The defence services of the country mean to protect the public at the lowest level and our three main national causes at the highest level. We, the military members, discharge defence duties for the sakes of people with our own wishes but not for private intentions.

(Excerpt from the speech made by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on one-year State responsibilities discharged by the State Administration Council on 1-2-2022)

All Tatmadaw members need to control themselves ...

FROM PAGE-1

Moreover, a large number of loans was taken from foreign countries, so the country is packing the burden of loans. From 2011 to 2021, the trade deficit reached some US\$25 billion, and the trade deficit started regaining as of 2021.

The government is implementing a five-point road map and nine objectives for the development of the nation. Moreover, voter lists are being scrutinized. At present, the State economy which was down due to COVID-19 resurges with some improvement.

The ceasefire has been announced for restoring peace. And, an invitation has been put forward to the peace talks. Emphasis is being placed on restoring the internal peace so as to build the Union based on democracy and federalism.

Only when the country restores peace and stability will the free and fair election be held. It is



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets Tatmadaw members and families of the Mongkhat Station in the Triangle Region Command on 16 February 2022.

necessary for the people to cast votes without any threats. As it is necessary to cease the armed conflicts to be free and fair election and not to pose threat to anyone, efforts are being made for

carrying out the peace process. The Tatmadaw is to defend the State, sovereignty and the people. So, the Tatmadaw must be capable, have full training and have good morals and disciplines.

The Tatmadaw must be powerful. So, all the Tatmadaw members need to be good soldiers. Leaders need to have the capacity of leadership for the Tatmadaw. Those administrators from the rank of

lance corporal to commanders must control the military units with the fatherly spirit and commander spirit. All Tatmadaw members need to control themselves with good leadership and good followership.

Obedying the orders and having good military disciplines are important for the Tatmadaw members. So, they must have a school education. Efforts are being made to improve the basic education of the Tatmadaw members. The Senior General then presented foodstuffs for Tatmadaw members and families from Mongkhat and Mongyawng stations to respective station commanders and, Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, the wife of the Senior General, gave the cash awards for Mongkhat Station Maternal and Child Welfare Association through the wife of the station commander.

After the meetings, the Senior General, wife and party cordially greeted Tatmadaw members and families. — MNA



The Senior General presents foodstuffs for Tatmadaw members and families of the Mongyawng Station (Left photo) and for Tatmadaw members and families of the Mongkhat Station (Right photo).

Concerted efforts of students, parents, teachers and authorities can shape education promotion, says Senior General

IT is necessary to apply the political way of solving the problems in the democratization, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in meeting with departmental personnel and town elders at the halls of Mongkhat and Mongyawng Township General Administration Departments separately yesterday.

The local authorities reported on supply of drinking water to Mongkhat, the requirement of education staff, issuance of citizenship scrutiny cards through Pankhinn project, prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19, improvement of Yangpon-Wamphyat-Wamyut inter-village road, and reconstruction of collapsed Dunnwe bridge across Namphun Creek.

Union ministers and the Shan State Chief Minister discussed measures of respective ministries to fulfil the requirements of the region.

In his speech, the Senior General said that if water from Namloi Creek can be purified in modern technologies, it will supply drinking water to the people. Research can be conducted



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets the departmental personnel and town elders in Mongyawng Township in Shan State (East) yesterday.

for generating hydropower at Namloi Creek.

Mongkhat and Mongyawng regions should utilize the existing natural resources for having more development. Mongyawng region needs to implement the agricultural-based industry to

produce rice-based products and other value-added products. Agriculture and livestock farms must be undertaken together for ensuring food sufficiency of the region and exporting the value-added products to neighbouring countries so as to improve

the socio-economic life of the people.

Shan State (East), Kayah and Chin states are weak in encouragement to education. Despite language barriers and poor transport facilities, these regions need to encourage education. Parents need to encourage their children to learn education as well as strive for economic growth. Teachers must be qualified for teaching while students should focus on learning education. Concerted efforts of students, parents, teachers and authorities can shape education promotion.

It is necessary to encourage the emergence of outstanding persons in respective subjects. The government will assist in learning education as much as possible, so, local people need to make efforts to come out the educated human resources from the respective regions.

Although the region was notorious in the measures related to narcotic drugs, efforts of the Myanmar Police Force and the Tatmadaw for eradication lessen

these events. All need to take eradication of narcotic drugs. The region should be famous with industries and businesses.

The Senior General expressed his hope, saying that the Mongkhat region would be a drug-free area with the improvement of the socio-economic status of the local people. If the country does not have stable politics, such a country will not meet development. The Senior General said he does not focus on armed insurrection for solving the political and racism problems. It is necessary to apply the political way of solving the problems in democratization. Local people need to join hands with administrative officials and departmental personnel for the development of the regions.

The Senior General presented gifts for Mongkhat and Mongyawng regions through respective administrators.

After the meeting, the Senior General cordially greeted departmental officials, town elders, Shan, Lahu and Akha ethnic cultural troupes. — MNA



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing cordially greets the departmental personnel and town elders in Mongkhat Township in Shan State (East) yesterday.

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CIRCULATION & DISTRIBUTION

(+95) (01) 8604532,
Hotline - 09 454237515

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

(+95) (01) 8604530,
Hotline - 09 251022355

marketing@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com
subscription@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com

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gnlmnews@gmail.com
www.gnlm.com.mm

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Chairman of State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing inspects military-related matters in Triangle Region Command



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets the high ranking officers of the General Staff, Adjutant-General and Quartermaster-General Corps of the Triangle Region Command yesterday.

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, accompanied by Commander-in-Chief (Navy) Admiral Moe Aung, Commander-in-Chief (Air) General Tun Aung inspected the activities of General staff, adjutant-general and quartermaster-general corps of the Triangle Region Command yesterday.

First, Commander of Triangle Region Command Maj-Gen Myo Min Tun explained the implementation of region security, law enforcement, security and stability of border areas, seizures of drugs, trading, co-operation works for COVID-19

preventive measures and security, drug seizures, security and appropriate security operation in region command and reopening of schools which were closed during the outbreak of COVID-19.

After hearing the reports, the Senior General talked about his duty assignment in Triangle Region Command where has transportation difficulties. He continued that it should conduct military operations, security and operations successfully in the region. In the COVID-19 period, efforts were made to transport medical supplies in time as the command is in a far-reaching area. In serving the security and defence

tasks, it needs to prevent any destructions that affect the national interests. Making anti-drug activities and preventing cross-border crimes mean national interests protection measures.

The military outfits under the control of region command need to be perfect in skills and abilities to attack and should practise in each outfit and the training schools should train successively.

Only if the leaders at different levels have proper disciplines, there would be disciplined and skilful military units. It should hold a fair and good mindset of Commander in mentoring the lower ranking.

It should fulfil the rights and welfares of the individual soldier. The commanders need to know the basic concept of individual soldiers so that they can be assigned in the correct sectors and their weaknesses and needs can be also improved. The low-rank members should follow the 60 military codes of conducts strictly.

The leaders need to read and improve the education level of their fellows. Only the knowledge of literacy can distinguish right and wrong and solve individual problems properly. Tatmadaw also makes efforts to improve the education level of the entire Tatmadaw.

The leaders play a key role

in creating a skilful army and so the commanders need to serve in accord with 16 leadership qualifications. Moreover, Tatmadaw provides food and accommodation and the health sector of the individual soldier to a certain extent. Therefore, the Commanders who closely control them need to mentor them in improving their living standard systematically. It should behave to become military leaders with ethics of real soldier.

The Senior General pointed out the need to improve the interests of residents, accelerate actions for education and make efforts to ensure regional development. — MNA

MIFER Union Minister meets South Asia Future Investment Group Pte. Ltd delegation

UNION Minister U Aung Naing Oo of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations received a delegation led by Chair Mr Zhang Jun of the South Asia Future Investment Group Pte. Ltd in Nay Pyi Taw on 16 February.

They openly discussed the investment matters in livestock production and exportation, real estate, urban estate development, tourism development, international trade, digital trade platform

for Myanmar's products and gems and jewellery sectors.

Moreover, they conferred implementation of trade gateways for exports and transits from the originating country to final destinations (southern and western China) through Myanmar's border posts or Yangon Port.

Present at the meeting were the deputy minister, senior officials from the departments concerned and the company representatives. — MNA



All stakeholders must exert concerted efforts to draw up ICM: Vice-Senior General Soe Win



State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win presides over the second meeting of the National-Level Central Committee on Administration and Management of Natural Resources in Coastal Areas on 16 February 2022 in Nay Pyi Taw.

STATE Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win delivered a remark at the second meeting of the National-Level Central Committee on Administration and Management of Natural Resources in Coastal Areas, held in the afternoon of 16 February at Ingyin Hall of the Forest Department under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation in Nay Pyi Taw.

Present at the meeting were Union Minister U Tin Htut Oo for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Union Minister U Khin Maung Yi for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, Deputy Ministers U San Lwin and U Min Min Oo, the Commodore General Staff (Navy), permanent secretaries and officials concerned. Also, the chief ministers of the regions and states and officials virtually attended the meeting.

At the meeting, the chairman of the central committee stated that natural resources and environmental conservation are regarded as the State responsibility and the government is prioritizing this matter. By looking forward to achieving the State's coastal and mangroves sectoral management activities, according to the SAC Notification No 95/2021 dated 2 April 2021, the National-Level Central Committee on Administration and Management of Natural Resources in Coastal Areas was formed. It was reconstituted on 30 October 2021 under the Notification 306/2021 with 21 members and

10 responsibilities.

At the first meeting of the committee held on 9 June 2021, 11 points of decisions regarding the administration and management of the coastal areas were made under the guidance of the SAC depending on the reports and discussions of the committee members.

The central committee planned to hold the meeting bi-annually. Therefore, he asked

able development of the State. To enhance the multi-sectoral coordination, the national-level committees was formed as well. Of the 10 responsibilities of the central committee, as per the task (C), developing the national-level Integrated Coastal Management Programme (ICM) and instructions to implement the projects of ICM are assigned to the committee. According to point (B) of the decision made

herent implementation of the environmental sustainability, integrated management approach on natural resources among the relevant sectors and analysis to ensure the coherence for the ecosystem in the mineral extraction and the development activities.

It is the environmental management with advanced practices in the forms of social, economic and environmental elements, he remarked.

leum and mineral extraction, manufacturing and construction enterprises. Furthermore, the issues between the stakeholders must be addressed concertedly by looking forward to the long-term benefits of the State and the people. The system also coordinates the stakeholders from the multi-sectors, stressed the Vice-Senior General.

A draft for ICM, with the technical assistance of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the future tasks will be reported hereby.

Under the ICM programme, Myanmar coastal areas and marine resources must be valued as the country's natural resources. All the stakeholders must exert concerted efforts to balance the conservation and development focuses, building resilience on human-environmental impacts and utilizing effectively for the long-term sustainable development for future generations. The six strategies of ICM are administration and management, organizational capacity development, coastal ecosystem conservation and restoration, research and supervision, the delegation of administration, private partnership with the responsible businesses.

The ICM programme is drawn up for a 15-year period. The relevant departments must draw plans to implement those six strategies. Those plans will be funded by the State and the development partners of the State. The committee members must cooperate effectively in all the tasks.

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the committee members to report the implementation of the 11 points of the decision made in the first meeting and the future tasks and processes to implement effectively the coastal area management activities.

The coastal area conservation plays a pivotal role in the sustainable development of the country and sustainable natural resources conservation for future generations is a key aspect of the State, he stated.

Myanmar's coastal resources can meet the goals and objectives of the different sectors. It helps contribute to the sustain-

able development of the State. To enhance the multi-sectoral coordination, the national-level committees was formed as well. Of the 10 responsibilities of the central committee, as per the task (C), developing the national-level Integrated Coastal Management Programme (ICM) and instructions to implement the projects of ICM are assigned to the committee. According to point (B) of the decision made

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This ICM system is the co-

Whichever business executions in coastal areas affect the ecosystem and those engaged in natural resource extraction. Biodiversity is in ecological diversity in coastal areas. Loss of biodiversity can affect the ecosystem. This being so, the values of the elements of the coastal ecosystem must be carefully realized in the development activities and specific measures have to be taken to protect the environment.

As a result of this, we must consider the impacts on coastal regions and socio-economy by the agriculture, fisheries, hotels and tourism, natural gas, petro-

All stakeholders must exert concerted efforts to draw up ICM: ...

FROM PAGE-6

Myanmar has rich marine biodiversity and long coastal regions. The resources help contribute to the country's food security and sustainable development. The growth in population along with the coastal areas, the deforestation and mangroves destruction, overfishing, environmental impacts from the coastal tourism and development projects, pollution in the marine ecosystem due to the mineral extraction and water depletion issues must be resolved in harmony.

Harmony with environmental must be adopted to deal with the growing population and changes in living styles in order to achieve sustainable development.

The members of the United Nations are trying to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Coastal marine development is one of the SDGs.

Global warming, global sea-level rise and climate change challenges must also be considered while developing the ICM projects.

To mitigate climate change and the greenhouse impacts, the mangroves, coastal areas and marine ecosystems being the carbon sink can be defined as the blue carbon initiative. The conservation activities are therefore required to be undertaken across the globe.

The mangrove destruction can cause climate change, riverbank erosion and a threat to marine biodiversity. Therefore, The

establishment and protection of mangroves and green building concepts are system-wide approaches to climate change. Coastal and marine tourism, inshore and offshore fishing, the onshore and offshore exploration and drilling are regarded as "Blue Economy". the sustainable use of ocean resources for the economy is crucial in the Sustainable Blue Economy Initiative which integrates sustainable development and green growth. The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS Myanmar) reported four opportunities from the Blue Economy Initiative in 2015; developing the policy and frameworks for the administration and management of the coastal and marine business sectors, investment in coastal and marine extraction, prospects

on conservation activities for rich biodiversity, and the protection of mangroves for natural disasters resilient measures under the environmental security and protection enhancement plan.

Myanmar is cooperating with the international countries to carry out coastal and marine sustainable activities as the UN's 14 SDGs.

The effective implementation for the coastal development in the post-COVID-19 pandemic are encouraged and Myanmar will conduct the ICM by looking forward to the enhancement of the Blue Economy Initiative.

He also appreciated the implementation and efforts of the central committee for the points of decisions made in the first meeting. Reviving the coast-

al and marine conservation and development activities suspended by the pandemic, coordination in each sector, the existing development activities and future plans in harmony with the coastal and marine sustainability can be discussed openly, he pointed out.

Later, a coastal risk awareness video was shown. The secretary of the central committee, Director-General U Htay Aung of the Forest Department reported the accomplished tasks and preparations to draw up the ICM.

Next, other committee members also explained matters in each sector and the Deputy Prime Minister instructed them to fulfil the needs. Then, the Deputy Prime Minister concluded the meeting with the closing remarks. — MNA

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

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

A total of 8.40 tonnes of masks were imported by one vehicle of one company via the Lwejel trading zone yesterday.

Officials from the relevant departments are cooperating to facilitate and expedite the standard operating procedures for the import process.

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

Tatmadaw Air Force fighter jet crashes during training flight

A regular fighter jet flying from the Tatmadaw (Air Force) TadaU Air Base crashed yesterday morning during a training flight in the training area.

The plane crashed during a regular training flight at the training area at around 10:43 am yesterday.

The plane was found to have crashed in Yemyatgyi Lake, east of Ohntaw village, Sagaing Township. The pilot, Captain Hein Htet Aung, was killed in the crash.

Authorities are checking the crash and detailed investigations are underway. —MNA



Crash site.

CRIME NEWS

Illegal teak, timber, motorcycle, foodstuffs, utensils seized



Seized illegal consumer goods.

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

On 13 February, a com-

bined inspection team conducted the surprise check under the supervision of the Kachin State Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force and seized various sizes of raw jade which weighed 243

kilogrammes.

On 14 February, the combined team of the Yaypu inspection checkpoint and the Customs Department confiscated K6,250,000 worth of illegal materials — Mitsubishi Chariot car worth K4,000,000 carrying undocumented China-made foodstuffs worth K2,250,000.

On 15 February, the Customs Department of the Myanmar Industrial Port seized K2,334,114 worth of commodities that were not mentioned in import IDs.

Similarly, the Customs Department of the Yangon International Airport found undocumented 800 packs of liver medicines valued at K4,000,000.

The Mandalay Region

Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force launched an inspection with the Customs officials of the 16-Mile Kyaukchaw checkpoint and seized illegal foodstuffs and utensils valued at K15,657,000.

The Customs Department of the Chinshwehaw trade zone in Shan State also captured K12,500,000 worth of undocumented materials — 20 packs of China-made chicken strand valued at K500,000 and K12,000,000 worth of FF-2856 AD van that carried chicken.

Moreover, the Rakhine State combined inspection team seized 11.1480 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K 780,360 in Kyaukpyu and Thandwe townships in a surprise check.

On 16 February, the Bago

Region Forest Department also seized 15.2060 tonnes of various illegal timbers worth K2,404,360 in the forest reserves of Bago, Toungoo and Thayawady districts.

Similarly, the Sagaing Region combined inspection team confiscated one unregistered Floymo-125 Tracke motorcycle worth K600,000 in Indaw Township and five engines used in gold mining valued at K1,500,000.

Thus, a total of 16 arrests (estimated value of K46,025,834) were made on 13, 14, 15 and 16 February and the officials took action under the Forest Law, Customs Law, Export and Import Law and Myanmar Gems Law, stated the committee. — MNA

Wear masks, wash hands, prevent Omicron

NOT only ordinary species of COVID-19 virus but new variant Omicron is spreading in the societies of global countries. International news shows global countries are taking restricted preventive measures against infection of the pandemic and new variant Omicron as much as possible.

Governments and people from those global countries are embracing frets in struggling with prevention, control and treatment activities of the pandemic and new variants. Till today, they are facing a high infection rate of the virus, leaving terrible casualties.

Even though they do not have any frets over the disease, they should carefully bear the mindset to follow the necessary disciplines related to the pandemic. Anybody should not oppose orders, announcements, notifications, directives and restrictions.

Consequently, disciplined practices of people in individuals and groups reflect the prevention, control and treatment activities of the authorities against the pandemic.

If so, all the people should not go out without firm reasons. They all need to comply with the restrictions related to prevention and control of the pandemic issued by the Ministry of Health at an opportune time. Even though they do not have any frets over the disease, they should carefully bear the mindset to follow the necessary disciplines related to the pandemic. Anybody should not oppose orders, announcements, notifications, directives and restrictions.

In fact, the exhortation to wear masks and wash hands is not related to politics. Such exhortation should be practised not only during the period of COVID-19 infection but also during the normalcy period. Such moves cannot bring disadvantages to the doers. These are basic needs of personal hygienic measures. So, anyone should not oppose the health restrictions related to COVID-19. Otherwise, they may face disadvantages.

■ ■ ■

Three doses of COVID vaccine better than two? Study suggests so!

This study assessed the primary series of two doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccination effectiveness against infection, hospitalization, and death up to 8 months after vaccination, and also assessed the effectiveness of 3 doses of the vaccine up to 3 months after vaccination.

THE majority of the vaccines available for COVID-19 have two doses. People are said to become more capable of resisting the virus after the second dose. But, a recent Kaiser Permanente study, found that one month after a third dose, the effectiveness of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine was higher for preventing infection and hospitalization than 2 doses of the vaccine after 1 month.

The study was published in 'The Lancet Regional Health - Americas'.

"When we looked at the effectiveness of the 2 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine versus 3 doses, we see a benefit with 3 doses that exceeds that achieved with 2 doses alone," said Sara Y. Tartof, PhD, an epidemiologist with the Kaiser Permanente Southern California Department of Research & Evaluation and a member of the faculty of the Kaiser Permanente Bernard J.

Tyson School of Medicine, both in Pasadena.

Effectiveness against infection

This study assessed the primary series of two doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccination effectiveness against infection, hospitalization, and death up to 8 months after vaccination, and also assessed the effectiveness of 3 doses of the vaccine up to 3 months after vaccination.

To assess effectiveness, this research study evaluated electronic health records of 3.1 million members of Kaiser Permanente in Southern California from 14 December, 2020, to 5 December, 2021. During the study period, 197,535 (6.3 per cent) patients were infected with SARS-CoV-2, and of those, 15,786 (8 per cent) were admitted to the hospital. During the study period, the predominant variant was delta and not omicron.

2-dose vaccine effectiveness



A mass COVID-19 vaccination site at M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore on 20 March 2021. PHOTO: ERIC BARADAT/AFP

against infection declined from 85 per cent during the first month after vaccination to 49 per cent up

to 8 months following vaccination.

Effectiveness against hospi-

talization

2-dose vaccine effectiveness against hospitalization remained

high (90 per cent) throughout the 8 months and did not wane, except among people who were 75 years of age and older, or who had compromised immune systems.

For people who were immunocompromised, the protection against hospitalization dropped to 74 per cent, and for those 75 and older, it was 77 per cent.

3-dose vaccine effectiveness was 88 per cent against infection and 97 per cent against hospitalization within the first 3 months after vaccination.

"What we see from this research is that the public health impact of a third dose to prevent severe disease is substantial," Tartof said. "Importantly, all studies that have evaluated the vaccine effectiveness of a third dose -- including ours -- have shown a meaningful improvement in vaccine effectiveness against a broad range of SARS-CoV-2 outcomes."

SOURCE: ANI

Strong protection for babies born to Covid-vaccinated moms: study

The authors studied the odds of Covid-19 vaccination among mothers whose babies were hospitalized with the disease (176 infants) compared to the odds of vaccination among mothers whose babies were hospitalized for non-Covid reasons (203 infants), who were a control group.



Babies born to mothers fully vaccinated against the coronavirus during pregnancy were around 60 per cent less likely to be hospitalized with severe Covid, a new study by the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said. PHOTO: MAYOCLINICHEALTHSYSTEM.ORG/AFP

BABIES born to mothers fully vaccinated against the coronavirus during pregnancy were around 60 per cent less likely to be hospitalized with severe Covid, a new study by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Tuesday.

Such an effect had been hypothesized — because of the transfer of antibodies through the placenta during pregnancy and through breast milk after birth — but wasn't backed by real world evidence until now.

A study involving 379 babies

The CDC carried out a study involving 379 babies aged up to six months, who were hospitalized in 20 paediatric centres from July

2021 to January 2022. The authors studied the odds of Covid-19 vaccination among mothers whose babies were hospitalized with the disease (176 infants) compared to the odds of vaccination among mothers whose babies were hospitalized for non-Covid reasons (203 infants), who were a control group.

This is a statistical method used in real world studies to try to examine patients with similar characteristics, and is often used when it's not possible or ethical to carry out a randomized clinical trial. "Babies less than six months old whose mothers were vaccinated were 61 per cent less likely to be hospitalized with Covid-19," CDC researcher Dana Meaney-Delman said in a press call.

Born to people not vaccinated in pregnancy

What's more, 84 per cent of babies who were hospitalized with Covid were born to people not vaccinated in pregnancy. The one baby who died in the study was born to a mother who was not vaccinated.

Black and Hispanic babies were disproportionately hospitalized for Covid. "The bottom line is that maternal vaccination is a really important way to help protect these young infants," said Meaney-Delman.

The study further found that completion of a two-dose vaccine series later in pregnancy was more protective than earlier in pregnancy — 80 per cent com-

pared to 32 per cent. Although that is consistent with what is known about the waning of antibody levels in the months that follow vaccination, Meaney-Delman said it was important for people to get vaccinated at any stage during pregnancy in order to protect both the mother and baby.

Recommend boosters specifically for the pregnant

"If we have a woman who comes in in the first trimester and is vaccinated she can actually be eligible for a booster vaccine later in pregnancy," she said, but added it was premature for the agency to recommend boosters specifically for the pregnant.

SOURCE: AFP

MYANMAR Daily Weather Report

(ISSUED at 7:00 pm Wednesday16 February, 2022)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 17 February, 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Taninthayi region, scattered in Kayin, Mon states and isolated in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady regions. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be generally fair in upper Sagaing region and northern Shan state and partly cloudy in the remaining regions and states.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of fairly widespread rain or thundershowers in Taninthayi region, scattered in eastern Shan, Kayah, Kayin, Mon states and isolated in Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady regions and southern Shan state.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17 February, 2022: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17 February, 2022: Likelihood of isolated rain or thunder showers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 17 February, 2022: Generally fair weather.

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Market-based avocado farming in PyinOoLwin recorded to create market expansion



The accuracy of statistics plays a pivotal role in the development of the avocado industry. Thus, growers and entrepreneurs in PyinOoLwin Township are required to cooperate in this survey.

GOING on a survey to avocado farms linking to market-based approaches is being undertaken in PyinOoLwin Township, said U Myo Nyunt, vice-chair of the Myanmar Avocado Producers and Exporters Association.

This survey is aimed at expanding into a new market and measuring farm productivity.

A combined team, including the officials from the Agriculture Department, Myanmar Avocado Producers and Exporters Association, the Department of Agricultural Land Management and Statistics, the General Administration Department, the

Cooperatives Department and the Department of Planning has been surveying from 14 February in the township, to list the number of farm acres and calculate the yield rates of Hass and other varieties.

“We can figure the yield rate out only after the market-based farming statistics are listed in PyinOoLwin. After that, we can proceed to process, packaging, warehouse construction and factory establishment matters. We will specifically collect data of Hass separated from other varieties. This way, we can calculate the Hass production rate

in PyinOoLwin”, he explained.

During the survey, technical assistance will be provided to boost the quality of the avocado varieties that originated in PyinOoLwin.

The name of farmers, farming acres, varieties and the plants aged below and above three years are to be recorded. The accuracy of statistics plays a pivotal role in the development of the avocado industry. Thus, growers and entrepreneurs in PyinOoLwin Township are required to cooperate in this survey. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)/GNLM

More than 1,500 acres of onion cultivated in Chin State

MORE than 1,500 acres of onion has been grown in Chin State, said the Director of Chin State Agriculture Department.

“Chin State is targeted to grow over 1,100 acres of onion and over 1,300 acres of garlic this growing season. As of today, about 693 acres of onion and 836 acres of garlic have been cultivated, which is covered over 62 per cent of the projected acres,” said U Aung Myo Oo, Director of the Chin State Agriculture Department.

This year, authorities are targeted to grow 2,459 acres of onion in Haka, Falam and Matupi districts in Chin State. As of today, about 693 acres of onion and 836 acres of garlic are grown. The department cultivated about 107 acres of onion and 200 acres of garlic in Haka district, 495 acres of onion and 516 acres of garlic in Falam district and 91 acres of onion and 120 acres of garlic in Matupi district. In the 2021-2022FY, Chin State aims to grow about 5,025 acres of chilli crop. So far, about 4,379 acres of chilli have been cultivated, which is covered over 87 per cent of



the projected acres, according to the Director of Chin State Agriculture Department. — Lu Lay/GNLM

Raw coffee bean fetches handsome prices despite low yield in Thandaunggyi Tsp

THE perennial coffee plants in Thandaunggyi Township, Hpa-an District, Kayin State experience low yield this year, yet the price edges up.

Thandaunggyi Township is a hill region and residents are engaged in the agribusinesses. The region is renowned for its organic coffee (Arabica and Robusta coffee).

Earlier, the producers were not capable to manufacture quality coffee beans due to a lack of technology. The Agriculture Department went on a field trip and demonstrated the know-how to produce top-quality coffee.

Last year, the coffee beans were priced only K3,500-4,000 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilograms), whereas it slightly rose to K4,500-5,000 per viss this year.

Myanmar’s coffee has already earned a good reputation. It has penetrated markets in Asia such as Hong Kong and Singapore, some European



Thandaunggyi Township is a hill region and residents are engaged in the agribusinesses. The region is renowned for its organic coffee (Arabica and Robusta coffee).

countries, and the US, and it has good potential in the global market, according to the Agriculture Department.

Myanmar’s coffee has grabbed a market share in the US, with the support of USAID and WinRock International NGO. Efforts are being made to penetrate markets in Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Canada.

However, the impacts of coronavirus hurt the coffee industry as the lockdown and physical distancing caused a reduction in consumption.

There are 40,000 acres of highland coffee plantations and about 10,000 acres under lowland coffee in Myanmar, totalling 50,000 acres. Shan State is the main producer of coffee beans.

Coffee beans are harvested between December and February. They are distributed and exported throughout the year after harvest time. Myanmar earlier exported around 400 tonnes of coffee to foreign partners every year. — Saw Mintha (IPRD), KK/GNLM

Myawady border trade value increases to double in current mini-budget period

THE value of border trade through Myawady between Myanmar and Thailand doubled to US\$881.24 million between 1 October and 4 February in the current mini-budget period 2021-2022, indicating a sharp increase of \$476.507 million as against a year ago period, according to the statistics released by the Myanmar Customs Department.

The trade through the Myawady border stood at over \$404.7 million in the corresponding period of the last FY2020-2021.

Myawady-Mae Sot border trade remains normal amid the COVID-19 restrictions, according to the Myawady Chamber of Commerce.

Myanmar ships tonnes of corn to Thailand through the Myawady border. Thailand gives green light to corn imports through Mae Sot under zero tariff (with Form-D), between 1 February and 31 August. Myanmar exported approximately 1.6 million tonnes of corn were delivered to Thailand in the FY2020-2021.

Next, Thailand is suppressing Intellectual Property infringements at cross-border points to strengthen the trust with the trading partners and create a better investment climate.

There are seven border posts between Myanmar and Thailand-Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Hteekhee, Myeik, Mawtaung and Maese. The majority of the border trade with Thailand is conducted via the Myawady border post.

Myanmar primarily exports corn, natural gas, fishery products, coal, tin concentrate (SN 71.58 per cent), coconut (fresh and dry), beans, and bamboo shoots to Thailand. It imports capital goods such as machinery, raw industrial goods such as cement and fertilizers, consumer goods such as cosmetics and food products from the neighbouring country. — KK/GNLM

Beijing Winter Olympics shows resilience of sport amid pandemic: reports

THE ongoing Beijing Winter Olympics has proved to the world the resilience of sport amid the COVID-19 pandemic, according to media reports out of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Despite extreme challenges under the current circumstances, the Beijing Winter Olympics has experienced “a fantastic start with all measures in place to ensure the safety of those taking part,” said an editorial by Gulf News, an English daily based in Dubai.

Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi of the UAE Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan “praised

the opening ceremony and the high level of organization of the Games,” the Emirates News Agency said in a press statement.

The crown prince, who was invited to attend the opening ceremony and met with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Games, also “wished it success in strengthening bridges of understanding and friendship among the world’s youth, thus solidifying the foundations of peace and coexistence on the international arena,” said the report.

“The ability of the Chinese government to host a huge international event during the

pandemic is really highly commendable,” said Liza Grey, a communications professional from Dubai.

“It speaks well of the slogan of this year’s Games — Together for a Shared Future — that we all can move away from the pandemic if we show solidarity, and sports have proven that,” he added.

Based on mutual respect and cooperation, ties between the UAE and China have “entered a new and special era,” said an article published by Abu Dhabi-based English daily The National, citing the UAE ambassador to China Ali Obaid Al Dhaheri.—Xinhua ■



A woman poses in front of a flower display dedicated to frontline healthcare workers during the Covid-19 pandemic, Beijing, 29 September 2021. PHOTO: NICOLAS ASFOURI/AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

US efforts on pandemic, economy getting better, but not good: poll

MOST Americans thought US economy and the fight against COVID-19 improved to some extent in recent weeks, but still not good, while a majority of people were still concerned about the pandemic, according to a new poll released on Sunday.

As coronavirus cases came down in many places in the United States, more Americans said efforts against the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic “are going well”, but it was still a mixed report, showed the poll conducted by CBS News/YouGov between 8 and 11 February.

Around 47 per cent said “things are going well,” up from 36 per cent a few weeks ago. Fewer people reported than a year ago that their own mental health “is worse” as a result of the pandemic, it found.—Xinhua ■

Papua New Guinea to reopen borders shut by Covid

PAPUA New Guinea will reopen to vaccinated travellers from Wednesday, ending two years of strict border closures that virtually sealed the Melanesian nation off from neighbours.

The country’s pandemic controller David Manning said on Tuesday that he had revoked rules requiring approval to enter the country and mandatory quarantine.

The rules had hampered production at some of the country’s largest copper and gold mines and caused diplomatic spats — most notably with India and China, who were accused of bypassing rules to bring citizens into the country.—AFP ■

Philippines now at ‘low risk’ from coronavirus: gov’t



People at a market in Quezon city, Manila. PHOTO: AFP

THE Philippines is now at “low risk” from the coronavirus pandemic as more people get vaccinated and hospital admissions drop, President Rodrigo Duterte’s spokesman said Tuesday. The country last week reopened to foreign tourists for the first time in two years, though some health restrictions remain as campaigning for the 9 May

elections starts, with political rallies seen as potential super-spreader events.

“The National Capital Region and the entire Philippines now have a low-risk classification” in terms of case growth, prevalence and health system capacity, Duterte spokesman Karlo Nograles told reporters.

After surges of the highly

transmissible Omicron and Delta strains of the virus that led to government-enforced restrictions on mobility, hospital bed occupancy rates have eased to about 30 per cent.

Cases have averaged about 3,600 daily in the past week as the number of fully vaccinated people climbed to around 56 per cent of the population, health officials said. After lengthy lockdowns which ravaged the economy and put millions out of work, the government is now planning for a lifting of all restrictions, Health Undersecretary Maria Rosario Vergeire told reporters without giving a time frame.

“When that happens, all restrictions will be lifted and everything will be under self-regulation,” she added.

The virus has infected more than 3.6 million people and killed more than 55,000, according to government data.—AFP ■



A vaccination centre at the vaccination marathon at Bran Castle, Romania. PHOTO: DANIEL MIHAILESCU /AFP

WHO calls for increased vaccination efforts in Eastern Europe

THE WHO’s European office on Tuesday called for increased vaccination efforts in Eastern Europe, warning that the Omicron “tidal wave” was heading eastwards.

The World Health Organization’s regional director, Hans Kluge, noted that in the last two weeks, Covid-19 cases had more than doubled in six countries —

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Russia and Ukraine.

“As anticipated, the Omicron wave is moving east. Ten eastern member states have now detected this variant,” Kluge said.

The WHO’s European region comprises 53 countries, including several in central Asia.

Kluge lamented that vaccine uptake was still relatively slow in

parts of the region.

Less than 40 per cent of over-60s have complete their Covid-19 vaccine series in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. He added that in Bulgaria, Georgia and North Macedonia under 40 per cent of healthcare workers had received at least one dose of a Covid-19 vaccine.—AFP ■

S.Korea adds over 1 mln jobs in January

SOUTH Korea added more than 1 million jobs in January, marking the fastest increase in nearly 22 years, showed data from Statistics Korea on Wednesday.

The number of those employed totalled 26,953,000 in January, up 1,135,000 from a year earlier, according to Statistics Korea. It was the highest growth in almost 22 years since March 2000.

In January 2021, employ-

ment tumbled by 982,000 on a yearly basis due to the negative effect from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Asian country's employment continued to rise for the 11th consecutive month since March last year.

The number of unemployed fell 427,000 from a year earlier to 1,143,000 in January, and the unemployment rate retreated 1.6 percentage points to 4.1 per cent.—Xinhua ■



The number of those employed totaled 26,953,000 in January, up 1,135,000 from a year earlier, according to Statistics Korea. **PHOTO: JUNG YEON-JE/AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

A four-day workweek? Belgium takes the plunge

BELGIUM is giving employees the right to ask for a four-day workweek under a Covid-era shake-up of its labour laws, Prime Minister Alexander De Croo announced on Tuesday.

"The Covid period has forced us to work more flexibly — the labour market needs to adapt to that," he told journalists after an overnight negotiation of the changes among ministers.

The four-day workweek is the most eye-catching change. It would allow employees to clock up 38 hours of work over four days instead of five, opening the possibility to permanent long weekends, or a day of parenting. All without any reduction in salary.

The flexibility principle it carries would also allow an employee to work a higher number of hours in one week to have a much lighter week the next.—AFP ■

US Republicans block vote on Biden's Fed candidates

REPUBLICANS in the US Senate on Tuesday boycotted a vote to confirm President Joe Biden's nominees to lead the Federal Reserve, creating a potential roadblock for the central bank as it looks to fight runaway inflation.

The Senate Banking Committee was scheduled to vote on the nomination of Fed Chair Jerome Powell for a second term, as well as Fed Governor Lael Brainard to serve as his vice chair, Sarah Bloom Raskin for the post of top banking regulator and Lisa Cook and Philip Jefferson to join the central bank's Board of Governors.

But opposition lawmakers denied the committee the quorum it needed to proceed, and delayed confirmation by the full Senate.

Powell, a Republican, is still leading the central bank but his term officially expired 4 February and there are three vacant seats on the board.—AFP ■

Auto unions seek 1st base-pay hike in 2 yrs on recovery from pandemic

LABOUR unions from some major automakers asked management to raise their base salary for the first time in two years on Wednesday as the annual spring wage talks began amid the economy's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Workers at Honda Motor Co. and Mitsubishi Motors Corp. demanded a monthly base wage hike of 3,000 yen (\$26) and 1,000 yen, respectively, while the union of Toyota Motor Corp. sought an average monthly pay increase of 9,200 yen, roughly the same level from the year before, but declined to say whether it includes a base-pay hike.

The automotive industry's wage talks are keenly watched as they have a strong influence on other sectors. The new business year for automakers and many other major companies in Japan begins in April.

In a departure from demanding a pay hike based on the average wage of all union members, Toyota's union — seen as the industry trendsetter — has proposed wage increases in accordance with the line of work and positions of employees.



Workers at Honda Motor Co. and Mitsubishi Motors Corp. demanded a monthly base wage hike of 3,000 yen (\$26) and 1,000 yen, respectively. **PHOTO: KYODO**

The union of Nissan Motor Co. is demanding a monthly pay hike of 8,000 yen, up 1,000 yen from last year, but it also declined to disclose whether a base-pay hike is included in the request.

Meanwhile, the union of Subaru Corp., which has been forced to sharply reduce output due to a global semiconductor shortage, cut its wage increase request from the previous year by 600 yen to 6,400 yen. The un-

ion, however, called for annual bonuses worth 5.4 months of pay, up 0.2 month compared to last year.

The Confederation of Japan Automobile Workers' Unions has decided not to set a target for a unified pay-scale hike for the fourth consecutive year as it believes doing so may cement existing disparities in pay between employees of larger and smaller companies.—Kyodo ■

Security in Afghanistan improving while economic challenges remain

FOLLOWING the US-led forces withdrawal and Taliban's takeover of power in August 2021, the war in Afghanistan was over, a development that has been widely welcomed by Afghans.

However, an economic crisis has been worsened in Afghanistan, with the poverty hitting the country badly.

"To be frank, the country is peaceful over the past six months, as there is almost no fighting in Afghanistan. But unfortunately, some countrymen left the country mostly due to economic hardships," political analyst and former government employee Liluma Nuri observed.

Since the Taliban takeover of power in August last year, no major fighting has been reported in Afghanistan. The terror group Islamic State has since not launched any big attacks.

"We can go from one place to another even at midnight," Noor Aqa, a vegetable vendor in Kabul, told Xinhua.

Following the US military withdrawal, Washington has slapped sanctions on the new Afghan administration, freezing Afghanistan's central bank assets worth more than 9 billion US dollars and thus plunging the aid-dependent country into the economic crisis and poverty.

"We have security today but unfortunately we are struggling for naan (traditional flat bread) as the economic problem has sandwiched everyone," Kabul

resident Abdul Sami said.

Deputy spokesman for the Taliban administration Inamullah Samangani told Xinhua that the administration has been working hard to stabilize the economy. Samangani blamed Washington for the dire economic situation in Afghanistan. He criticized the US decision on allocating 3.5 billion dollars of Afghanistan's assets to the victims of the 9/11 terror attacks without consent of the Taliban administration.—Xinhua ■



Afghan women shop at a market area in Kabul on 23 August 2021, following the Taliban's military takeover of the country. **PHOTO: HOSHANG HASHIMI/AFP**

System glitch causes delays in JAL's domestic flights



A Japan Airlines Co. staff member attends to passengers at a check-in counter at Haneda airport in Tokyo on Feb. 16, 2022. PHOTO: KYODO

A glitch in Japan Airlines Co.'s check-in system caused delays in departures Wednesday at Tokyo and other domestic airports in Japan, the company said.

Customers also experienced problems on the airline's website when trying to make reservations for domestic flights and when checking in for international flights.

At Tokyo's Haneda airport, one flight was delayed by an hour as staff worked manually to complete the check-in process for passengers. The problem was detected around 4:30 a.m. on Wednesday and JAL is working to restore the system and find the cause of the glitch, according to the company.—Kyodo ■

Vaccinated children allowed to enter shopping centres in Indonesian capital

THE Indonesian government has allowed vaccinated children aged six to 12 to enter all shopping centres and recreational places in the region of capital Jakarta starting from Tuesday.

However, the children are required to show proofs that they have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, and they must be accompanied by parents.

With COVID-19 restrictions still in place in Jakarta, malls, playgrounds for kids and recreational areas are now allowed to operate at 50 per cent capacity to try to keep the economy moving amid the current surge in COVID-19 cases due to the Omicron variant of the virus.

With a four-tier COVID-19 restriction policy

in place in the Southeast Asian country, the government is currently imposing the level-3 curbs in Greater Jakarta.

The peak of the third wave of COVID-19 is starting to pass in Jakarta, with the numbers of daily cases, active cases and hospitalizations beginning to fall, according to Coordinating Minister for Maritime and Investment Affairs Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan.

"If (a person) has been vaccinated twice, has no comorbidities, just go out for a walk. There's nothing to worry about too much," the minister told an online media briefing on Monday, calling on the public to continue implementing health protocols.

To date, the country has recorded over 4.9 million COVID-19 cases with more than 145,000 deaths.—Xinhua ■



In this picture taken on 20 November, 2009, people walk around a shopping mall in Jakarta. PHOTO: AFP/ADEK BERRY

NEWS IN BRIEF

China inflation slows as govt vows to keep prices under control

INFLATION in China slowed in January, official data showed Wednesday, as the government pledged to keep prices in check in the world's second-biggest economy.

The producer price index (PPI), which measures the cost of goods at the factory gate, rose 9.1 per cent on-year, according to the National Bureau of Statistics, tracking falls in coal and steel prices. It was below the 9.5 per cent forecast in a Bloomberg survey of economists, and marked the third straight month of PPI easing. It was 10.3 per cent in December 2021. Policies to ensure supply and price stability were "vigorously promoted" to ease pressure from rising oil and commodity prices in international markets, National Bureau of Statistics senior statistician Dong Lijuan said in a statement.—AFP ■

UK annual inflation hits fresh 30-year high

UK annual inflation has hit the highest level since 1992, data showed Wednesday, adding pressure to the cost of living and on the Bank of England to keep raising rates.

The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) edged up to 5.5 per cent in January from 5.4 per cent in December, also a level not seen in almost three decades, the Office for National Statistics said in a statement. The rate is now at the highest level since March 1992, the ONS added. Prices have soared globally over the past year, in large part owing to surging energy prices, while consumers are facing also higher food costs as economies reopen from pandemic lockdowns.

"We understand the pressures people are facing with the cost of living," British finance minister Rishi Sunak said in response to Wednesday's data.—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CHERRY VOY.NO. (102N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CHERRY VOY. NO. (102N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **17-2-2022** 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 SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MEGHNA DREAM

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MEGHNA DREAM VOY.NO. (1)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **17-2-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **IBTT** 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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V BAO SHUN

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V BAO SHUN VOY.NO. (2203)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **17-2-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **WILMAR** 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 NEW HIGHEST MARINE CO LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MCL 21

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MCL 21 VOY. NO. (03/2022)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **18-2-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AIPT-2** 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

NEWS
IN BRIEFEU-Africa
summit: vaccines,
investment,
migration

EU leaders meet their counterparts from Africa on Thursday for a two-day summit that seeks to reboot ties through a pledge of major investment in the face of competition from China and Russia.

Key issues:

The European Union is under fire for its response to the coronavirus pandemic — the accusation is that it has hoarded vaccines that could have helped Africa better protect itself.

The EU — the world's biggest vaccine exporter — has been criticized for prioritizing shipments to richer nations.

It has also drawn ire for blocking an African-backed push for an intellectual property waiver to allow the generic production of Covid-19 vaccines.

The EU points to more 400 million jabs it has contributed to the global Covax vaccine-sharing initiative and its promise to provide Africa some 450 million doses by mid-2022.—AFP ■

Nigeria top cop held
over drug cartel ties

A high-profile Nigerian police commander who was suspended last year has been arrested after investigators issued a wanted notice against him for alleged involvement in a drugs deal, police said.

National deputy police commissioner Abba Kyari was suspended after he was implicated by Nigerian influencer Ramon Abbas, known as Hushpuppi, who pleaded guilty to money laundering and other crimes in the United States.

Kyari, who became famous for exposing a string of high-profile crimes in Nigeria, denied the allegations against him.

On Monday, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) declared Kyari wanted for complicity in a 25-kilogramme (55-pound) cocaine deal. In a statement late Monday, the police said Kyari and four other officers had been arrested “for their involvement... in a case of illicit drug trafficking involving a perpetual transnational drug cartel.”—AFP ■

Iran says nuclear deal ‘at hand’ but sanctions must be ‘truly lifted’



Technicians work at the Arak heavy water reactor's secondary circuit, as officials and media visit the site, near Arak, Iran, 23 December 2019. PHOTO: ATOMIC ENERGY ORGANIZATION OF IRAN/AFP

IRAN on Monday said an agreement to restore the 2015 nuclear deal was “at hand”, but insisted

that sanctions be “truly lifted” amid ongoing talks in Vienna. Iranian President Ebrahim

Raisi said during a meeting with visiting Irish foreign and defence minister Simon Coveney that “the

rights of the Iranian people must be respected” in the ongoing negotiations. Raisi also hailed Ireland's “independence from the United States and some European countries”, adding that the two countries have “vast capabilities” to strengthen ties, according to state news agency IRNA.

Iran is engaged in negotiations with Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia directly and with the United States indirectly to revive the deal formally called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Also on Monday, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said that he believed an agreement is “at hand” soon, provided that the US and European parties “are serious” about returning to full compliance with the deal. Speaking at a joint press conference with Coveney, the Iranian top diplomat said: “We are serious and ready to reach a good agreement.”—AFP ■

‘Our responsibility’: Ukraine teens dig trenches facing Russia threat

UKRAINIAN teenager Mykhailo Anopa had been suffering sleepless nights worrying about a full-on attack from Russia. Then he decided to do something about it.

The 15-year-old joined other boys from disadvantaged families digging trenches for soldiers serving on his country's eastern front and facing off with Russian-backed separatists.

“When our father, the pastor, said there might be shelling, that Putin might attack, I started having nightmares, because that's what I would think about before bed,” he said. “We dug trenches to help Ukrainian soldiers. Now, we are reinforcing them. This



Ukrainian teenagers from broken homes have decided to respond by digging trenches for their troops. PHOTO: AFP

has become our responsibility,” he said with pride.

Ukraine has been trapped in a festering conflict across parts

of its mostly Russian-speaking industrial east ever since a pro-EU revolt deposed a Moscow-backed president in 2014.

The war has claimed more than 14,000 lives and forced 1.5 million people from their homes.

It has also drained Ukraine's economy and remained a constant drag on the former Soviet republic's aspirations to enter the Western fold.

Now Ukrainians fear Putin's confrontation with the West over NATO's expansion could lead to an all-out invasion by the more than 100,000 Russian troops poised just across the border.—AFP ■

Public inquiry opens into UK
Post Office scandal

A public inquiry opened Monday in Britain to probe the Post Office's role in a flawed IT system that led to one of the country's worst miscarriages of justice.

The scandal saw the Post Office prosecute hundreds of people running small local branches for alleged false accounting and theft, after its IT system called Horizon reported shortfalls between 2000 and 2014.

Some of the subpostmasters were imprisoned or left out of

pocket after being asked to make up the shortfalls, while others failed to find other jobs and lost their homes.

In 2019, the High Court ruled that Horizon was affected by bugs and defects, and courts have gone on to quash 72 convictions. Meanwhile, the government vowed in December to pay the final settlements to those Post Office workers wrongly convicted of defrauding their branches. The inquiry, which is being chaired



Former subpostmasters celebrate outside the Royal Courts of Justice in London. PHOTO: TOLGA AKMEN/AFP

by Welsh judge Wyn Williams and expected to run for the rest of this

year, will look into various aspects of the scandal.—AFP ■

North Korea marks ex-leader's birthday with snowy celebration



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (C) attends a national meeting to celebrate 80th birth anniversary of chairman Kim Jong Il (in front of his statue) in Samjiyon city. PHOTO: AFP

NORTH Korea marked the 80th birthday of leader Kim Jong Un's late father with a mass outdoor meeting in sub-zero temperatures, state media reported Wednesday, but no missiles or military parade.

Kim was joined by top officials in celebrating the "Day of the Shining Star" in snowy Samjiyon, a city near Mt Paektu, where official narratives say Kim Jong Il was born in a secret guerilla camp on 16 February.

The North Korean calendar is peppered with anniversaries related to the nation's official history, in particular to Kim's father

and his grandfather Kim Il Sung, the country's founding leader.

The occasions are celebrated with flower shows, mass dances and laudatory tributes in state media, in what analysts say is a means to instil loyalty to the leadership.

Kim Il Sung's 15 April birthday is called the Day of the Sun.

Photos and video in North Korean state media Wednesday showed participants gathered before a giant statue of Kim Jong Il to celebrate what the official KCNA news agency called "the great auspicious holiday of the nation".

The crowd was said to have burst into "stormy cheers" at the sight of leader Kim Jong Un, who has called Samjiyon -- located along the Chinese border in Ryanggang province -- the "home of our revolution". Kim has poured huge resources into the area's redevelopment in recent years, with the vast project including new apartments, hotels and a ski resort. This year's anniversary has been closely watched as it comes amid fresh tensions on the peninsula. Some observers had anticipated a military parade by the North to showcase its new weapons.—AFP ■

Singapore marks 80th anniversary of Japanese invasion in WWII



Foo Wah Eng (R) prays after a memorial service as Singapore marks the 80th anniversary of the Japanese invasion of the then British-ruled island during World War II on 15 Feb 2022 in Singapore PHOTO: KYODO

SINGAPORE marked the 80th anniversary of the Japanese invasion of the then British-ruled island during World War II on Tues-

day, but commemorative events were kept small and low-key due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

About 100 people attended a

memorial service in downtown Singapore, continuing an annual tradition to remember civilians who perished during the Japanese occupation from 1942 to 1945.

Education Minister Chan Chun Sing said in a speech at the event that the occupation following the Fall of Singapore on 15 February 1942, "reminds us of our painful past" and "is etched in our collective memory."

"May we never forget the lessons from the past," he added while urging Singaporeans to take the defence of the city-state seriously. Among the Singaporeans who attended the memorial service was Foo Wah Eng, 81, who was just an infant when his father was taken away by Japanese soldiers and was never seen again.—Kyodo ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Italy's constitutional court rejects euthanasia referendum

ITALY'S Constitutional Court shot down a referendum bid to decriminalize assisted suicide on Tuesday, judging that there were inadequate protections for the weakest.

Right-to-die advocates in Italy have been trying to force a referendum on the contentious issue in the largely Catholic country where opposition is strong, having gathered 750,000 signatures in August, well above the minimum required.

In announcing its decision, the court said in a press release the proposed referendum would not guarantee the constitutionally guaranteed "minimum protection of human life in general, particularly with reference to weak and vulnerable persons." —AFP ■

At least 4 dead as Spanish trawler sinks off Canada

A Spanish fishing trawler sank in rough waters off eastern Canada on Tuesday, killing at least four of the vessel's 22-strong crew, the Spanish transport ministry said.

Rescuers saved three crew members and were searching for 15 others who were missing off the island of Newfoundland on Canada's Atlantic coast where the ship foundered, a ministry spokesman told AFP.

Twelve of the crew are Spanish nationals, eight are from Peru and the rest from Ghana, Spanish media reports said.

Rescuers had spotted four of the trawler's lifeboats, said Maica Larriba, a representative of Spain's central government in the north-western Galicia region where the trawler is based.—AFP ■

Russia announces end of Crimea drills, troops leave



The statement said tanks, infantry vehicles and artillery were leaving Crimea by rail. PHOTO: AFP

RUSSIA on Wednesday said military drills in Moscow-annexed Crimea had ended and that soldiers were returning to their garrisons, a day after it announced a first troop pull-back from Ukraine's borders.

"Units of the Southern Military District, having completed their participation in tactical exercises, are moving to their permanent deployment points," Moscow's defence ministry said in a statement, as state television showed images of military units crossing a bridge linking the Russian-controlled peninsula to the mainland.

The statement said tanks, infantry vehicles and artillery

were leaving Crimea by rail.

It comes a day after Moscow said it was pulling back some of the troops deployed on its neighbour's borders.

But Western leaders remain concerned that Russia could still launch an attack on Ukraine, with US President Joe Biden warning on Tuesday that an attack by Moscow remained "very much a possibility".

Biden said that despite Russian claims earlier in the day, Washington and its allies had yet to verify the withdrawal of any of the tens of thousands of troops he says Moscow has now mustered along Ukraine's border.—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.

Lot drawing for 2023 AFC Asian Cup group stage to be held on 24 Feb

THE lot drawing event for the 2023 Asian Cup Third Round qualifiers in which Myanmar national football team participating will be held on 24 February.

A total of 24 teams will compete in the third round, which will

be divided into four groups of six. The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has allowed some teams to qualify for the 2022 World Cup Asia Zone 3 after the second round, which ended in mid-2021, without having to

advance to the third round of the AFC Asian Cup.

Twenty-four teams, including Myanmar, will compete in the third round of the AFC Asian Cup, with the top six teams from six groups and the top five runners-up for a total of 11 teams will advance to the next stage.

Hosts are automatically allowed to play in the tourney without having to compete in the third round qualifiers.

Myanmar is falling in the

Pot3 of the drawing lots together with Afghanistan, Yemen, and Malaysia.

The third round matches will be played on 8, 11 and 14 June in a one-round format. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

‘One-shot’ Noel takes Olympic slalom gold for France

CLEMENT Noel claimed France’s first alpine skiing gold medal of the Beijing Olympics when he won the men’s slalom on Wednesday.

Noel, sixth fastest after the first run, laid down the quickest second run to clock a combined total of 1min 44.09sec down the “Ice River” course in Yanqing in bitterly cold and sunny conditions.

Austria’s Johannes Strolz, already a gold medallist in the alpine combined at these Games, took silver 0.61sec behind, while Norwegian Sebastian Foss-Solevaag claimed bronze at 0.70sec. Strolz had been fastest in

the first run, but he faded in his second leg, leaving Noel roaring with delight as the Austrian came through the finish line and it was clear the Frenchman had taken the gold.

“That was one of the most important races in my career. It’s not often that you are able to win a medal in the Olympic Games,” said 24-year-old Noel. “It’s one shot - one minute and 40 seconds every four years. I knew that I was in shape. My races in January were not good but

training here was really good, I was fast. “This is the best I can do. I have no words to describe it. Olympic champion ... wooh!” Noel’s gold completed a full house for the French men’s ski team after veteran Johan Claréy bagged downhill silver and Mathieu Faivre took a bronze medal in the giant slalom. The most technical race on the alpine ski programme had promised to be one of the most open contests in recent history and so it proved.

Of the six World Cup races held this season, there have been five different winners, including Noel, while 14 different racers have made the podium.—AFP ■



Clement Noel won France’s first alpine skiing gold of the Beijing Olympics. PHOTO: AFP

No ‘Miracle on Ice’ as Slovakia knock USA out of Olympic hockey



Slovakia’s Marek Hrivik celebrates with teammates after scoring against the US. PHOTO: AFP

SLOVAKIA eliminated the United States in the Beijing Olympic ice hockey quarterfinals Wednesday, stunning the Americans with a tying goal in the final minute of regulation before winning 3-2 in a shootout.

Deprived of its National Hockey League (NHL) stars by the pandemic, the USA squad of relative unknowns had inspired comparisons to the overachieving 1980 gold-medal winning “Miracle on Ice” team as they went 3-0 in group play.

They were 44 seconds from

clinching a spot in the Beijing semifinals when Slovakia’s captain Marek Hrivik slotted home to tie it 2-2 and send the game into overtime.

Slovakia scored once in the penalty shootout, leaving USA captain Andy Miele with one last shot, but his effort was smothered by goalie Patrik Rybar.

The USA’s collection of ageing veterans and NHL-bound teenagers had played with surprising cohesion despite practising only a few times together before the Games. —AFP ■