

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Thursday, 24 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.

Minhlakyin villagers still go on Shwesettaw pilgrimage riding bullock-carts



A caravan of bullock-carts goes to the Shwesettaw Pagoda annually as a unique tradition of the Minhlakyin villagers in Minbu Township. **PHOTO: ZEYAR HTET (MINBU)**

RESIDENTS of the Minhlakyin village in Minbu (Sagu) Township, Minbu District, Magway Region, are preserving the tradition of going to Shwesettaw Pagoda with bullock-carts every year.

Minhlakyin village has more than 430 households and is 13 miles from Shwesettaw Pagoda. All the households, except for those who do not have bullock-carts, go to the pagoda in unison each year, between

the 13th Waxing of Tabaung and the 3rd Waning of the month.

The pilgrims usually camp for seven days at the jetty of downstream sandbank, said U Ohn Kyaing, the village administrator.

The Shwesettaw Pagoda is annually held for three months from the 5th Waxing of Tabodwe to the first day of Myanmar New Year (February-April) and is always alive with pilgrims from all over Myanmar.

However, Minhlakyin village is the only village that still keeps the tradition of making an annual pilgrimage to the pagoda with the use of bullock-carts.— Zeyar Htet (Minbu)/GNLM

CASE CONCERNING APPLICATION OF THE
CONVENTION ON THE
PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF
GENOCIDE

PAGE-3

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL

Areas, time for Hilsa fish conservation set to ensure sustainability in Rakhine state

PAGE-7

LOCAL BUSINESS

Low-grade rice price rises over K30,000 per bag in domestic market

PAGE-11

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 Announcement

23 February 2022

TELECONSULTATION teams formed with specialists and medical professionals have been set up to create direct communication links for COVID-19 confirmed patients in home isolation in each district and township in Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory, and Mon State under the Teleconsultation Programme (CDC) and following telephone numbers of these professional groups can be contacted in each district and township.

- Nay Pyi Taw, Union Territory**
“Telephone numbers of 24-hour Teleconsultation Team for Dekkhina District COVID-19 Health Counseling Team”
09-88 21100 11
09-88 21100 22

“Telephone numbers of 24-hour Teleconsultation Team for Ottara District COVID-19 Health Counseling Team”
09-88 21100 33
09-88 21100 44

Mon State	
“Telephone numbers of 24-hour Teleconsultation Team for Township COVID-19 Health Counseling Teams”	
Mawlamyine	09-4086 222 11
Chaungzon	09-4086 222 12
Kyaikmaraw	09-4086 222 02
Mudon	09-4086 222 32
Thanbyuzayat	09-4086 222 42
Ye	09-4086 222 52
Kyaikto	09-4086 222 62
Bilin	09-4086 222 72
Thaton	09-4086 222 82
Paung	09-4086 222 92

Ministry of Health

Public Notification

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

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

- Auto telephone number - 067 409 883

Mobile phone - 09 404339969

Fax - 067 409 886

Email address - antiillegaltradeinfo@gmail.com

Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

3,381 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 23 February, total figure rises to 575,508

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **575,508** after **3,381** new cases were reported on 23 February 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **527,367** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **19,349** after **5** died.

COVID-19 vaccine is being injected to those of priority groups in regions and states for prevention and control of the disease. Up to 22-2-2022, a total of **23,440,147** people have been vaccinated. Of them, **20,768,335** people have been fully vaccinated and **2,671,812** people are yet to get the second shots.—MNA

NEWS ON PAGE-1



Public Notification

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

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

- Auto telephone number - 067 409 881

Mobile phone - 09 699611116

Fax - 067 409 887

Email address - antiillegaltradeoffice@gmail.com

Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

Promote education as a priority for strengthening democracy

As a larger number of educated persons is designed to own the future of the country for democratization, ...

(Excerpt from the speech made by State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at meeting with departmental officials and town elders from Kengtung and Mongpyin townships of Shan State (East), Namsang Township and Kholan of Loilem District in Shan State (South) on 18-2-2022)

CASE CONCERNING APPLICATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF GENOCIDE (THE GAMBIA V. MYANMAR) 21 FEBRUARY 2022 FIRST SPEECH OF MR CHRISTOPHER STAKER LEAD COUNSEL AND ADVOCATE FOR MYANMAR FIRST PRELIMINARY OBJECTION

Introduction Madam President, Mr Vice-President, Members of the Court,

1. It is an honour for me to appear before you again.
2. At the outset, I must express my sadness at the passing in May last year of Judge James Crawford. So many of today's international lawyers were personally taught, inspired and encouraged by him. I have the privilege to be one of them.
3. I turn to the first preliminary objection. Myanmar contends that the Court lacks jurisdiction, or that the application is inadmissible because the real applicant in these proceedings is the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the "OIC". Article 34, paragraph 1, of the Statute, provides that only States may be parties in cases before the Court. The OIC is an international organization, not a State.
4. This preliminary objection raises one main question of fact, and one main question of law.
5. The question of fact is this: Is The Gambia bringing this case on behalf of the OIC, such that the OIC is in fact the real applicant?
6. And the question of law is this: Can a State bring a case before this Court on behalf of a third party which could not bring the case itself in its own name?

The question of fact Madam President, Members of the Court,

7. I begin with the question of fact.
8. The written pleadings set out the contents of many documents giving de-



tails of dealings between The Gambia and the OIC and its other Member States leading up to these proceedings.
9. These documents show that in May 2018, the OIC's Council of Foreign Ministers, one of its main organs, established an Ad Hoc Committee, and appointed The Gambia as its chair.¹ I refer to this as the "Committee".
10. In February 2019, this Committee adopted a plan of action that involved bringing a case before this Court against Myanmar under the Genocide Convention.²
11. The following month, the Council of Foreign Ministers adopted a formal resolution endorsing the Committee's plan of action.³
12. Then, in May 2019, the matter was considered at a conference of the Islamic

Summit,⁴ the supreme authority of the OIC.⁵ In its Final Communiqué,⁶ the Islamic Summit—and I quote—
... urged upon the ad hoc Ministerial Committee led by the Gambia to take immediate measures to launch the case at the International Court of Justice on behalf of the OIC.⁷
13. Three key points are made here. First, that the bringing of this case was called for by the Islamic Summit. Secondly, that this case was to be brought by the OIC Committee, The Gambia being mentioned only as chair of that Committee. Thirdly, that the proceedings were to be brought on behalf of the OIC.
14. Then, on 4 July 2019, just over a month later, according to a press release of the Office of the President of The Gambia,⁸ The Gambia's Attorney

General and Minister of Justice presented to the Cabinet "a paper on the OIC proposal for The Gambia to lead the international legal action against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice". The Cabinet approved that OIC proposal.
15. Three points emerge from this. First, The Gambia's decision to "lead" this legal action was pursuant to a direct proposal of the OIC. Secondly, The Gambia was to be "leading" this action, as opposed to taking this action alone and in its own right. Thirdly, The Gambia accepted the OIC proposal over a month after the Islamic Summit had already decided that this case should be brought by the OIC Committee on behalf of the OIC.
16. Then, on 11 November 2019, the day that the application instituting proceedings was filed, the legal representatives of The Gambia issued a press release⁹ that was disseminated in six languages.¹⁰ Its opening sentence states that The Gambia is "acting on behalf of the 57 Member States of the [OIC]". It subsequently states—and I quote—
The OIC appointed The Gambia, an OIC member, to bring the case on its behalf.
17. This wording must surely have been carefully chosen and approved by the client.
18. We thus have express statements both from the supreme authority of the OIC and by The Gambia's legal representatives that these proceedings are brought on behalf of the OIC. Other documents contain similar statements.

SEE PAGE-4

1. Preliminary Objections of Myanmar, 20 January 2021 ("POM"), especially paras. 69-73.	7. POM, paras. 90-91.
2. POM, especially paras. 76-77, 81-84, 130; Written Observations of The Gambia on the Preliminary Objections Raised by Myanmar, 20 April 2021 ("WOG"), para. 5.12.	8. POM, especially paras. 95-96, and Annex 120 (The Gambia, Office of the President, Press Release, "Cabinet approves transformation of GTTI into University of Science, Technology and Engineering", 6 July 2019).
3. POM, especially paras. 78-80.	9. POM, paras. 106-109, and Annex 132 (Foley Hoag LLP, "Foley Hoag Leads The Gambia's Legal Team in Historic Case to Stop Myanmar's Genocide Against the Rohingya", 11 November 2019).
4. POM, especially paras. 90-92.	10. POM, para. 108, and Annexes 133 to 138.
5. POM, para. 63.	
6. Memorial of The Gambia ("MG"), 23 October 2020, vol. VII, Annex 205 (Final Communiqué of the 14 th Islamic Summit Conference, 31 May 2019).	

FROM PAGE-3

19. Statements to the effect that this case is brought by the OIC, or by the OIC Committee, have been made in a further resolution of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers in 2020,¹¹ and by Bangladesh’s Foreign Minister¹² and Foreign Ministry,¹³ the Prime Minister of Malaysia,¹⁴ the OIC Journal,¹⁵ an OIC press release,¹⁶ the OIC Twitter account,¹⁷ and the NGO, Fortify Rights.¹⁸

20. Statements that the OIC decided to bring this case have been made in the OIC Journal¹⁹ and an OIC press release,²⁰ and by the Foreign Ministry of Bangladesh,²¹ the Foreign Minister of Malaysia,²² and the UN Special rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar.²³

21. Statements that The Gambia brings these proceedings on behalf of the OIC have been made in a resolution of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers,²⁴ and by the Office of the President of The Gambia,²⁵ the Vice-President of The Gambia in a statement to the UN General Assembly,²⁶ and the respective Foreign Ministries of Bangladesh,²⁷ Malaysia,²⁸ and the Maldives,²⁹ as well as in media reports in numerous countries,³⁰ and on the websites of various other Governments and NGOs, as well as that of the United Nations.³¹

22. Statements that The Gambia has been “tasked” or “chosen” by the OIC to bring these proceedings have been made by the Office of the President of The Gambia,³² an OIC press release,³³ and in the media.³⁴

23. Statements that The Gambia, in bringing these proceedings, is acting in its capacity as chair of the OIC Committee have been made, expressly or impliedly, in a resolution of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers,³⁵ by the Malaysian Foreign Ministry,³⁶ and in three OIC press releases.³⁷

24. Further statements that The Gambia is “leading” this action, or that this is “collective” action—thereby suggesting

that The Gambia is not acting in its own right—have been made by the Office of the President of The Gambia,³⁸ the Vice-President of The Gambia,³⁹ and the Bangladesh Foreign Ministry.⁴⁰

25. Documents annexed to the preliminary objections also indicate that the costs of bringing these proceedings are met by a special fund set up by the OIC, to which voluntary contributions are made, and which The Gambia does not control.⁴¹ A press report of December 2020 says that the then donors were Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Nigeria, Malaysia, and the Islamic Solidarity Fund.⁴² Nothing indicates that The Gambia itself will bear any of the costs, and, indeed, there are indications that it will not.⁴³

Madam President, Members of the Court,

26. What does The Gambia say about these matters?

27. Astonishingly, it says nothing. It gives no alternative account of events and no explanations of these documents. It provides no additional facts. It gives no reasons for not addressing these facts.

28. The Gambia’s written observations annexe but a single new document relevant to these facts: a press release issued by The Gambia’s Justice Ministry on 11 November 2019.⁴⁴ This new document in fact says that The Gambia has stepped forward “on behalf of the 57 Member States” of the OIC, “with the mandate” of that Organization. It is thus consistent with the statements referred to before.

29. Beyond this, The Gambia makes only general and unparticularized assertions, unsupported by any evidence.

30. The Gambia states that there is “no basis in fact” for the contention that it brings these proceedings at the behest of the OIC,⁴⁵ that it alone took the decision to initiate these proceedings on its own be-

half, and that all the OIC did was to endorse The Gambia’s decision.⁴⁶ Where is the evidence of this? We have seen documents indicating that it was only after the Islamic Summit decided that the OIC Committee should bring this case on behalf of the OIC that The Gambia’s Cabinet then approved the OIC’s proposal that The Gambia lead the case. In November 2020, the Gambia’s Justice Minister in fact himself referred to this case as an initiative of the OIC.⁴⁷ If explanations can be given, The Gambia does not supply them.

31. The Gambia then contends that it was “instrumental” in the adoption of the OIC resolution establishing the OIC Committee and that in recognition of this it was made chair of the Committee.⁴⁸ Again, where is the evidence? The mere fact that a State is appointed chair of a committee does not of itself mean that it was instrumental in the establishment of that committee or was the main proponent of action taken by the committee.⁴⁹ The material before the Court does not in fact indicate exactly who made or supported which proposals, when. Myanmar cannot know this, and The Gambia provides no details. Indeed, there are suggestions that main actors may have included Bangladesh,⁵⁰ or a contact group headed by Saudi Arabia.⁵¹ Another document refers to the OIC as having previously been looking for a State to bring these proceedings.⁵²

32. The Gambia then maintains that it, not the OIC, has full control and direction of the case.⁵³ What evidence is there of this? The material before the Court does not indicate who is making what decisions. We do know that three senior OIC officials were members of The Gambia’s delegation at the provisional measures hearing,⁵⁴ and it seems that the OIC Committee met some days before The Gambia’s Memorial was filed.⁵⁵ We know that The Gambia briefs the

OIC on the progress of the case.⁵⁶ One OIC document acknowledges The Gambia’s prerogative to choose the legal representatives,⁵⁷ but does this not suggest that this prerogative was conferred by the OIC?

33. Finally, The Gambia says that it merely “sought and obtained the support of” the OIC.⁵⁸ However, documents referring to “support” being given to The Gambia are hardly inconsistent with all the other statements to which I have referred, let alone proof to the contrary.

Madam President, Members of the Court,

34. In cases before the Court, there will rarely be a question as to whether the applicant State acts as a proxy for a third party. However, where there is the burden must be on the applicant State to prove that this is not the case, rather than on the respondent to show that it is the contrary.⁵⁹

35. Obvious reasons of fairness require this. It is the applicant State that knows the details of its relationship and dealings with the third party. Myanmar cannot know the particulars of The Gambia’s dealings with the OIC and its other Member States.⁶⁰ The Gambia does know, and its failure to provide any evidence is telling.

36. Furthermore, as a matter of principle, it must be for an applicant to establish the facts necessary to satisfy the fundamental jurisdictional requirements of the kind imposed in every case by the very terms of the Court’s Statute. It is well established that it is the applicant who must prove there was a dispute at the time of the institution of proceedings. The identity of the real applicant is the same kind of fact.⁶¹

37. However, even if (quod non) the burden of proof was not on The Gambia, the Court would still need to determine the relevant facts on the basis of such material as is before it.

SEE PAGE-5

11. POM, paras. 130-131, and Annex 106 (OIC Res. No. 59/47-POL, On the Work of the OIC Ad hoc Ministerial Committee on Accountability for Human Rights Violations Against the Rohingyas, November 2020, ninth preambular paragraph).

12. POM, para. 122, and Annex 114 (Bangladesh, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Speech of Hon’ble Foreign Minister on the Inauguration Ceremony of the OIC Youth Capital – Dhaka 2020”, updated 28 July 2020).

13. POM, para. 83, and Annex 110 (Bangladesh, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Press Release, OIC Okays Legal Action Against Myanmar at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in Abu Dhabi”, 4 March 2019).

14. POM, paras. 101-102.

15. POM, especially para. 84.

16. POM, especially paras. 124-125.

17. POM, especially para. 126.

18. POM, especially para. 149.

19. POM, especially para. 84.

20. POM, paras. 111-112.

21. POM, especially para. 81.

22. POM, especially para. 114.

23. POM, especially paras. 97-98.

24. POM, para. 133.

25. POM, especially paras. 93-94.

26. POM, paras. 103-104.

27. POM, para. 110 (twice).

28. POM, para. 117.

29. POM, para. 120.

30. POM, paras. 149, 157 and 158.

31. POM, para. 149.

32. POM, especially para. 93, referring to “OIC tasks The Gambia to lead ICJ case against Myanmar”.

33. POM, especially paras. 111-112.

34. POM, paras. 157 (New York Times) and 158 (Dhaka Tribune).

35. POM, para. 133.

36. POM, para. 117.

37. POM, paras. 111, 115 and 116.

38. POM, especially paras. 93-94.

39. POM, paras. 103-104.

40. POM, especially paras. 81 and 88-89.

41. POM, paras. 118, 124, 127, 132 and 146.

42. POM, paras. 136-137.

43. POM, paras. 136, 137, 144, 157 and 158.

44. The Republic of The Gambia, Ministry of Justice, Press Release (11 November 2019), WOG, Annex 2, referred to in WOG, para. 2.22.

45. WOG, para. 2.11.

46. WOG, para. 2.20

47. POM, para. 135, and Annex 124 (The Gambia, Ministry of Justice, Tweet (@Gambia-MOJ), 30 November 2020).

48. WOG, para. 2.18.

49. POM, paras. 152-156.

50. POM, para. 151, and Annex 161 (Daily Sun (Bangladesh), “Challenges Ahead For Bangladesh”, 3 January 2020).

51. POM, para. 119, and Annex 164 (Arab News (Saudi Arabia), “OIC contact group discusses Rohingya protection with UN chief”, 1 March 2020).

52. POM, para. 156 footnote 120, and Annex 162 (Vox, “The top UN court ordered Myanmar to protect the Rohingya. An expert explains what it means”, 24 January 2020). Also POM, para. 159.

53. WOG, para. 2.5.

54. POM, para. 147.

55. POM, para. 128.

56. POM, para. 99 (paras. 7 and 11 of the report). Also POM, para. 143.

57. POM, para. 99 (para. 8 of the report).

58. WOG, paras. 2.4, 2.17, 2.21, 2.23 and 2.24.

59. POM, paras. 39-42, 54 and 161.

60. POM, para. 54.

61. POM, paras. 37-41.

FROM PAGE-4

38. The Gambia has not disputed the authenticity of any of this material, nor denied or sought to explain any of the specific statements made in it, nor has it submitted any contrary evidence. Unparticularized assertions made by The Gambia, unsupported by evidence, cannot be treated by the Court as facts.⁶²

39. The Court has before it official statements by the supreme organ of the OIC and the Government of The Gambia that the latter has been tasked by the former to bring this case on behalf of the OIC. This is reflected in numerous other documents. There is no contrary evidence. Matters must proceed on that basis.⁶³

The question of law
Madam President, Members of the Court,

40. I turn, then, to the question of law.

41. It is of course fundamental that the Court’s contentious jurisdiction is limited.

42. One limitation is that only States may be parties in cases before it. An international organization cannot. Nor can a non-governmental organization, or a commercial corporation, or other entity. The question that arises directly, in this case, is whether an entity that is not a State can circumvent this limitation on the Court’s jurisdiction by appointing or tasking a State to bring a case on its behalf.

43. A second limitation is that the Court can only exercise jurisdiction in contentious cases with the consent of both parties, expressed for instance through their mutual participation in a treaty with a compromissory clause. A related question is whether this limitation can be circumvented in the same way. For instance, suppose that State A is not a party to the Genocide Convention but that State B and State C are both parties without reservation. Could State A, the non-party, bring a case against State B under the Genocide Convention by appointing or tasking State C to bring the case on State A’s behalf?

44. This second question is of some pertinence to this case, because 20 of the 57 Member States of the OIC are either not parties to the Genocide Convention or have made reservations to its Article IX.⁶⁴ Two of those are Bangladesh and Malaysia, who appear to be members of the OIC Committee,⁶⁵ and who appear together to have contributed half of the funds financing this case, as of December 2020.⁶⁶ At least one press article also suggests that

Bangladesh was active in persuading the OIC to bring the proceedings.⁶⁷

45. These questions are not confined to cases under the Genocide Convention. They could arise in cases brought under other treaties, especially if an applicant contends that a treaty creates rights erga omnes partes. These same questions might thus arise in cases brought under treaties concerning any number of areas of law, including environmental, energy or trade law, the law of the sea, or nuclear weapons.

46. In addressing these questions, I refer to the third party on whose behalf proceedings are brought as the “real applicant”, and to the State bringing proceedings on its behalf as the “proxy” State.

47. Now, it might be argued that a proxy State would surely not go to the trouble of bringing proceedings for another unless it also had an interest of its own in the case. But that cannot be assumed. A proxy State might in theory have any number of motivations. It might, for instance, be doing a political favour to the real applicant, in return for a wholly unrelated reciprocal favour. The real applicant might simply pay a proxy State to bring a case. In any event, as The Gambia acknowledges, motivations are irrelevant to matters of jurisdiction.⁶⁸

48. Regardless of motivations, the position must surely be as follows. If a third party cannot itself bring a case before the Court, for instance, because it is not a State, or because it has no reciprocal acceptance of jurisdiction with the respondent, it cannot circumvent this restriction on the Court’s jurisdiction by using a proxy State to bring proceedings on its behalf.

49. General international law principles of effectiveness and good faith necessitate this conclusion. The Court’s jurisdiction is determined by its Statute, which is a treaty. Treaty law has well-established principles of effectiveness⁶⁹ and good faith,⁷⁰ which are an entrenched part of international law more generally.⁷¹ If provisions of the Statute limiting the Court’s jurisdiction could be avoided through the use of proxy States, the effectiveness of those provisions would be defeated.

50. In the example I gave earlier, no case could be brought against State A under the Genocide Convention because it is not a party to it, yet State A itself could bring a case under that Convention against State B by using State C as a proxy. This would be antithetical to the principle of

reciprocity. Any good faith interpretation of the provisions governing the Court’s jurisdiction, in the light of their object and purpose,⁷² could not permit such a practice.

51. Furthermore, the question of whether the applicant State acts as a proxy for another must be a question of fact, a question of substance, not merely a question of form or procedure. If an applicant is in fact acting as a proxy for another, it is immaterial whether or not there is a legally binding relationship between the proxy State and the real applicant, such as an agency agreement under international or domestic law, or whether or not the real applicant has the legal power to compel the proxy State to act.⁷³ Whether or not such circumstances exist, the effect of the principles I have referred to would be the same. Nonetheless, in the present case, there are reasons to conclude that The Gambia acts as an organ or agent of the OIC.⁷⁴

52. Furthermore, if an applicant is in fact acting as a proxy for another, the fact that the real applicant has given the proxy some independent discretions as to how the proceedings are conducted would not alter that fact.

53. The bringing of proceedings as a proxy State for a third party that could not itself bring proceedings can also be characterized as an abuse of process.⁷⁵ If a State uses its right to bring a case before the Court in order to give access to the Court to a third party that is not entitled to it, how can it be said that this is not a use of proceedings for aims alien to those for which the procedural rights have been granted?⁷⁶ Nevertheless, whether or not this is characterized as an abuse of process, principles of effectiveness, good faith and reciprocity must prohibit such a practice in any event.

Madam President, Members of the Court,

54. What, then, does The Gambia say about the legal question?

55. Again, it simply does not engage with it.

56. It just says that it is the named applicant in the application instituting proceedings and that all jurisdictional requirements are met in relation to it.⁷⁷ It says that these considerations alone “foreclose” Myanmar’s first preliminary objection.⁷⁸ No explanation is given of why this is so. Implicitly, The Gambia may

suggest that it is always permissible for any entity not entitled to bring a case to use a proxy State to do so. If so, it presents no arguments to support that contention, nor to counter Myanmar’s contrary arguments.

57. The Gambia then says that its application states that the Agent acts in the name of, and on behalf of, The Gambia.⁷⁹ However, even if the Agent acts for The Gambia, that does not address the question of whether The Gambia itself is acting on behalf of the OIC.⁸⁰

58. The Gambia then refers to the principle that a State’s motivation for bringing a case is irrelevant to matters of jurisdiction.⁸¹ But of course, previous cases applying that principle did not address the question with which we are presently concerned. We are concerned with identifying who is to be treated as the real applicant for purposes of determining jurisdiction and admissibility. We are not concerned with the motivation of whoever that may be, or of whoever acts on their behalf.

59. The Gambia then says that a dispute existed between it and Myanmar at the time proceedings were instituted. That is denied by Myanmar in its fourth preliminary objection. But in any event, once it is established that the applicant brings proceedings as a proxy for a third party, the effect of principles of effectiveness, good faith and reciprocity will still be the same, whether or not the proxy also has its own dispute with the respondent in relation to the same issue.

Conclusion
Madam President, Members of the Court,

60. That concludes my arguments on the first preliminary objection. Myanmar contends that the relevant facts are clear. As to the law, it cannot be possible for an international organization to bring a case before the Court by using a State as a proxy applicant. The Gambia has provided no substantive response to that contention. This may be the first case in which this issue has arisen, but depending on what the Court decides, it may be far from the last. This case will set an important precedent.

61. I thank the Court for your careful attention. Madam President, may I now please ask you to call on Professor Talmon to address the second preliminary objection.



62. *Territorial and Maritime Dispute (Nicaragua v. Colombia)*, Preliminary Objections, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2007, p. 832, p. 874, para. 138, quoting *South West Africa (Ethiopia v. South Africa; Liberia v. South Africa)*, Preliminary Objections, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 1962, p. 328.

63. POM, paras. 46-49.

64. POM, para. 68.

65. POM, para. 72.

66. POM, para. 137.

67. POM, para. 151.

68. WOG, para. 2.11.

69. *Fisheries Jurisdiction (Spain v. Canada)*, Jurisdiction of the Court, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 1998, p. 432, p. 455, para. 52; *Territorial Dispute (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya/Chad)*, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 1994, p. 6, p. 25, para. 51.

70. Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, 23 May 1969, UNTS, vol. 1155, p. 331, Article 31, paragraph 1, POM Annex 4, reflecting pre-existing customary international law: *Maritime Delimitation in the Indian Ocean (Somalia v. Kenya)*, Preliminary Objections, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2017, p. 3, p. 29, para. 63.

71. E.g., *Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua (Nicaragua v. United States of America)*, Merits, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 1986, p. 14, p. 126, para. 246 (effectiveness); *Pulp Mills on the River Uruguay (Argentina v. Uruguay)*, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2010, p. 14, p. 67, para. 145 (good faith).

72. Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, 23 May 1969, UNTS, vol. 1155, p. 331, Article 31, paragraph 1, POM Annex 4, reflecting pre-existing customary international law: *Maritime Delimitation in the Indian Ocean (Somalia v. Kenya)*, Preliminary Objections, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2017, p. 3, p. 29, para. 63.

73. POM, paras. 39-43 and 162-168. Compare WOG, para. 2.25.

74. POM, paras.169-184.

75. POM, paras.189-206.

76. Compare WOG, para. 2.29.

77. WOG, paras. 2.5, 2.7-2.10 and 2.26.

78. WOG, para. 2.10.

79. WOG, paras. 2.12-2.13.

80. POM, para. 176.

81. WOG, para. 2.11.

Golden Jubilee Myanmar Health Research Congress continues into third day

THE third day session of the 50th Myanmar Health Research Congress was organized in Yangon yesterday.

In the morning session the officials held seminar under the topic of Myanmar-Korea Joint Symposium (2022): New insights to combat infectious diseases: BPAL DR-TB regimen and molecular approach to Hepatitis B.

The event was led by Deputy Director-General Dr Hlaing Myat Thu of the Medical Research Department and Prof Jae Hun Cheong of Korean Pusan National University, and Dr Sun Dae Song, Chairman of the Board of Korean International Tuberculosis Research Centre made an opening speech.

Then, Dr Maria Imelda D Quelapio, Regional Technical Consultant, LIFT-TB Project for KNCV of the Philippines exchanged views on BPAL DR-TB



The Golden Jubilee Myanmar Health Research Congress holds its third day in Yangon.

regimen and LIFT-TB project while the importance of genetic mutations of Hepatitis B by

Prof Jae Hun Cheong of Korean Pusan National University, patient-centred TB care in the

outbreak of COVID-19 by Prof. Jae Gook Shin of Korean Inje University College of Medicine,

new DR-TB regime of Myanmar by TB Specialist Dr Zaw Myint of the National Tuberculosis Control Project and the genetic variants of Hepatitis B virus found in Myanmar and its implications for treatment by Deputy Director Dr Yi Yi Kyaw of the Medical Research Department.

In the evening session, a total of nine papers regarding basic research, applied research, social and health system researches were presented via videoconferencing and the paper readers replied the questions of online participants in the chat box of the videoconference system.

The research posters are displayed with E-poster form at <https://conference.myanmar-dmr.org> and those who want to join the congress can make registration free and the congress will be held until 25 February. — MNA

Nay Pyi Taw Veterinary Teaching Hospital opened on 23 February

AN opening ceremony of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital (Nay Pyi Taw) was inaugurated by the Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department (LBVD), the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation at that VTH building located on the Yangon-Manadaya highway on 23 February 2022.

Present at the meeting were Deputy Minister Dr Aung Gyi for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Dr Ye Tun Win, director-general of the LBVD, rector Dr Mar Mar Win of the University of Veterinary Science, officials concerned and invitees.

At the ceremony, the Deputy Minister gave a remark that the VTH will become the educational source for the future veterinarian in the private sector, provide excellence in education, research, technology and academic ser-

vices and produce expert veterinarians.

The VTH will offer courses regarding veterinary ethics, veterinary clinical management, veterinary care, treatment, surgery, beauty and basic lab activities. It will conduct training, research and discussion. The mini-lab is placed in the VTH. Laboratory tests and training, mobile laboratory and mobile clinics are also arranged to raise public awareness on veterinarians' impacts on society and human health.

The VTH is tailored for those veterinarians seeking advanced clinical practice and treatment of rabies and other diseases and preventive measures for diseases that are directly transmissible from animals to humans.

The VTH to produce the future veterinarians was opened in Insein Township, Yangon Region



in January 2019. Three-month courses will be opened with the same curriculum based on effec-

tive veterinarian clinical teaching in the VTH Nay Pyi Taw. Nevertheless, the first-ever batch will

take four months by adding the clinical management practices. — 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 19 tonnes of masks were imported by three companies using four vehicles via the Chinshwehaw trading post yesterday.

Officials from 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

Areas, time for Hilsa fish conservation set to ensure sustainability in Rakhine state



Myanmar accounts for three per cent of the world’s Hilsa fish production, followed by India at 25 per cent and Bangladesh at 65 per cent.

As efforts are being made to export Hilsa fish (Tenulosa illisha) more to the world market, conservation areas for Hilsa fish have been designated for the long-term sustainability of the fish species in Rakhine State, according to the Rakhine State Department of Fisheries. To ensure the long-

term sustainability of the Myanmar Hilsa fish species that breed in salt-water areas, creeks and rivers in Myebon Township and Minbya Township have been initially designated as a Hilsa fish conservation area, with 2,065 acres. The conservation period is set twice from 1 April to 31 May, and 1 September to 31

October, and efforts are also being made to extend some other areas. Myanmar accounts for three per cent of the world’s Hilsa fish production, followed by India at 25 per cent and Bangladesh at 65 per cent. As Myanmar, which owns the sea, has many opportunities to earn more foreign exchange from the international market for

Hilsa fish production, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation is implementing the conservation of the fish species and the meeting (2/2022) of the Rakhine state government on 20 January issued the order to conserve Hilsa fish. “As Hilsa fish is gradually scarce in the country, the Union minister has reconnected

conservation activities to increase production and set the conservation area and time for fish,” said U Thet Oo, Director of the Rakhine State Department of Fisheries. “It breeds in fresh water and grows in salt-water. If the conservation period is followed, Myanmar fish exports will rise again,” he added. In Rakhine State,

hatchlings are caught into fishing nets during hatching seasons, and during the non-fishing season, they are lost due to overfishing, resulting in scarcity of fish and high prices from year to year. So far, the state is working to establish 11 Hilsa fish conservation areas across the country. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/GNLM



Myanmar artisanal fishing for Hilsa. PHOTOS: KANU

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 Committees 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	

Be grateful to irrigation facilities for cultivation

THE government is trying hard to electrify the people through the national grid fed by hydropower plants, natural gas power plants, coal-fired power plants and renewable power plants.

Electricity is playing a key role in operating various kinds of industries as well as all functions on daily processes. An outage of electricity can interrupt the daily routine of the people and cause delays for the time-limited work process. Hence, it is necessary to seek the best way for electrifying the people without an outage.

In the mini-budget of the 2021-22 financial year, the Kyaungsu river water pumping station in the Bago Region and Kanni and

Kanmalay stations in the Magway Region are being operated with solar energy instead of electricity from other ways, according to the Department of Irrigation and Water Utilization Management.

During the period, river water pumping stations in Mandalay, Sagaing, Magway and Bago regions are being operated through solar energy. In this regard, shifting the energy system will be completed at Letpan Chaypaw and Ngathayauk stations in the Mandalay Region and Pyawya station part II and part III and Kata-92 in the Sagaing Region this month.

Up to the end of January 2022, seven groundworks of similar stations have been facilitated with 2.3 megawatts of solar energy to irrigate farmlands in these regions.

In the coming financial year, plans are underway to change the consumption of electricity from solar energy at 17 river water pumping stations with 5.4 megawatts

in five regions in order to save the electricity from the national grids to some extent, reducing the use of fuel and contributing to environmental conservation.

The department builds and maintains 245 dams, 144 diversion weirs, 72 lakes, 199 sluice gates and 210 river water pumping stations across the nation to sufficiently supply agricultural water to the farmlands.

The government makes efforts to operate the water supply facilities as much as possible amid the unbalance of consumption rate and generating capacity of electricity. Hence, user farmers need to efficiently use the irrigated water, understanding the efforts and budget allotment for generating electricity and water supply measures.

As such, all the national people need to understand the work process for generating electricity from solar energy contributing to functions of the national grid and boosting the per-acre yield of crops with an act of gratitude to the efforts and initiatives of relevant technicians and personnel.

■ ■ ■

Omicron sublineage BA.2 remains a variant of concern

The BA.2 virus, a sublineage of the Omicron COVID-19 mutation, should continue to be considered a variant of concern, scientists convened by the World Health Organization (WHO) said in a statement on Tuesday.

BA.2 should also remain classified as Omicron, WHO's Technical Advisory Group on SARS-CoV-2 Virus Evolution (TAG-VE) which was held yesterday.

SARS-CoV-2 is the coronavirus that causes COVID-19, and the expert group meets regularly to discuss available data on transmissibility and severity of variants as well as their impact on diagnostics, therapeutics, and vaccines.

They stressed that public health authorities should continue to monitor BA.2 as a distinct sublineage of Omicron, currently the dominant variant circulating globally.

Studies underway
Omicron is made up of sev-

eral sublineages, including BA.1 and BA.2, all of which are being monitored by WHO and partners.

BA.2 is among the most common, with reported sequences increasing in recent weeks, relative to BA.1, though global circulation of all variants is currently declining.

The experts explained that BA.2 differs from BA.1 in its genetic sequence, and that it has a growth advantage over this sublineage.

Although studies are ongoing to understand why, initial data suggest BA.2 appears inherently more transmissible than BA.1, currently the most common Omicron sublineage reported.

However, this difference in transmissibility appears to be

much smaller than that between BA.1 and the Delta variant, the experts said.

Overall decline reported

Meanwhile, although BA.2 sequences are increasing in proportion relative to other Omicron sublineages, there is still a reported decline in overall cases globally.

Furthermore, while cases of reinfection with BA.2 following infection with BA.1 have been documented, preliminary data from studies show that infection with BA.1 provides strong protection against reinfection with BA.2.

WHO will continue to closely monitor the BA.2 lineage as part of Omicron.

The UN agency urged coun-



People with protective masks walk in the street of Tokyo, Japan. PHOTO: ADB/RICHARD ATRERO DE GUZMAN

tries to remain vigilant, to monitor and report sequences, and to conduct independent and comparative analyzes of the different

Omicron sublineages.

Globally, there were more than 424,820,000 cases of COVID-19 as of Tuesday, and more

than 5.8 million deaths, according to WHO data.

SOURCE: UN

COVID-19 genetic risk variant protects against HIV: Study

The genetic risk factor is located in a region on chromosome 3 that consists of many genes. There are several genes in its vicinity that encode receptors in the immune system. One of these receptors - CCR5 - is used by the HIV virus to infect white blood cells.

THE SARS-COV-2 INFECTION affects some people severely, while others have only mild symptoms or no symptoms at all. A recent study has revealed that

in addition to risk factors such as advanced age and chronic diseases, like diabetes, our genetic heritage also contributes to our individual COVID-19 severity risk. The study was published



A recent study has revealed that in addition to risk factors such as advanced age and chronic diseases, like diabetes, our genetic heritage also contributes to our individual COVID-19 severity risk. PHOTO: CHANDAN KHANNA/AFP

in 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences' (PNAS).

Genetic risk factor

In the autumn of 2020, Hugo Zeberg at Karolinska Institutet and MPI-EVA and Svante Pääbo at MPI-EVA showed that we inherited the major genetic risk factor for severe COVID-19 from Neanderthals. In the spring of 2021, the same researcher duo studied this variant in ancient human DNA and observed that its frequency has increased significantly since the last ice age. In fact, it has become unexpectedly common for a genetic variant inherited from Neanderthals. Hence, it may have had a favourable impact on its carriers in the past. "This major genetic risk factor for COVID-19 is so common that I started wondering whether it might actually be good for something, such as providing protection against another infectious

disease," said Hugo Zeberg, who is the sole author of the study.

The genetic risk factor is located in a region on chromosome 3 that consists of many genes. There are several genes in its vicinity that encode receptors in the immune system. One of these receptors - CCR5 - is used by the HIV virus to infect white blood cells.

CCR5 receptors

Zeberg found that people who carried the risk factor for COVID-19 had fewer CCR5 receptors. This led him to test whether they also had a lower risk of becoming infected with HIV. By analyzing patient data from three major biobanks (FinnGen, UK Biobank and Michigan Genomic Initiative), he found that carriers of the risk variant for COVID-19 had a 27 per cent lower risk of contracting HIV. "This shows how a genetic variant can be both good and bad news: Bad news

In the spring of 2021, the same researcher duo studied this variant in ancient human DNA and observed that its frequency has increased significantly since the last ice age.

if a person contracts COVID-19, good news because it offers protection against getting infected with HIV," said Zeberg. However, since HIV only arose during the 20th century, protection against this infectious disease cannot explain why the genetic risk variant for COVID-19 became so common among humans

SOURCE: ANI



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 7:00 pm Wednesday 23 February 2022)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 24 February 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region and isolated in Upper Sagaing Region and Kachin, Eastern Shan States. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in (North and South) Shan, Chin and Mon States and generally fair in the remaining regions and states.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-7) 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 24 February 2022: Generally fair weather.

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

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 24 February 2022: Generally fair weather.

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COVID-19 vaccine drive continues in various states, regions

DOCTORS and nurses from public hospitals, Tatmadaw medical teams, healthcare workers and volunteers are working hard to give COVID-19 vaccines in different states and regions as the vaccination

programme is one of the most important activities in the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 disease. COVID-19 vaccine is administered daily to target groups regardless of race or



Residents receive vaccination in Sagaing Region.



Inoculation is underway in Shan State (North).

religion, including Buddhist monks and nuns, local people over the age of 40, students, religious leaders, prisoners, people with disabilities, ethnic armed groups, people with chronic diseases, people in IDP camps and over 12-year-old students, respectively.

On 22 February and Yesterday, doctors and nurses from public hospitals, medical teams from the Tatmadaw, relevant healthcare workers in collaboration with volunteers gave COVID-19 vaccines to 734 people from three Townships in Shan State (North), 330 peo-

ple from Tachilek Township in Shan State (East), 2,397 people from twelve townships in Mon and Kayin States, 1,509 people from Myeik Township in Taninthayi Region, 519 people from Yankin and Tamway Townships in Yangon Region, 17,722 people from 26 townships in Ayeyawady Region, 14,700 people from seven townships in Rakhine and Chin States, 290 people from Hkamti Township in Sagaing Region, 230 people from Ottwin and Htantabin Townships in Bago Region, respectively.

Similarly, healthcare officials gave the vaccines to 768 students from 26 townships in Ayeyawady Region yesterday.

It is reported that officials from the respective Regional Military Headquarters visited the site and coordinated the necessary work. — MNA

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, cattle, vehicle, motorcycles, vessel, commodities seized

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

On 21 February, the Rakhine State Forest Department seized 7.8208 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K570,676 in Thandwe, Taungup and An townships and took action under the Forest Law.

On 22 February, the unit led by Lt-Commander Min Thein of Taninthayi Naval Region Command seized K50,350,000 worth of one illegal vessel that carried 100.4896 tonnes of illegal gum-kina and took action under the Forest Law.



Confiscated commodities.

Similarly, the Ayeyawady Region Forest Department also

seized 57.7771 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K3,973,032 in Bo-

gale and Thaboung townships and took action under the Forest Law.

Moreover, the Customs Department at Myanmar Industrial Port, Yangon found K40,935,564 worth of overloaded commodities and foodstuffs than the load mentioned in the ID list in a surprise check and charged under the Customs Law.

On 23 February, the Sagaing Region inspection team led by Myanmar Police Force seized illegal 43 cattle worth K12,900,000 in Shwebo Township and took action under the Animal Health and Breeding Development Law while one unregistered

Crown car worth K2,000,000, one ZI-125 motorcycle without a licence worth K100,000 seized in Monywa and one Shayan-125 motorcycle without a licence worth K150,000 seized in Shwebo township under the Export and Import Law.

On 23 February, the Kawka-reik (Tadakyoe) checkpoint of Kayin State seized undocumented 50 packs of detergent powder worth K1,000,000 and took action under the Customs Law.

Thus, a total of 14 arrests (estimated value of K343,105,352) were made on 21, 22 and 23 February, according to the committee. — MNA

Drugs seized in Myawady, Mudon, North Okkalapa townships

A combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force inspected Thet Naing Oo on Ayethaya 7th street, No. (4) ward, Myawady Township at 6:10 pm on 22 February and seized 9,750 stimulant tablets from him.

According to the investigation, a search of the house of Ma Naw Mellison (alias) Daephaw, a resident of ward 4, Myawady at 6:30 pm resulted in the seizure of 7,410 stimulant tablets.

At 6:30 am on the same day, a combined team consisting of members of the Mon State Police Force stopped and searched a motorcycle driven by Hein Lin Khaing (alias) Maung Pein on Mudon-Chaunghnakhwa Road, Myoma (4) ward, Mudon Township and seized 1,960 stimulant tablets.

At 11:30 am on the same day, a combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Po-

lice Force stopped and searched a motorcycle driven by Kyaw Kyaw Min near junction of Hantawady Road and Yazadhariz Road, Shwepaukkan Myothit ward, North Okkalapa Township and 40,000 tablets of ecstasy were confiscated.

According to the investigation, police raided Kyaw Lin Khaing's house at No. 1185, Nyaung Oo Road, Shwepaukkan Myothit Ward, North Okkalapa



An arrestee is seen together with seized drugs and motorbike.

Township, and confiscated another 0.035 kilogramme of ICE. They are prosecuted under

the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, according to the Police Force. —MNA

Low-grade rice price rises over K30,000 per bag in domestic market

THE prices of highly consumed low-grade rice varieties stand at over K30,000 in the domestic, said U Than Oo, the secretary of Bayintnaung Rice Wholesale Market.

“The prices of low-grade rice varieties (long-grain rice) remain over K30,000 in the domestic market,” U Than Oo was quoted as saying.

Furthermore, the prices of Pawsan high-grade rice varieties are worth over K40,000-50,000 per bag. Highly consumed Pawsan rice varieties produced in the Shwebo area are valued at over K50,000.

Yet, the market is quite sluggish, U Than Oo added.

“There is no brisk market

for rice at present. We see a regular trade,” he pointed out.

Next, the prices of low-grade rice varieties are relatively high in the export market as well, ranging from K25,000 to K27,500 per 108-pound bag.

The rice prices for the export market is highly correlated with the currency market and the global cues.

At present, Kyat is weakening against the dollar at K1,980, he continued.

Summer paddy is gradually flowing into the market at the moment. Bayintnaung rice depot, the major point for rice export through maritime trade, witnessed the daily inflow of 30,000-40,000 bags. — NN/GNLM



Furthermore, the prices of Pawsan high-grade rice varieties are worth over K40,000-50,000 per bag. Highly consumed Pawsan rice varieties produced in the Shwebo area are valued at over K50,000.

CMP raw materials import peaks to \$918.89 mln as of 11 February



Female workers are pictured at one of the CMP garment factories.

IMPORTS of raw materials by CMP (cut-make-pack) businesses have soared to US\$918.89 million as of 11 February in the current six-month mini-budget period 2020-2021 since October 2020, which reflects an increase of \$107 million compared with the year-ago period, according to the Ministry of Commerce.

The figures rose from \$728.38 million registered the last FY2020-2021, the Commerce Ministry's data indicated.

Myanmar's garment exports witnessed a decline of over 20 per cent last year on the back of a slump in demand by the European Union market. The raw materials imported by the CMP businesses fell simultaneously, stated the Ministry of Commerce.

Consequently, some CMP garment factories permanently and temporarily shut down and left thousands of workers unemployed.

Nonetheless, the industry is returning to normal after the COVID-19 vaccination programme for the workers, as per the HIS Markit's September report.

Exports of garments manufactured under the cut-make-pack (CMP) system were valued at US\$3.6 billion in the last FY2020-2021, according to data from the Myanmar Customs Department.

The garment sector is among the prioritized sectors driving up exports. Myanmar's manufacturing sector is largely concentrated in garment and textiles produced on the Cutting, Making, and Packaging

basis, and it contributes to the country's GDP to a certain extent.

Myanmar mainly exports CMP garments to markets in Japan and Europe, along with the Republic of Korea, China, and the US.

The export value of CMP garments was only \$850 million in the 2015-2016FY, but it has tripled over the past two FYs. In the 2016-2017FY, about \$2 billion was earned from exports of CMP garments. The figure increased to an estimated \$2.5 billion in the 2017-2018FY and \$2.2 billion in the 2018 mini-budget period (from April to September). It tremendously grew to \$4.6 billion in the 2018-2019FY and \$4.8 billion in the 2019-2020FY, according to the Commerce Ministry. — KK/GNLM

Tapioca successfully cultivated in Ayeyawady region for potential export item

AS an agricultural country, Myanmar has many good bases for cultivating many kinds of agricultural products.

Among the agricultural products, tapioca can be successfully cultivated and is a potential export product if properly cultivated, according to international reports.

International Centre for Tropical Agriculture-CIAT is also providing technical assistance to local farmers in less-developed Southeast Asian countries to help them grow tapioca for the rapid economic development. The local farmers from Viet Nam, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Indonesia are earning extra income by growing tapioca.

The residents from Kyonpyaw, Hinthada, Lemyethna and Yekyi townships in Ayeyawady Region grow about 30,000 acres of tapioca yearly in their region. Then, the tapioca is made the powder through companies' traders and it became a local product. Each tapioca acre can produce about 3,000-3,500 visses.

In 2014, the Ayeyawady Region Tapioca Growers and Ex-

porters Association was formed to improve tapioca production, led by the consumer affairs department. Then, the association conducted the workshop and invited the international experts led by Dr Robert Anderson Cranb from Queensland university to provide awareness to the local farmers in 2015. Besides, the association attended 4th starch world, held in Inya Lake Hotel, Yangon and sent study tours to Thailand and China.

Under the cooperation plan of the tapioca industry development, the association distributed the Hauby Bong-60 high yielding tapioca species to the local farmers. Hauby Bong-60 species have yielded about 7,500-10,000 visses per acre.

China buys about 11.5 million tonnes of tapioca powder yearly.

In the near future, with the rising price of other industrial raw crops such as corn, tapioca, a potential alternative, it will inevitably become a local product of the Ayeyawady Region, which has a very high demand for its products. — District IPRD/GNLM



NEWS
IN BRIEF

US opposes Canada's digital services tax proposal

THE United States on Tuesday announced its opposition to Canada's proposed tax on the largest tech firms, warning it "would examine all options" should Ottawa go ahead with the levy.

The United States Trade Representative (USTR) said Canada should instead work towards implementing a global taxation agreement that Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries announced last year to defuse the global tech tax row.

"As Canada is fully aware, the United States has serious concerns about measures that single out American firms for taxation while effectively excluding national firms engaged in similar lines of business," USTR said. It called for Ottawa to "focus efforts on engaging constructively" with the OECD negotiations, "instead of pursuing a counterproductive unilateral measure that risks encouraging other countries to follow suit."—AFP ■

China to step up tax, fee cuts to support market entities

CHINA will intensify tax and fee cuts with targeted measures in 2022 to bring benefits for market entities and bolster economic growth, according to the Finance Ministry on Tuesday.

"China will see a larger scale of tax and fee cuts this year," the minister of finance Liu Kun told a press conference, citing that the country cut about 1.1 trillion yuan (about 173.9 billion US dollars) of taxes and fees last year. The country will maintain appropriate levels of fiscal expenditure while giving priorities to key sectors including sci-tech breakthroughs, environmental protection and major regional strategies, Liu said. Measures will be taken to allocate local government special bonds in a reasonable manner, Liu said, noting that the country issued 484.4 billion yuan in January to fund projects in the transport, industrial park infrastructure and other key areas.—Xinhua ■

China remains biggest export country for German electrical, digital industry in 2021

CHINA remained the biggest export country for Germany's electrical and digital industry in 2021, the country's Electro and Digital Industry Association (ZVEI) said on Monday.

The industry's exports to China increased by 7.5 per cent to 25.1 billion euros (28.5 billion US dollars) last year, according to ZVEI. The United States ranked second, with exports up 10.2 per cent year-on-year at 19.1 billion euros. Total exports by Germany's electrical and digital industry reached 224.6 billion euros last year, exceeding pre-crisis levels in 2019 by 4.6 per cent, according to ZVEI. Exports to other European countries in 2021 recovered strongly by 11.4 per cent to 144.9 billion euros, while the industry's exports to Asia grew 7.1 per cent to 49.4 billion euros.—Xinhua ■



An exhibitor stands next to a digital printer for textiles during Heimtextil in Frankfurt, Germany, on 8 January 2019. PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE

UK body urges Japan to reconsider CO2 storage, ammonia fuel policy



Japan's biggest power generator, JERA said it will conduct an international auction to buy up to 500,000 tonnes of ammonia a year from 2027 to be used as a fuel in its coal-fired power plants to cut carbon dioxide emissions. PHOTO: TOKIOX.COM/KYODO

A British research group has urged Japan to reconsider promoting carbon capture and storage and a so-called integrated gasification combined cycle because such technologies are not only costly but do not significantly cut the country's carbon dioxide emissions.

In a report released this month, London-based climate data provider TransitionZero said Japan instead should focus more on offshore wind power it said could "unlock tremendous

renewable energy potential" in the fight against global warming.

Referring to the IGCC, which applies high pressure on coal to turn it into gas, and co-firing coal with ammonia, the group said Japan's "advanced coal technologies" are "expensive with limited potential" and will not help achieve the government's goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.

Environmentalists have been criticizing Japan for lag-

ging behind other industrialized nations in phasing out coal-fired power plants.

The group recommended that Japan "re-evaluate" and "reconsider" the roles of ammonia co-firing for power generation and IGCC, and "be prudent" with its limited storage sites when investing in carbon capture and storage, or CCS, capabilities.

According to TransitionZero analysis, carbon emission per kilowatt hour of IGCC is expected to be 670 grammes in 2030, with that of 20-per-cent co-firing of ammonia at 693 grammes.

Those figures are around "five times higher than the Japanese energy grid needs to be in 2030 to align with" a net-zero pathway.

In addition, the average cost of such technologies is \$200 per megawatt hour, more than double that of solar power.

As for CCS, a technique used to store carbon deep in the ground, the group said it is "not a sustainable solution," given "Japan's limited geological storage" whose capacity could run out in just a decade.—Kyodo ■

Australian state bans offshore mining, exploration

THE government of the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW) announced on Wednesday that it would no longer accept applications for offshore mining and exploration, instituting a ban on the practice in the state.

The ruling seeks to protect beaches along the coast of NSW as well as marine and coastal ecosystems.

"NSW has some of the world's most spectacular coastlines which support local industries and make them a great place to live and visit, and we want that to continue for future generations," said Paul Toole, deputy premier of NSW and the minister responsible for natural resources. It would also mean that the controversial Petroleum Exploration Permit 11 (PEP 11) proposal is now dead in the water.

The project, which would drill for gas off the coast of Sydney's most famous beaches, has long been a point of contention for local residents, advocacy



The government of the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW) announced on Wednesday that it would no longer accept applications for offshore mining and exploration, instituting a ban on the practice in the state. PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE

groups and local governments.

"After four years of hard work, here's our fantastic result," read an announcement from Australian coastal conservation group Save Our Coast.

"This flawed plan (PEP 11) risks devastating our coastal ecosystem, the whale migration route and the rich biodiversity off the coast, our climate, our

livelihoods and our way of life," said the group in a petition that garnered some 80,000 signatures in the lead up to the eventual ban.

The NSW government said that while going forward all commercial projects would be banned from operation, sand mining for the purposes of beach restoration would still be able to go ahead.—Xinhua ■

Women workers must cover up ‘even with a blanket’, say Afghan Taliban

WOMEN working in Afghan government departments must cover up – even with a blanket if necessary – or they may lose their jobs, the Taliban’s religious police said Tuesday.

Most women have been barred from their government jobs, since the Taliban retook power in August, though Afghanistan’s new rulers claim they will be allowed to return once some conditions are in place – such as segregated offices.

On Tuesday, the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice issued a statement saying women should not go to work unless they were properly covered, and they could be fired if they did not follow guidelines.

The ministry earned notoriety during the Taliban’s first stint in power from 1996 to 2001 for policing the leadership’s strict interpretation of Islam.

It was unclear why they issued Tuesday’s statement, as most women in Afghanistan have always covered their heads in public – with a loose shawl at least.

“They can follow the hijab the way they want,” ministry spokesman Mohammad Sadeq Akif Muhajir told AFP when reached for clarification.

But when asked if this meant they had to wear the all-covering burqa that the Taliban made compulsory during their previous rule, he demurred.

They can wear “any other sort of hijab, it is up to them, but they must (cover up) properly... even wear a blanket”, he said.

During the Taliban’s previous stint in power, a strict interpretation of Islam meant policing people’s day-to-day habits, actions, and clothing.

Western clothing was prohibited, men were ordered not to shave, and people were thrashed if they did not hurry along to prayers.—AFP ■

Portuguese companies launch green hydrogen consortium

A consortium of Portuguese companies has announced an investment of 100 million euros (114 million US dollars) to create Nazare Green Hydrogen Valley (NGHV), a project that aims to decarbonize industries through the use of sustainable energy.

According to a statement, the consortium would serve the “cement, waste, glass, fertilizers and ceramics” industries, among others, helping them “manufacture low-carbon products using clean energy produced in Portugal.”

The goal, says the statement, is “to revolutionize the way Portuguese industry approaches decarbonization through mature and scalable technology.”

The NGHV project encompasses a group of companies that are responsible for around ten per cent of Portuguese industry’s total emissions, having a strong impact



The planned facility will begin as a 10 MW pilot electrolysis installation. PHOTO: POWER INNOVATIONS/XINHUA

on the sustainability and exports of companies as well as communities.

In the statement, the companies also reveal that direct investment will continue until 2025 and that it would create “more than 1,700 jobs”.—Xinhua ■

Ailing SAS launches drastic cost-cutting programme

SCANDINAVIAN airline SAS on Tuesday announced a major cost-cutting plan, as the ailing carrier faced further heavy losses.

Under the new plan then company will reduce costs by 7.5 billion Swedish kronor (\$800 million, 710 million euros) annually.

“Absent fundamental change,” the current situation in the airline sector, which is plagued by the economic fallout of the pandemic, “will quickly exhaust SAS’ cash resources,” the carrier said in a statement.

The “full transformation” of the business will affect “its network, fleet, labour agreements and

other cost structures”, the company.

Called “SAS Forward”, it will notably result in a “redesigned fleet” which included a “refocusing” on long-haul flights, the company said.

SAS, which already cut 40 per cent of its workforce, 5,000 staff, in 2020, did not mention new job cuts.

The group did not specify when it expected to achieve the 7.5 billion annual reduction in its costs.

Last year, SAS widened its losses after an already disastrous 2020, with a net loss of just over 2.4 billion kroner, with rebounded turnover of about 5.5 billion.—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V KOTA HIDAYAH VOY.NO. (0310N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V KOTA HIDAYAH VOY.NO. (0310N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **24-2-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** 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 ADVANCE CONTAINER LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SHUNXIANG

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SHUNXIANG VOY.NO. (V.209)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **23-2-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT-4** 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 CHUN AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS CO LTD

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Notice for change of distributor

We, **JIANGXI ZHENGBANG CROP PROTECTION CO.,Ltd**, would like to change the Distributor of the following product, which registered under Pesticide Registration Board, Myanmar, from **Friends Helper Co.,Ltd** to **MYANMAR SHWE THEIN TRADING CO., LTD**. If any objection or enquiry, please contact to Co-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, West Gyogone, Insein township, Yangon from here to next two weeks.

No	Trade Name	Active Ingredients	Registration Type	Registration number
1	ZB-Nimble 240SC	Spirodiclofen 240g/l SC	Provisional	P2021-5304
2	ZB-Punisher10SC	Spinosad10% SC	Experimental	E2021-5411
3	ZB-General60 WG	Metiram 55% + Pyraclostrobin 5%WG	Experimental	E2021-5384
4	ZB-Defeat 30SC	Chlorfenapyr 18% + Indoxacarb 12% SC	Experimental	E2021-5303

MYANMAR SHWE THEIN TRADING CO., LTD (Pa Tin Wun Oo Shwe Pin Street, NO.121, Industry Zone(4), Shwe Pyi Thar, Township, Yangon Region, Myanmar. Tel; 09428038496)

Notice for change of distributor

We, **TONGHUA PESTICIDE CHEMICAL INDUSTRY STOCK Co., Ltd**, would like to change the Distributor of the following product, which registered under Pesticide Registration Board, Myanmar, from **Friends Helper Co.,Ltd** to **ZABU HTATE TAN MYANMAR AGRO GROUP CO., LTD**. If any objection or enquiry , please contact to Co-Secretary, Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, Department of Agriculture, West Gyogone, Insein township, Yangon from here to next two weeks.

No	Trade Name	Active Ingredients	Registration Type	Registration number
1	TH-Yan Shin 25 WG	Thiamethoxam 25%WG	Provisional	P2020 - 4963
2	TH-Aung Myin 30EC	Difenoconazole 15% + Propiconazole 15%EC	Provisional	P2020 - 4779
3	TH-Yan Kinn37.5 SC	Thiodicarb 37.5%SC	Provisional	P2020 - 5020

ZABU HTATE TAN MYANMAR AGRO GROUP CO., LTD. (AungThiri Street No.(844) 28-Quarter, North Dagon Township, Yangon, Myanmar.Tel : 09-428038496)

Transferring Distributor for Registered Products

Distrib in 6 fb lw ig p sticid reg stered by **Asiatic Agricultural Industries Pte Ltd (Singapore)** is transferring from **AKA YARZAR COMPANY LIMITED** to **Golden Lion High Tech Agricultural Resources Co., Ltd**. Any Objection reg rld g to th s tran fer can b ify at Co Secretary, Mý m ar Pesticid Reg stratin Bø rd West Gý , In sein Tw s h p w ith n ww eek .

Sr.	Trade Name	Active Ingredient	Type of Reg.	Reg. No
1	SUITABLE	Cp rmeth ið l+ Prb eh s ð IE C	Flu l	Fð ð
2	Exact-SL	Acetamip ið IS L	Pro .	Pð ð

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NEWS
IN BRIEFUN Security Council
ends Iraq invasion
reparations to
Kuwait

THE UN Security Council voted unanimously Tuesday to wrap up the three-decade programme which has allowed Kuwait to recover more than \$50 billion from Iraq for damages caused by its 1990 invasion.

Members approved a resolution to “terminate the mandate” of the United Nations Compensation Commission, concluding that the operation has “fulfilled” its purpose of adequately remunerating Kuwait.

The measure, drafted by Britain, says it “confirms that the government of Iraq is no longer required to deposit a percentage of proceeds from export sales of petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas into the fund.” The claims process “is now complete and final,” having recovered some \$52.4 billion in total from Iraq for Kuwait, it adds.—AFP ■

Tonga back online
as undersea cable
repaired

INTERNET connection was restored in Tonga on Tuesday, five weeks after a massive volcanic eruption shredded the undersea cable that connects the Pacific nation with the rest of the world.

Telecom providers Digicel and TCC said data connectivity had been restored to two main islands, after breaks in an 80-kilometre (50-mile) stretch of the cable were finally fixed.

Residents reported services were quickly coming back online, email seemed blazingly fast after 38 days in the internet doldrums and a slew of calls from family overseas were coming in — their voices now heard loud and clear.

“YES! TCC is restoring fibre cable internet services,” the company said in a message to customers. The 15 January eruption was so powerful it was heard as far away as Alaska and caused a tsunami that flooded coastlines around the Pacific.

It covered Tonga with ash and mangled an 80-kilometre stretch of the undersea cable that proved more difficult than expected to fix.—AFP ■

Working-class hero? Ex-factory boy aims for
South Korean presidency

CULTURAL hits from Netflix show “Squid Game” to Oscar-winner “Parasite” have raised South Korean inequality to global prominence, and one presidential hopeful claims his working-class credentials make him the best man to fix a broken system.

Former child factory worker Lee Jae-myung, a school dropout maimed in an industrial accident as a teen, is the ruling Democratic Party’s maverick candidate in the 9 March election.

A rarity for politicians in status-obsessed South Korea, Lee is playing up his rags-to-riches tale in a bid to convince voters he can solve their economic woes.

Sky-high real estate prices, stagnant growth and stubborn youth unemployment are among



South Korean presidential candidate Lee Jae-myung is hoping his working-class credentials will convince voters he is the best man to fix inequality. **PHOTO: AFP**

voters’ top concerns in an election where polling is neck-and-neck and the campaign has been dominated by mud-slinging.

From universal basic in-

come to government-funded hair-loss treatment, former mayor and provincial governor Lee is proposing a slew of unorthodox policies that his campaign says

are a reflection of his impoverished childhood.

“You can worry about people outside shivering in the cold while you sit in your warm living room,” Lee told AFP in an exclusive interview in his campaign van.

“But you can never really understand their pain.”

The opposition decries his proposals as populist, saying Lee is trying to “buy votes with free money” and will “burden the next generation with debt”.

And a series of scandals have marred Lee’s run for top office: his wife was accused of misappropriating public funds; he is being scrutinized over a suspect land development deal, and he is dogged by rumours of mafia ties.—AFP ■

Afghanistan launches polio vaccination
targeting 9.1 mln children

Health worker gives a polio vaccine to a child during an anti-polio vaccination campaign in Spin Boldak district of Kandahar province, Afghanistan, 14 September 2020. **PHOTO: SANAULLAH SEIAM/**

THE Ministry of Public Health of the Afghan caretaker government launched a nationwide polio vaccination campaign on Monday, the government said.

“This is the second general polio vaccination campaign in 2022 aimed at vaccinating 9.1 million children under the age of five,” it said in a statement.

Provinces including Bamyan, Daykundi, and Ghor as well as some districts of Ghazni and Badakhshan provinces are not included in the ongoing campaign due to cold

weather, the government said.

The three-day campaign was launched in collaboration with the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO), the statement said.

So far in 2022, one positive case of polio has been reported in the Asian country, according to the statement.

Afghanistan and neighbouring Pakistan are the only two countries in the world where polio cases are reported every year.—Xinhua ■

Colombia decriminalizes abortion up to 24 weeks of
pregnancy: court

COLOMBIA’S high court decriminalized abortion up to 24 weeks of pregnancy on Monday in a landmark ruling for the majority-Catholic country, one of only a few in Latin America that currently allows the procedure.

“The performance of an abortion will only be punishable when it is carried out after the 24th week of gestation,” the Constitutional Court said in a statement.

After that point, abortion will only be permitted in certain circumstances already established



Abortion rights activists celebrate the decision of Colombia’s high court to decriminalize abortion up to 24 weeks of pregnancy in Bogota. **PHOTO: AFP**

by the court, such as in cases of rape, if the health of the mother is in danger or if the fetus has a fatal condition. Before Monday’s ruling, abortion was only allowed under those three conditions, per a 2006 decision by the Constitutional Court. Apart from those exceptions, both women and the doctors who performed their abortions would face prison sentences ranging from 16 to 54 months. Hundreds of pro- and anti-abortion protesters gathered outside the court building in the capital Bogota.—AFP ■

Japan to impose sanctions on Russia amid Ukraine crisis: Kishida

JAPAN will implement a set of economic sanctions against Russia and two pro-Russian separatist regions in eastern Ukraine after Moscow formally recognized the areas and ordered the deployment of troops there, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Wednesday.

The government will suspend visa issuance for officials from the two regions and freeze their assets. It will ban exports to and imports from the self-proclaimed republics of Donetsk and Luhansk as well as the issuance and trading of new Russian sovereign bonds in Japan,

Kishida said.

Japan has condemned the latest Russian move as a violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine as well as international law. Kishida had stressed the importance of close coordination with other members of the Group of Seven nations in taking a “tough” approach to Russia.

The sanctions are similar to those announced Tuesday by the United States, in what President Joe Biden called a “first tranche.” Britain and the European Union also decided to impose economic sanctions.

“We strongly urge Russia to return to efforts to break the impasse through a diplomatic process,” Kishida told reporters Wednesday morning.

Russia has so far defied calls from the G-7 to defuse the tensions sparked by its buildup of military forces near Ukraine’s borders. Tensions have spiked since Russia recognized the Donetsk and Luhansk regions as independent and ordered the deployment of troops to maintain peace there. Biden has described the situation as the “beginning of a Russian invasion of Ukraine.”—Kyodo ■



An activist wrapped in Ukrainian flag shout slogans during a rally outside Russian embassy in Kyiv. **PHOTO: AFP**

Putin asks upper house to send Russian army to back Ukraine separatists

RUSSIAN parliament’s upper house on Tuesday voted to allow President Vladimir Putin to use the Russian army outside the country to support separatists in Ukraine.

A total of 153 Russian senators backed the decision, with no one voting against or abstaining.

Putin earlier in the day asked the Federation Council to approve the army’s use outside the country to back separatists who have been fighting the Ukrainian army since 2014.

“Negotiations have stalled. The Ukrainian leadership has taken the path of violence and bloodshed,” Deputy Defence Minister Nikolay Pankov said during a session of the Federation Council called at Putin’s request.

“They have not left us a choice,” Pankov said, addressing the chamber.

He alleged that there were “heavy armoured vehicles” on



A Ukrainian serviceman is seen at a position on the front line with Russia-backed separatists near the settlement of Troitske in the Lugansk region. **PHOTO: AFP**

the border of east Ukraine’s separatist-controlled regions known as the DNR and LNR.

Pankov also said that NATO was “actively pumping Ukraine with modern weapons.”

“Russia will act for the protection of the sovereignty of other states and in order to prevent acts of aggression,” Pankov

said. He cited Putin’s request: “In accordance with the treaty of friendship and cooperation with the DNR and LNR, I am submitting a proposal for the adoption by the Federation Council for the consent to use the armed forces of the Russian Federation outside Russia.”—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

US sanctions Russia for ‘beginning’ invasion of Ukraine

US President Joe Biden on Tuesday announced tough new sanctions against Russia for “beginning” an invasion of Ukraine but said there was still time to avoid war, even as Vladimir Putin signalled plans to send troops beyond Russia’s borders.

Japan and Australia followed suit early Wednesday with their own stringent penalties for Moscow and individuals connected with the aggression against Ukraine, with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison targeting members of Russia’s security council for “behaving like thugs and bullies”.

Russia’s upper house, the Federation Council, gave Putin unanimous approval to deploy “peacekeepers” to two breakaway Ukrainian regions now recognized by Moscow as independent, and potentially into other parts of Ukraine.—AFP ■

Trial begins of Ohio doctor accused of 14 counts of murder

OPENING arguments began on Tuesday in the trial of a doctor in the midwestern US state of Ohio accused of 14 counts of murder for prescribing painkillers to critically ill patients.

William Husel, 46, is facing charges for deaths that occurred at Mount Carmel West hospital in Columbus between February 2015 and November 2018. Husel, who has pleaded not guilty, was originally indicted for 25 counts of murder but 11 counts were dismissed by a judge in January at the request of prosecutors.—AFP ■

Germany halts controversial Nord Stream 2 Russian pipeline project

GERMANY on Tuesday put on ice the controversial Nord Stream 2 pipeline in response to Moscow’s recognition of two breakaway regions in eastern Ukraine, finally halting the €10 billion project that has long irked allies.

Berlin had over the years doggedly pursued the pipeline which was set to double natural gas import capacity from Russia, despite opposition from the United States and Eastern Europe which fear it would leave

the continent too dependent upon Russian energy.

Through controversies that had weighed on German-Russian ties — from the poisoning of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny to several spying scandals to a series of cyberattacks, the German government had pushed on with the project, which was finally completed last year and was awaiting regulatory approval.

But hours after Putin’s decision on recognising sep-

aratists in eastern Ukraine, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said on Tuesday he had asked for the approval process to be halted, despite a severe energy crisis that has sent gas prices soaring in Europe.

“That sounds technical, but it is the necessary administrative step so there can be no certification of the pipeline and without this certification, Nord Stream 2 cannot begin operating,” he said.—AFP ■



In this file photo taken on 26 March 2019 a worker puts a lid on a pipe at the construction site of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline in Lubmin, northeastern Germany. **PHOTO: AFP**

Ajax star Haller out to extend Champions League scoring streak

SEBASTIEN Haller will be bidding to continue his remarkable scoring record in this season's Champions League when his Ajax side face Benfica in the first leg of their last-16 tie on Wednesday.

Ajax take on Benfica at the Estadio da Luz as they return to Lisbon, where Haller scored four times on his Champions League debut when the Dutch champions beat Sporting 5-1 along the road at the Jose Alvalade in September. Ivory Coast international Haller went on to score 10 times in the group stage, becoming just the second player to find the net in all six group games in a Champions League campaign after Cristiano Ronaldo in 2017.

"Before the competition if you asked me if I would score that many goals of course I would say no," Haller told Ajax TV ahead of the knockout stages of Europe's elite club competition.

"I was happy with one already. I score one goal in the



Ivory Coast international Haller went on to score 10 times in the group stage, becoming just the second player to find the net in all six group games in a Champions League campaign after Cristiano Ronaldo in 2017. **PHOTO: AFP**

Champions League and my life is done."

Haller, who is 27, was the first player to score a quadruple on his debut in the competition since Marco van Basten in 1992 and his goals helped Ajax top their group with maximum points, beating Sporting, Borussia Dortmund and Besiktas

home and away.

His tally of 10 goals puts him one ahead of Bayern Munich's Robert Lewandowski in the competition's scoring charts and is as many as Dortmund's Erling Haaland managed last season when he finished as the Champions League's leading marksman.—AFP ■

Barcelona and Napoli finely poised, Rangers look to finish job against Dortmund



Barcelona and Napoli drew 1-1 in the first leg last week. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

BARCELONA'S Europa League tie against Napoli is finely poised heading into the return in Italy on Thursday as Rangers look to finish the job against Borussia Dortmund following their stunning 4-2 win in the first leg last week.

Barca needed a Ferran Torres penalty to draw at home to Napoli in the first leg of their knockout round play-off tie after Piotr Zielinski put the Serie A

side in front at the Camp Nou.

However, with the away goals rule having been dispensed with this season by UEFA, the heavyweight tie remains very much in the balance going to the Stadio Diego Armando Maradona.

Barcelona are enduring a troubled season, but Xavi Hernandez's side still cross the Mediterranean in good form having gone five unbeaten and

not lost in 90 minutes since Bayern Munich dumped them out of the Champions League in early December.

They won 4-1 at Valencia in La Liga at the weekend with Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scoring a hat-trick, while Napoli are third in Serie A after drawing 1-1 with Cagliari on Monday.

Scottish champions Rangers are hoping to secure a spot in the last 16 as they welcome Dortmund to Ibrox following their stunning 4-2 win in Germany.

It would go down as one of the best results in their history in Europe if they could see off the Bundesliga giants, but the outcome of the tie could hinge on whether Erling Haaland plays any part.

The Norwegian, scorer of 23 goals in 20 appearances for his club this season, missed the first leg and his team's last three domestic outings due to injury but has now returned to training and could feature in Govan.—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.

Olympic champion Zverev thrown out of Acapulco tournament after tantrum

GERMAN Olympic tennis champion Alexander Zverev has been expelled from the Mexican Open in Acapulco after smashing his racket on the umpire's chair several times and directing a foul-mouthed rant at the official, the ATP announced Wednesday.

"Due to unsportsmanlike conduct at the conclusion of his doubles match on Tuesday night, Alexander Zverev has been withdrawn from the tournament in Acapulco," the governing body for men's tennis tweeted. Zverev—ranked number three in the world—lost his cool when he and doubles partner Marcelo Melo of Brazil

were beaten 6-2, 4-6, 10-6 by Britain's Lloyd Glasspool and Harri Heliövaara of Finland.

The 24-year-old defending champion smashed his racket three times just below umpire Alessandro Germani's feet before taking his seat and then rising again to verbally abuse the official and smash the chair one last time. He had apparently been irked by a line call during the match. Zverev had been involved in a marathon first-round singles clash with American Jenson Brooksby that had finished early Tuesday morning—the latest-ever finish to a professional tennis match.—AFP ■



Germany's Olympic singles champion Alexander Zverev has been thrown out of the Acapulco tournament the ATP said due to his smashing the umpire's chair several times and a foul mouthed rant at the official following defeat in a doubles match. **PHOTO: AFP**