

THE

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Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

1.

The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted and its mandated tasks, including the scrutiny of voter lists, shall be implemented in accordance with the law.
2.

Effective measures will be taken with added momentum to prevent and manage the COVID-19 pandemic.
3.

Actions will be taken to ensure the speedy recovery of businesses from the impact of COVID-19.
4.

Emphasis will be placed on achieving enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.
5.

Upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution, and further work will be undertaken to hand over State duties to the winning party in accordance with democratic standards.

Danyingon wholesale market thriving in Yangon Region

THE Danyingon Wholesale Market in Insein Township of Yangon Region operates the sales of fresh vegetables and fruits of the country thrivingly.

The international standard wholesale market was opened on 30 January 2018 and is running with 5,000 shops daily.

The market offers cauliflower, cabbage, mustard, carrot and chilli from Aungban, Heho, Kalaw and Pindaya, including Shan products, green groceries and various foodstuffs of Tatkon, marrows and pumpkin from Shwebo, onion, potato and cooking oil from the middle part of country, rice and fish-paste from Rakhine State and Ayeyawady Region, including the vegetables and fruits from other townships.

The products produced across the nation enter the market via road and sea routes daily while the products from



The market located near the Danyingon railway station offers the sale of about 7,000 tonnes of green groceries and about 3,000 tonnes of various commodities daily. **PHOTO: KANU**



Pyay by trains and vehicles. The products are distributed in Yangon.

“We aim for the people to get what they want at one place whenever they come this market. We want to promote the farmers. The consumers can get fresh vegetables and fruits at fairer prices just at a single place. The market provides foodstuffs for Yangonites and they can freely and peacefully buy here. We open the market from 4 am to 9 pm in accordance with the COVID-19 health rules,” said a market management official.

The officials studied in international countries to develop such an international standard wholesale market in the country. The market located near the Danyingon railway station offers the sale of about 7,000 tonnes of green groceries and about 3,000 tonnes of various commodities daily. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/GNLM

Myanmar presents its second round of oral arguments at the Preliminary Objections hearing

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

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 Notification

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

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

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

Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

Public Notification

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

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

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

Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

"Colour In Spring" Art Exhibition held in Yangon



paintings, and the rest are by my fellow artists. We can only sell paintings for the support of artists," Artist Ko Maung Win Hla added. The exhibition features painting styles of six artists: Ko Maung Win Hla, Hla Myint, Mon Myint, Zaw Htoo, Soe Naing Soe and Khun Htun Khaung.

A total of 50 acrylic and watercolour paintings are on display, ranging in prices from K50,000 to K100,000, and the exhibition will run from 10 am to 5 pm till 1 March. — Soe Myint Aung/GNLM

AN art exhibition named "Colour In Spring" is being held at Studio Paradise, No. 154 (First Floor), 33rd Street, Kyauktada Township, Yangon on the morning of 25 February thanks to the support of the artists who helped set up the studio.

"As appreciations to all artists who have supported us, this studio space will be set up soon," said Artist Ko Maung Win Hla.

"This is a small exhibition. There are about 15 of my own



Statement of Young Men's Buddhist Association

- 1. The Gambia, on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), filed a case against Myanmar at the International Court for Justice (ICJ).
- 2. The Myanmar delegation led by the Agent of Myanmar, Union Minister for International Cooperation U Ko Ko Hlaing and the Alternate Agent of Myanmar, Union Minister for Legal Affairs Attorney-General of the Union Dr Thida Oo attended the hearing and the YMBA welcomed their proper explanations.
- 3. The YMBA strongly condemned The Gambia for prosecuting Myanmar, standing with the extremists by neglecting the genocide against the endangered ethnic races such as Mro, Thet, Khami and the minority group such as Hindus committed by the majority of terrorist religious extremists.
- 4. The 116 years old YMBA appreciated the efforts of the Myanmar delegation who try to protect the interests of Myanmar and its citizens and the experts who compile the correct documents of the issue.
- 5. It is announced that the YMBA, the monks and citizens with the national spirit support and stand with the Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing and Union Minister Attorney-General of the Union Dr Thida Oo.

Young Men's Buddhist Association

3,391 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 25 February, total figure rises to 581,837

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **581,837** after **3,391** new cases were reported on 25 February 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **530,847** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **19,356** after **3** died.—MNA

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)

Myanmar presents its second round of oral arguments at the Preliminary Objections hearing

MYANMAR presents its second round of oral arguments on 25 February 2022 at the public hearing relating to the preliminary objections raised by Myanmar concerning the application filed by the Gambia alleging Myanmar of violating the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The Myanmar delegation led by the Agent of Myanmar, Union Minister for International Cooperation, U Ko Ko Hlaing and the Alternate Agent of Myanmar, Union Minister for Legal Affairs and Attorney-General of the Union Dr Thida Oo attend the aforementioned public hearing.

During the second round of oral argument, international advocates and counsels; Dr Christopher Staker, Professor Stefan Talmon and Professor Robert Kolb, presented their arguments to the Court responding to the Gambia's first round of



Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing.

oral arguments on 23 February 2022. After their arguments, the Agent of Myanmar, Union Minister for International Cooperation, U Ko Ko Hlaing presented the closing statement. In his closing statement, the

Agent of Myanmar stated that counsel for The Gambia made many factual and political allegations that were not relevant to the preliminary objections and Myanmar will not respond to these allegations as now is

neither the right place nor time to do so. He further stated that these allegations were aimed at intimating to the Members of the Court and the public that the authorities in Myanmar should be considered perpetrators of genocide. He said that Counsel for The Gambia also appears to suggest that the preliminary objections should not be considered seriously as the Court has already rejected them in the previous Provisional Measures Order; and Myanmar is exercising its right as Respondent by submitting these preliminary objections, as clearly foreseen by paragraph 85 of the Provisional Measures Order and has the right not to be prejudged on the merits at the preliminary objections phase. He stated that since The Gambia have used this hearing as a platform to make allegations about the merits, as Agent for Myanmar he cannot

just sit here in silence without responding at all. He emphasized that Myanmar is committed to ensuring compliance with the Genocide Convention and Myanmar amended its Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure in conformity with the Convention. He further stated that Myanmar is also implementing its obligations under the Provisional Measures Order and there also are continuous efforts to improve the general situation on the ground. Finally, the Union Minister requested the International Court of Justice to adjudge and declare that the Court lacks jurisdiction to hear the case brought by The Gambia against Myanmar; and/or that The Gambia's Application is inadmissible.

It is learnt that The Gambia will present its second round of oral arguments on 28 February 2022. — MNA

Golden Jubilee Myanmar Health Research Congress concludes

THE final day and closing ceremony of the 50th Myanmar Health Research Congress was virtually organized in Yangon yesterday.

In the morning session of the event, the seminar under the topic of "Overcoming challenges in COVID-19 vaccination" was held.

At the event, Union Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win said :

- Vaccination processes play a key role in conducting COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities.
- When the COVID-19 vaccines were first introduced, efforts were made to reduce socio-economic impacts with the aim of reducing infection rate and mortality rate. Therefore, the socio-economic related businesses such as the factories/industries, hotels and schools were resumed almost normally.

- There were also challenges for human resources for vaccination, storage and distribution of vaccines in cold chain. Regarding with these experiences, the participants should discuss and exchange views for the expected vaccine coverage and successful vaccination processes.
- A total of 45 million people of the country received their doses and it shows more than 60pc of ground population were vaccinated.
- The Prime Minister instructed officials to conduct practically as quickly as possible and nothing is more important than human lives regarding the COVID-19 preventive measures.
- The government used \$276.64 million to buy COVID-19 vaccines and partner countries donated \$121.12 million and the country received a total of 62 million doses- 45 million doses



Union Minister Dr Thet Khaing Win.

- es were bought and 17 million were received from donation. Moreover, the locally produced vaccines will be also used.
- According to the data, the death rate significantly drops after the people have fully vaccinated. So, the actions will be accelerated in vaccination processes.
- The attendees to the congress should discuss and suggest regarding the outcomes of the event and papers and make

efforts to ensure better congresses.

Afterwards, Deputy Director-General Dr Kyaw Kan Kaug of the Public Health Department discussed under the title of Overview of COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment in Myanmar while Epidemiological Perspective by Director Dr Toe Thiri Aung, Operational Challenges at Central Level by Dr Myo Su Kyi, Manager of Expanded Programme on

Immunization Project and Challenges for the basic health staff at the township level for COVID-19 vaccination by Head Dr Tun Min of the Yangon Public Health and Medical Services Departments. The participants and the Professors and medical experts coordinated the discussion online.

Then, Director-General Prof Dr Zaw Than Tun of Medical Research Department expressed words of thanks during the closing ceremony saying it is such a success for holding five-day congress from 21 to 25 February. The efforts of officials, resource persons and participants were appreciated.

During the award-giving ceremony, the Chairman of the Subcommittee for Selecting Best Paper and Poster Rector Prof Dr Hla Hla Win, University of Community Health briefed the reviews and announced the winners.—MNA

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

(THE GAMBIA v. MYANMAR)

21 FEBRUARY 2022

SECOND SPEECH OF MR CHRISTOPHER STAKER
LEAD COUNSEL AND ADVOCATE FOR MYANMAR

FOURTH PRELIMINARY OBJECTION

Introduction

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

1. Myanmar’s fourth preliminary objection is that the Court lacks jurisdiction, or that the application is inadmissible, as there was no dispute between The Gambia and Myanmar when the application instituting proceedings was submitted.

2. It is of course well established that the Court cannot exercise its contentious jurisdiction unless the dispute already existed between the parties before proceedings were instituted.¹

3. The Gambia accepts that this requirement applies in this case, like any other.²

4. The Gambia has also not disputed that the burden is on the applicant to establish the existence of the prior dispute.³

5. The issue for your decision is thus whether The Gambia has discharged that burden in this case. Myanmar says it has not.

6. In explaining why, I will deal first with the requirements that must be met for a prior dispute to exist. I will then address the circumstances of this case.

The legal requirements
Madam President, Members of the Court,

7. I turn, then, first to the requirements.

8. At the outset, a point of agreement is noted. Both parties accept that the existence of a prior dispute is a question of substance, not of form or procedure.⁴

9. This means that no specific formalities need be observed for a dispute to exist.⁵ But this conversely also means that no specific formalities will necessarily suffice.⁶ All will depend on the particular circumstances of the individual case, viewed objectively.



10. These circumstances must, however, satisfy four requirements.

11. The first is that the prior dispute must be the same dispute between the same parties as that submitted in the application instituting proceedings.⁷

12. The second is that the prior dispute must be a legal dispute.⁸ Obviously, the Court can only decide legal disputes.⁹ If the prior dispute must be the same dispute as that contained in the application, then it too must be a legal dispute. This means, for instance, that prior exchanges of a political nature would not suffice.

13. These first two requirements are the very essence of the prior dispute requirement. The Gambia has not expressly challenged their existence. It does, however, dispute the next two requirements.

14. The third requirement is that both parties must have been aware of each other’s position.¹⁰

15. It is self-evident that if two parties

hold contradictory opinions, but neither knows of the other’s view, there is no dispute between them. A dispute arises only when their views are made known to each other.¹¹ As Judge Owada has said, “it is the ‘objective awareness’ of the parties that transforms a disagreement into a legal dispute”.¹² In the Right of Passage case, the Court thus asked whether events had led the parties to “adopt clearly-defined legal positions as against each other”.¹³

16. The Gambia claims that this third requirement would allow a respondent, simply by remaining silent, to prevent the applicant from knowing the respondent’s position, thereby preventing a dispute from existing and precluding litigation before the Court.¹⁴

17. That is not the effect of this third requirement. If the applicant has made a legal claim that calls for a response, and any reasonable time to respond has

passed, then the applicant may well be aware of the respondent’s position from its silence.¹⁵ However, one way or the other, each party must be aware of the opposing view of the other.

18. Contrary to what The Gambia seems to suggest,¹⁶ the Court has never said otherwise. In the Marshall Islands cases, the Court, having found that the respondent was not aware of the applicant’s position, did not need to go on to decide whether the applicant had awareness of the respondent’s position. However, the Court said that a dispute might be inferred from a respondent’s silence,¹⁷ thus affirming that the applicant does also have to be aware, from the respondent’s silence or otherwise, of the latter’s position.

19. If this third requirement did not exist, the effect would be this. The applicant could present a claim to the respondent in a note verbale, and then institute proceedings an hour later. The prior dispute requirement would be met because just prior to the application, the respondent would have known of the applicant’s claim, and the applicant would not need to know the respondent’s position.

20. If that was correct, the prior dispute requirement would be a pure formality. What purpose would it serve? It serves no purpose unless it allows both parties to articulate their legal positions to each other before a case is brought.¹⁸ The judicial settlement of international disputes is an alternative to the direct and friendly settlement of disputes between the parties.¹⁹ Obviously, friendly settlement is only possible once each party is aware of the other’s position, and until they are, there can be no dispute in respect of which a friendly settlement

SEE PAGE-5

1. POM, paras. 487-490 and 495-503.

2. POM, paras. 488 and 504-508; WOG, e.g. paras. 5.3-5.4 and 5.7.

3. POM, paras. 492-493; WOG, paras. 5.34 and 5.39.

4. POM, paras. 521 and 566-577; WOG, paras. 5.5 and 5.6.

5. POM, paras. 567-568.

6. POM, paras. 569-572.

7. POM, paras. 538-546.

8. POM, paras. 553-565.

9. POM, paras. 510-514.

10. POM, paras. 515-523.

11. POM, paras. 515-520.

12. Obligations concerning Negotiations relating to Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and to Nuclear Disarmament (Marshall Islands v. United Kingdom), Preliminary Objections, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2016, p. 833, separate opinion of Judge Owada, p. 881, paras. 13-14; POM, para. 519.

13. Case concerning Right of Passage over Indian Territory (Merits), Judgment of 12 April 1960, I.C.J. Reports 1960, p. 6, p. 34; POM, para. 517.

14. WOG, para. 5.34.

15. Obligations concerning Negotiations relating to Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and to Nuclear Disarmament (Marshall Islands v. United Kingdom), Preliminary Objections, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2016, p. 833, p. 850, para. 40; POM, para. 520, footnote 391 and accompanying text and paras. 575-577.

16. WOG, para. 5.32.

17. POM, para. 520.

18. POM, para. 575.

19. Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Georgia v. Russian Federation), Preliminary Objections, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2011, p. 70, p. 131, para. 150.

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could be reached. The Court could be burdened with many unnecessary cases if judicial proceedings could be brought before there is even a dispute capable of friendly settlement.

21. I move on, then, to the fourth requirement, which is this. The parties’ prior legal positions must have been articulated with a minimum degree of particularity.²⁰

22. The need for this requirement is illustrated by this hypothetical example.

23. Suppose that State A said to State B: “you are in breach of international law”. Suppose it is unclear from the statement or its context what conduct of State B is referred to, or what rule of international law is said to be breached. Suppose State B responds simply that it is unaware of any breach of international law on its part. Suppose State A then brings proceedings against State B before this Court, and its application now specifies the impugned conduct of State B and the norms of international law said to be violated. Can it be said in this example that the prior dispute requirement is satisfied?

24. The answer must be no. In this example, there was, in form, a prior allegation by State A of a breach of international law, which State B did not accept. But there was no prior dispute in substance. It cannot be shown that the prior statement of State A was referring to the same matter as that submitted to the Court in the application. Indeed, the prior statement of State A was so lacking in particularity that it could not be known what legal claim it was making, or whether it was even making a legal claim at all, rather than a political statement. If State B could not know what claim State A was making, then State B’s response could hardly be a positive opposition to any claim.²¹

25. Contrary to what The Gambia suggests, Myanmar does not contend that the applicant must “fully develop its factual and legal claims ... before it seizes the Court”.²² Rather, it is only a minimum degree of particularity that is required.

26. What is this minimum degree? Essentially, the positions of the parties have to be stated with enough particularity to make it possible to determine that

the first three requirements I have referred to are satisfied. In cases where the dispute is said to be manifested by the respondent’s silence to a claim made by the applicant, then of course it is the applicant’s claim that must be examined. Is it stated with sufficient particularity to establish that it is indeed a legal claim rather than, say, a political statement? And to establish that it has the same subject matter as the application subsequently submitted to the Court? And to enable the respondent meaningfully to respond to it, so that it can be established whether a response is a positive opposition to the particular claim made?²³

27. The required degree of particularity must also be a question of substance, and not of form. This too may vary according to the circumstances of the case.

28. Greater particularity may be required, for instance, if a party relies on its statements made in multilateral fora.²⁴ Thus, in the Marshall Islands cases, the Court found that no dispute could be inferred from a statement made by the applicant in a multilateral setting, given that statement’s “very general content and the context in which it was made”.²⁵

29. Even greater care may be needed if reliance is placed, not on a party’s statements in multilateral fora, but on its voting record on resolutions. The Court has noted that a State’s vote on a resolution is not of itself indicative of its position on every proposition in the resolution, let alone of the existence of a legal dispute between it and a particular other State.²⁶

30. Myanmar’s written pleadings thus give examples of General Assembly resolutions which state in general language that there have been “violations and abuses of human rights” in a particular State, and which call upon that State “to end immediately ... all violations of international law”.²⁷ Resolutions such as these, as a matter of form, specifically allege violations of international law by a particular State. However, in substance, they are insufficiently precise to establish that a specific legal claim is being made by any given State voting in favour of the resolution against the State that is the subject of the resolution. The latter’s silence in the face of such a resolution

would not mean that there is a legal dispute between it and every State voting for the resolution.

31. Another context where greater particularity is needed is the case of statements by a State that itself is not specially affected by breaches of international law referred to in its statement. A State that is not itself specially affected may well express a view that a State that is involved in the situation has breached norms of international law, including norms of an erga omnes or erga omnes partes character. But in the absence of a sufficiently clearly expressed intention, it cannot be assumed that the non-specially affected State is thereby asserting a specific legal claim of its own, much less assumed what that legal claim might be.²⁸ To demonstrate this point, the written pleadings give further examples of a motion of the Canadian House of Commons and a statement of the Canadian Minister for Foreign Affairs.²⁹ Like the General Assembly resolutions I have referred to, these are political statements, not legal claims.³⁰

32. In short, this fourth requirement is inherently necessary and is reflected in existing jurisprudence.

The circumstances of this case

Madam President, Members of the Court,

33. I turn, then, to the circumstances of this case.

34. The focus, in this case, is on a note verbale sent by The Gambia to Myanmar on 11 October 2019, and Myanmar’s lack of response thereto.

35. The Gambia also relies on various other prior resolutions, statements and silences preceding this note verbale, but these other matters are addressed comprehensively in the written pleadings,³¹ and I need only deal with them briefly today. None of these other matters, singly or collectively, could conceivably establish the existence of a dispute between The Gambia and Myanmar concerning alleged breaches of the Genocide Convention.

36. First, The Gambia relies on certain declarations and resolutions of the OIC.³² None of these are statements by The

Gambia, much fewer statements of the Executive government of The Gambia. None of them clearly alleges that Myanmar bears State responsibility for a breach of the Genocide Convention.³³ Indeed, the last of these OIC documents, adopted by the OIC’s supreme organ in May 2019, calls for a case to be brought before this Court on behalf of the OIC, yet contains no reference to genocide at all. While we now know that the OIC Committee envisaged as early as February 2019 that this case would be brought under the Genocide Convention, this was not known to Myanmar at the time and was not apparent from a reading of these OIC documents.

37. Secondly, The Gambia relies on reports of the United Nations Fact-finding Mission, the “FFM”.³⁴ These FFM reports are not statements by The Gambia, and there is nothing to suggest that the FFM was authorized to speak on behalf of The Gambia or was purporting to do so.

38. Thirdly, The Gambia relies on two statements made by The Gambia at the General Assembly,³⁵ neither of which contains any reference to the Genocide Convention and neither of which is addressed to Myanmar.

39. Fourthly, The Gambia relies on silences by Myanmar in the face of an OIC resolution and the FFM reports.³⁶ Obviously, if the resolution and reports did not amount to legal claims by The Gambia vis-à-vis Myanmar, then Myanmar’s silence was no positive opposition to any such claims.

40. Finally, The Gambia relies on three statements of Myanmar,³⁷ none of which mentions the Genocide Convention.

41. None of these earlier matters establishes a dispute. We are thus left with the October 2019 note verbale, which is found in volume IV of the preliminary objections, at Annex 121, page 850.

42. I ask the Court to look at this two-page document. Its brevity and vagueness are striking.

43. What facts does it refer to? None at all. It refers generally to “the findings of the UN [FFM]”, but does not say what those finding are. It quotes an OIC

SEE PAGE-6

20. POM, paras. 524-552.
21. POM, paras. 528-533.
22. WOG, para. 5.39.
23. POM, paras. 538-552.
24. POM, paras. 573-574.
25. Obligations concerning Negotiations relating to Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and to Nuclear Disarmament (Marshall Islands v. India), Jurisdiction and Admissibility, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2016, p. 255, pp. 273-275, paras. 44-48; Obligations concerning Negotiations relating to Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and to Nuclear Disarmament (Marshall Islands v. Pakistan), Jurisdiction and Admissibility, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2016, p. 552, pp. 569-571, paras. 45-48; Obligations concerning Negotiations relating to Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and to Nuclear Disarmament (Marshall Islands v. United Kingdom), Preliminary Objections, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2016, p. 833, pp. 852-854, paras. 48-52.
26. Obligations concerning Negotiations relating to Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and to Nuclear Disarmament (Marshall Islands v. India), Jurisdiction and Admissibility, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2016, p. 255, p. 276, para. 53; Obligations

concerning Negotiations relating to Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and to Nuclear Disarmament (Marshall Islands v. Pakistan), Jurisdiction and Admissibility, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2016, p. 552, p. 572, para. 53; Obligations concerning Negotiations relating to Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and to Nuclear Disarmament (Marshall Islands v. United Kingdom), Preliminary Objections, Judgment, I.C.J. Reports 2016, p. 833, p. 855, para. 56.
27. POM, paras. 556-559.
28. POM, paras. 490-491.
29. POM, paras. 560-564.
30. POM, paras. 562-565.
31. POM, paras. 578-585.
32. POM, paras. 587-600, 625-638, 639-651 and 653-661.
33. POM, paras. 581-582.
34. POM, paras. 610-620, 662-670 and 671-675.
35. POM, paras. 621-624 and 676-679.
36. POM, para. 652 and WOG, paras. 5.10 final sentence and 5.15 final sentence.
37. POM, paras. 601-609 and 680-685; WOG, para. 5.13.

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resolution referring to “the practice of genocide against Rohingya Muslims”, again without specifying any facts.

44. In the note verbale, The Gambia claims no knowledge of its own of the facts. It refers merely to FFM reports, saying The Gambia is “deeply troubled” by these. It finds the FFM reports to be “well supported by the evidence and highly credible”, but with no suggestion that The Gambia had access to, or could itself evaluate the FFM’s evidence.

45. It refers generally to “related resolutions” of the OIC without specifying which resolutions, apart from one that it quotes.

46. It refers to Myanmar’s “denial”, without specifying the statements said to constitute such denials.

47. As to norms of international law, it refers generally to “the Genocide Convention and customary international law”, or to “International Law and Human Rights covenants”. It does not specify which conventions it refers to other than the Genocide Convention, or which norms of customary international law, or which provisions of the Genocide Convention.

48. Ultimately, there is not even any positive allegation of The Gambia’s own that Myanmar is in breach of international law. Having referred to the FFM reports and OIC resolutions, the final paragraph says simply that The Gambia “understands” Myanmar to be in breach of international law. That final paragraph then ends with a hortatory call for Myanmar to comply with its obligations, reflecting a similar call in an OIC resolution that it quotes.

49. In short, the language of this document is similar to that in the General Assembly resolutions, or the motion of the Canadian House of Commons and statement of the Canadian Foreign Minister, which I have given as examples of documents that are not legal claims.

50. Having considered its terms, I then ask the Court to consider the context in which the note verbale was sent.

51. At the time it was sent, eight months

had elapsed since the OIC Committee proposed bringing this case.³⁸

52. At the time it was sent, seven and four months had elapsed respectively since the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers and Islamic Summit had resolved that this case should be brought on behalf of the OIC.

53. Three months had already elapsed since The Gambia agreed to be the applicant State.

54. Two weeks had elapsed since The Gambia had announced to the General Assembly that it would “lead concerted efforts” to bring this Court case on behalf of the OIC.

55. And a week had already passed since The Gambia instructed its legal representatives for this case.

56. This was not a case where there was first a dispute between the parties, followed by a decision of one of them to submit that dispute to the Court. What happened here was the reverse. First, a decision was taken to bring this case before the Court. Only months later did The Gambia then take steps to generate the necessary dispute. At the time it was decided to bring this case, the purpose for doing so was not to settle a dispute, as there was at the time no dispute. The decision to bring the case was therefore not for the purpose for which the Court’s contentious jurisdiction is made available to States, namely dispute settlement. For that reason alone, the application must be inadmissible.

57. Three further points about the circumstances should be noted.

58. First, there were no prior bilateral dealings between the parties against which the note verbale could be read and understood. The Gambia had been engaging for months with the OIC and its other Member States on preparations for this case, but not with Myanmar. For Myanmar, these were The Gambia’s opening words on the matter.³⁹

59. Secondly, if the note verbale had wanted to make a specific legal claim on behalf of The Gambia against My-

anmar, it could easily have done so. At the time it was sent, months had passed since the decision to bring this case, and The Gambia’s legal representatives had already been appointed. Shortly after it was sent, The Gambia submitted its application instituting proceedings, which does identify specific acts and specific provisions of the Genocide Convention said to be breached. It seems it was a conscious choice to send so brief a note verbale.

60. Thirdly, the note verbale contains no reference to the intention to bring this Court case. There may well be no general requirement for an applicant to give advance notice of such intention to a respondent, but given that here the intention had existed for months, the failure to mention it is striking. This suggests, if anything, that the note verbale is not yet making a specific legal claim by The Gambia.

61. Given the wording and circumstances of this document, should Myanmar at the time have understood it as making a specific legal claim calling for a response? It was a two-page note from a State not specially affected and not directly involved in the events, and which had not previously engaged with Myanmar in relation to the matter. It specified no facts and was vague and general about the legal norms said to be violated. It contained no reference to potential Court proceedings, or to The Gambia’s role in the OIC initiative. It merely referred to what was stated in FFM reports and OIC resolutions and called upon Myanmar in a general way to comply with its legal obligations.

62. No specific legal claim was made that Myanmar could meaningfully take a position on. This was not a document that called for a response. Indeed, the note verbale itself does not even request a response or imply that one was expected.

63. Furthermore, even if a response was called for; quod non, it cannot be said that a response was called for within a month. It had taken 8 months from the OIC Com-

mittee proposal for The Gambia to send these 2 pages. How can Myanmar reasonably have been required to respond to such broad and unparticularized claims within one month, especially when The Gambia indicated no timeframe for an expected response?

64. The inference can be drawn that The Gambia expected no response. At the time the note verbale was sent, The Gambia presumably already knew that it would submit its application exactly a month later, on 11 November 2019. The intention from the outset was presumably that the note verbale, containing references to breaches by Myanmar of international law, and the expected lack of any response to it within a month, would, in form, establish the existence of the necessary dispute.

65. However, there was no dispute in substance, and that is what is required. The note verbale was so general and lacking in specificity that it is not possible to determine that it was making any legal claim at all, or if so, exactly what legal claim. It identified no facts and made unspecified references to human rights covenants and customary international law. It is impossible to determine whether its wording had in mind all of the matters subsequently included in the application. It could have expressly stated that The Gambia was making a legal claim against Myanmar, but it did not.⁴⁰ It did not call for a response, but even if it did, it did not call for a response within a month. Therefore, even if it did advance a legal claim, quod non, no positive opposition can be inferred from Myanmar’s failure to respond to it by 11 November 2019.

66. For these reasons, the requirement of a prior dispute is not met.

Madam President, Members of the Court,

67. This concludes my presentation on the fourth preliminary objection and brings to an end Myanmar’s first round of oral arguments. I thank you for your kind attention.

38. WOG, para. 5.12.

39. POM, paras. 693 and 704.

40. POM, paras. 571-572.

Tender invites for toilet and toll-gate at nearly 50 markets in Ygn

THE Yangon City Development Committee-YCDC invited a tender for toilet and toll-gate at nearly 50 markets in Yangon City, it is learnt.

These projects are under the supervision of YCDC’s Markets & Commodities Center Department and they invited closed tender to lease these projects for the 2022-23 financial year (FY).

The businesses include entrances gates located in

specific markets, including Pazundaung, Mingala Taungnyunt poultry, Thiri Yadanar wholesale, Yadanar Thiri, Yadanar Theingi, Hledan, Sanyapa Ngamoeyeik, Mingalar, Thiri Mingalar, South Okkalapa-Padamya and Insein.

Similarly, the businesses contains charges for public toilets in Bominyaung market, Dagon Myothit (North)-5 market, the Dagon Myothit (North)-Pinlon market, Dagon

Myothit (North)-49 market, Dagon Myothit (North)-50 ward market, the San Yeik Nyein market, Dagon Myothit (South)-1 market, the Kaytumati market, the Min Ye Kaung Pon market, the Yuzana garden city mart market, Shwepaukkan market, the Nwetharki market, the Myananda market, the North Okkala (Hta) market, the North Okkala (Gagyi) market, the Wabargi market,

the Yazathingyan market, the Htanthonbin market, the Bogyoke Aung San market, the Myaynigon plaza, the 38th road plaza, the Bocho market, the Seikkyi Kanaungto market, the Dala market, the Myitta Nyunt market, the Insein outdoor market, the Insein poultry market, the Nantthagon market, the Thanlwin market, the Gandama duty free market, the Shan Chaung market, the Aung Thuka market, the

Tun Thiri market, the Shwe Yin Aye market, the Thirimala market, the Shwepyitha-10 ward market and the Thankuchan market.

Besides these 50 markets, the YCDC’s Markets & Commodities Centre Department invited tenders to collect the vehicle entrance gate fees, parking fees, public bathroom fees and rent the YCDC-owned buildings. — Ko Naing/GNLM

Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn replies to queries raised by reporters from South China Morning Post from China, Nikkei Asian News, Kyodo News, TBS and Asahi Shimbun from Japan

(CONTINUED FROM YESTERDAY)

The reporter of Nikkei Asian News asked about the date to convene the forthcoming election, and the Union minister replied that the State Administration Council temporarily assumed the State responsibilities by declaring the State of Emergency under Section 417 of the Constitution (2008) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Depending on the peace and stability of the nation, the general elections will be held under Section 429 of the Constitution (2008). Current authorities discharging the State duties at different levels in accord with the section 428 shall discharge their duties until the legislative, executive and judicial bodies have been formed under Section 430 of the Constitution. Officials from relevant departments will systematically hand over their duties and functions in accord with the Constitution (2008).

Currently, the state of emergency will be politically extended for six more months



The correspondent from Nikkei Asian News.

under Section 425 of the Constitution. During the period, special emphasis will be placed on peace and stability of the State and the people. Only when the entire people participate in the peaceful and stable measures will the country reach the right track of genuine, disciplined multiparty democratic system the people aspire.

As regards a question on Tatmadaw's capability of restoring the peace in Myanmar, the Union minister said that the successive governments strived for restoration of the peace process. The peace coordination committee of the Tatmadaw was extended to seven members, up from four on 1 February 2021. It showed the concept of the Tatmadaw on the important role of perpetual peace in building the Union based on democracy and federalism.

So, Announcement No 1/2022 was issued to extend an invitation on 6 February 2022 to perpetual peace. The invitation did not restrict the topics in the peace talks in advance to freely exchange their discussions.

In conjunction with the statement, ethnic armed organizations were invited to attend the Diamond Jubilee Union Day ceremony. The Tatmadaw issued some 20 statements from 2018 to February 2022 for ensuring the perpetual peace.

Priority is given to perform vaccination to EAOs. If so, it can be seen that the Tatmadaw is striving for ensuring per-



MoI Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn.

petual peace across the nation in accord with the NCA agreements as much as possible. On the other hand, the restoration of perpetual peace for the whole nation is the keenest aspiration of the Tatmadaw. Hence, the Tatmadaw will make utmost for strengthening the peace and sovereignty in 2022.

In connection with the question about the statue of Myanmar at Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership-RCEP, the Union Minister said foreign companies returned home during the COVID-19 period. They re-entered Myanmar as of May 2021. So, the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations recommended more than 3,200 companies and 9,010 foreigners for business visas and arranged relief flights. Some companies left the country due to pressure from big countries and some new companies entered the country.

During the period from 1 February 2021 to 31 January 2022, 12 investment sectors covered 44 businesses with US\$3,823.015 million including US\$3,062.138 million in the electricity sector, US\$237.564 million in other service sectors and US\$199.894 million in the industrial sector. During the same period, 14 countries put US\$3,823.015 million in Myanmar, comprising the United Kingdom US\$2,504.435 million, Japan US\$516.429 million and Singapore US\$442.202 million.

Currently, the government addresses the problems of tax the investors face, help them take out money from the banks quickly, arrange endorsements for investors to take relief flights and implement the DICA online solution-DOSo system for solving the difficulties of investors. Moreover, the investment monitoring software phase-1 is being developed.

The investor targeting campaign is being arranged for arrivals of investors in Myanmar. According to the plan, appropriate friendly countries including China and Russia will be persuaded into the campaign.

Firm guarantees are given to inves-

tors and their benefits meeting the international standards. Myanmar Economic Recovery Plan (MERP) comprising 10 work programmes, 30 missions, 165 outcomes and 430 work processes is being implemented. The MERP will focus on the guarantee, economic standards of international, security and other relaxation for international investors. Hence, foreign investors are deeply invited to Myanmar without believing in the exaggerated information.

The reporter of Kyodo News of Japan raised the question of how to deal with the allegation from The Gambia for ICJ hearings. The Union Minister said Gambia accused Myanmar of violating the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crime of Genocide at the ICJ on 11 November 2019. Regarding the argument of Gambia, the Court lacks jurisdiction and Gambia does not have the right to launch the case at the Court. Myanmar submitted the first preliminary objection to the International Court of Justice on 20 January 2021. The hearings related to the objection of Myanmar are being held at the court from 21 to 28 February 2022 at the Peace Palace of The Hague, the Neth-



The correspondent of Kyodo News.

erlands. The first round of oral argument was attended by Myanmar Agent Union Minister for International Cooperation U Ko Ko Hlaing and Alternate Agent Union Minister for Legal Affairs Attorney-General of the Union Dr Thida Oo. Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing delivered an opening speech. Then, international lawyers representing Myanmar presented Myanmar's

first preliminary objection at the court.

The second round of oral argument of Myanmar was held on 26 February, and the first round of oral argument of Gambia will be held on 28 February.

The reporter of Asahi Shimbun of Japan said she knew NUG would recognize Rohingyas as citizens. She asked about the attitude of the State Administration Council over the citizenship process of Rohingyas. The Union Minister responded that the name of Rohingya was never included in the records of the Ministry of Immigration and Population, on the list of ethnics and tribes collected by the British government in the pre-independence era, censuses enumerated in 1881, 1891, 1921 and 1931, population and household lists (first phase) collected in 1953-1954, the censuses collected in 1973, 1983 and 2014. Such a name was not expressed in the census in the British colonial era and Gazettes in the British era.

Those wishing to re-enter Myanmar from another country strictly demand recognition for them as Rohingyas but Bengalis. The Ministry of Immigration and Population identifies ethnics as naturalized citizens and non-ethnics as the legalized citizens under the 1982 Myanmar Citizenship Law. NV card is issued to those who applied for citizenship without holding any IDs. The NV cardholders have the right to apply for the decisions to legalized citizens,



The correspondent from Asahi Shimbun.

associate citizens and naturalized citizens. NV cards are issued to Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Bengali, Gurkha, Kokang, Kholon Leshaw and Monewun people legally residing in Myanmar without any IDs.

The reporter asked that NUG requested ICJ to have the rights to solve the issue, representing Myanmar. Now, the delegations representing the government of the State Administration Council are attending the hearings of ICJ. She asked, "Will their attendance at the ICJ be recognition of the international community over the SAC as the legal government of Myanmar?" The Union minister as the delegations of a country was invited to the hearings of ICJ due to the fact that the government of such country might be assumed as the capability for practically addressing the current issues, it is no (no) doubt at all that the State Administration Council is legal government of Myanmar. — MNA

Occupy market share with Myanmar's quality seeds

THE government is implementing the projects to ensure food sufficiency, supply of nutritious foods, food safety and increased income for farmers.

As such, the use of quality strains of crops and plans of high per-acre yield are crucial for operating the agricultural sector. It is necessary to carry out the systematic soil preparations, broadcasting of chemical fertilizers and natural fertilizers such as cow dung and humus for feeding nutrition to the plants.

That's why seed production organizations and companies need to comply with the existing laws, rules and regulations related to seed production for the long-term existence of their operation and distribution of quality seeds to the growers.

In this regard, the reliable statistics showed that 4,552 acres of farmlands in Magway, Mandalay and Sagaing regions and Nay Pyi Taw produce quality seeds of edible oil crops and pulses and beans as well as 8,048 acres of farmlands in regions and states, quality seeds of paddy last year.

As a Myanmar saying goes: "No good seed can thrive sprout", quality seed production is a great business with investments not only for meeting local demand of seed requirements but only for exporting quality seeds to the foreign market so as to occupy the share of the international market.

As such, officials from relevant departments, experts and businesses are to join hands in unison to operate the seeds production industries for improvement of the seed sector; by focusing on the interests of the State and the local farmers.

That's why seed production organizations and companies need to comply with the existing laws, rules and regulations related to seed production for the long-term existence of their operation and distribution of quality seeds to the growers.

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Europe: Second Smallest Continent on Earth

EUROPE is the second smallest continent of the Earth's continents and occupies a little less than seven per cent of its total land area. Europe is the land for forest and farm fields. It homed to around seven hundred and forty-five million people or roughly 11 per cent of the Earth's total population. The European continent consists of the westernmost portion of a huge landmass known as Eurasia which is shared by the continent of Asia.

The mainland of Europe is bordered to the south by the Mediterranean Sea, the Black Sea, and the Caspian Sea. It is bordered by the Arctic Ocean to the north and by the Atlantic Ocean to the west. Europe's long boundary with Asia is traditionally said to be made up of the Ural Mountains, Caucasus Mountains, and the Turkish Straits that meet the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. Several large islands such as Great Britain, Ireland Islands are considered to be part of Europe as well. Even far distance Greenland is linked culturally and politically to Europe. Historically European cultural influence worldwide has been quite great. This is due to the fact that hundred years ago certain powerful European nations carried out an intensive programme of war exploration that led to the colonization of far distant lands. Because of their colonies, many aspects of European culture including legal systems, languages, arts, architecture, and even ways of dress were introduced to countries all around the world.

Quality strains of crops are capable of resilience against pests, thirst, swamps and high head, benefiting the high per-acre yield of crops. If so, farmers can earn increased income for their families. Boosting the production of crops will have a chance for farmers to export surplus crops in food sufficiency to the international markets to earn income.

The government manages the smooth flow of procedures for the crops value chain starting from the production of quality seeds to the distribution, systematic storage, production of value-added products through modern technologies and exporting the products to the market.

To have a good crops value chain, local farmers need to choose the quality seeds of crops suitable for their regions and climatic conditions. Likewise, seed banks and quality seed production companies are responsible for the distribution of high-quality seeds of the crops to the farmers in the right way.

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By Than Htun
(MYANMAR GEOSCIENCES SOCIETY)



Political Map of Europe showing the European countries. SOURCE: THE NATIONS ONLINE PROJECT

the famous palace Alhambra and fortress and Granada Spain and flamenco dancing are found. In this region, Vatican City is the smallest country not only in Europe but in the entire world. It is located in the centre of Rome, the capital city of Italy, and its headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church and also the home of the Pope. In this region, romance and romantic languages are commonly spoken including French, Italian, and Spanish. Other languages like Greek, Albanian, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia are spoken. The climate in this area is very hot and dry in the summer and mild and wet in the winter. Wildlife in this area includes bears, wolves, wild pigs, and others.

Western Europe included Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Portugal. The region enjoys cool summers and cool winters. In this region, the romantic languages of Portuguese and French and their Germanic languages of Dutch-German and English are spoken. More tourists are visiting Europe than they are visiting all other six continents combined.

Landlocked Countries

Unfortunately, 15 European countries are landlocked (16 countries if Albania is considered). As the countries are being landlocked it reduced economic opportunities. Belarus and Moldova are the two

poorest countries in Europe. Switzerland has the second-highest GDP per capita in the world. It was one of the first European countries to industrialize and its banking industry has made it very rich.

Mountains

Geographically Europe's western and southern regions abound with mountainous and hilly terrain and most of these lands are heavily forested. The Alps stretched across eight different countries of the continent's most extensive tallest range of mountains. With the exception of the lower elevation mountain ranges of Scandinavia, Poland and Slovakia the majority of northern and eastern Europe consists of varied flat plains most of which are used for farming. Pyrenees Mountains form the boundary between France and Spain. This obstacle created cultural divergence causing a difference between the French and Spanish cultures. Italy and the top of the country Alps Mountains stretch across parts of French, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Slovenia. Mountains rise up to 15,000 feet. Mt. Blanc, in France, is the second-highest mountain in Europe at 15,774 feet. It was formed by convergent folding. To the east of the Alps, separated by the Dnieper River, are the Carpathian Mountains. They run to the countries of Slovakia east of Ukraine and Romania and are home to a diverse ecosystem in Europe. While hav-

ing 1/3 of Europe's plant species, these are not tall mountains. The Gerlachovsky stit in Slovakia is the tallest at 8,711 feet. There are two mountain ranges that define the boundary of Europe itself, Eastern Europe and Asia in Russia. The Ural Mountains stretch the Arctic Ocean to the Caspian Sea. Ural and Caucasus mountains divided Europe and Asia. Europe's tallest mountain, Mt Elbrus, is in the Caucasus Mountains of Russia.

Peninsulas

Europe is a Peninsula of Peninsulas. Some countries teach that Asia and Europe are one continent known as Eurasia and that Europe is a peninsula of Asia. There are six peninsulas in the European continent; Liberian Peninsula, Jutland Peninsula, Scandinavian Peninsula, Apennine Peninsula, Balkan Peninsula, and the Crimean Peninsula. Liberian Peninsula is made up of Spain and Portugal and the north Jutland Peninsula finds in Denmark. The Scandinavian Peninsula is the landmass situated in Norway and Sweden. Then down to the south Apennine Peninsula located in the Mediterranean in Italy. The Balkan Peninsula is in Greece. The Crimean Peninsula is lying into the Black Sea which Russia had taken it over.

Islands

Great Britain and Ireland make up the British Isles. Northwest Ireland is Iceland and its northwest is Greenland. Greenland, a territory of the European country Denmark, is geologically part of North America. In the Mediterranean, there are several islands. The Corsica island is part of France and to the south Sardinia Island which is a territory of Italy. Sicily Island is also the territory of Italy. Farther to the east Crete is the largest island in Greece, and the fifth largest one in the Mediterranean Sea. The remnants of brilliant civilizations, explore glorious beaches, impressive mountainscapes, fertile valleys, and steep gorges, and become part of the island's rich gastronomic culture. Crete is, after all, a small universe teeming with beauties and treasures.

Seas

The Mediterranean Sea is important to European trade with Africa and Asia for thousands of years and still today. The Adriatic Sea, east of Italy or the Alpine peninsula is important to the emer-

gence of the City of Venice. Greek and Turkey are also the birthplaces of the Aegean Sea which is a coast of the site of Minoans and Mycenaeans who preceded and bring Aegean Greek civilization to Ancient Greeks. The Black Sea is located east of the Aegean Sea and the Sea of Marmara is situated south of the Black Sea. The Crimean Peninsula in the Black Sea was the USSR/Russia's only major warm-water port. The Caspian Sea is the largest inland body of water in the world and it also has rich oil reserves.

Rivers

There are six significant rivers in Europe; the Thames River runs through London, England. Rhine River is very important to trade and flows through Germany. Tiber River is the warmest river in Europe and it flows through Rome in Italy. Danube River is the second-longest river in Europe and it flows from Germany into Eastern Europe. Dnieper River is the 4th longest river in Europe and it runs through Kyiv, Ukraine, and down to the Black Sea. The Volga River is the longest river in Europe. It is also called "Mississippi of the East" and it is important to trade in Russia and provide shipping access to interior Russia to the Caspian Sea.

Religions

Today the territory of the European Continent is divided up into 51 independent nations in which more than a hundred native languages are spoken. In Europe, almost all its governments are Democratic Republics or constitutional Monarchs. Christianity is by far the predominant faith in Europe and has profoundly influenced its arts and culture for well over a thousand years. Most of the countries in the southwestern part of Europe have deep roots in Roman Catholic churches which is Head Quarter in Rome in the Vatican City. While in northern Europe a large number of people are protestants. In the most eastern part of the continent, many belong to eastern Orthodox Catholic churches. A few European-spoken peninsula nations such as Albania seem to have a Muslim majority population.

References:

1. The Nations Online Project
2. Rueschhoff Teaches
3. Miacademy Learning channel

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Myanmar Gazette

Appointment of Head of Service Organization confirmed

The State Administration Council has confirmed the appointment of U Sein Win, Director-General of the Union Minister's Office of the Ministry of Health on the expiry of a one-year probationary period.



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Friday 25 February 2022)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 26 February, 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in upper Sagaing region and Kachin state, isolated in Taninthayi region and Chin state. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in lower Sagaing, Mandalay regions and (northern and eastern) Shan state and generally fair in the remaining regions and states.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be slight to moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (4-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of scattered rain or thundershowers in upper Sagaing, Taninthayi regions and Kachin state and isolated in Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26 February, 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26 February, 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26 February, 2022: Generally fair weather.

Bay of Bengal Condition

Issued at (14:00) hours M.S.T on 25-2-2022

According to the observations at (13:30) hrs M.S.T today, a low pressure area may form over Southeast Bay of Bengal and adjoining South Andaman Sea around (28.2.2022).

EARTHQUAKE NEWS

(Issued at 09:19 hour M.S.T.)

A Moderate earthquake of magnitude (6.0) Richter Scale with its epicenter outside Myanmar (northern Sumatram, Indonesia), latitude 0.26 °N, longitude 99.99°E, depth (10) kilometers, about (1170) miles southeast of Kaba-Aye seismological observatory was recorded at (08) hr (09) min (31) sec M.S.T on 25th February 2022.

The Global New Light of Myanmar

www.gnlm.com.mm

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Over 20 municipal enterprises in Aung Mingala terminal to be leased under tender system

OVER 20 municipal-owned enterprises in the Aungmingala highway bus terminal will be leased under the tender system, it is learnt.

The enterprises, to be granted for lease in the next 2022-2023 financial year, are collecting vehicle entrance fees at the Aungmingala highway bus terminal, parking fees for three car parking lots and five public toilets fees at the expressway.

Besides, some enterprises such as collecting three public toilets fees and vehicle entrance fees, one vehicle entrance fees and one resting place fees in the Dagon-Ayeya depot and highway terminal, collecting of one vehicle entrance fees and two public toilets fees at the Hlaing auto dealers camp, collecting of one vehicle entrance fees and one public toilet fees at the Thanthuma car dealer, collecting of one truck parking lot at Yangon west truck terminal, collecting of one car parking lot at Yangon east vehicle parking camp, collecting of one car driving training entrance and driving participating area and, public toilet fees at the Dagon Myothit (North) driving training camp will also be leased.

The Yangon City Development Committee-YCDC's Engineering Department (Road and Bridge) invited the tender to run its owned 23 enterprises from April 2022 to March 2023 in the next 2022-2023FY.

The tender's application was started selling on 18 February and the deadline for submission is on 15 March. The tender will be opened on 18 March, according to the announcement of the YCDC. — Ko Naing/GNLM

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

THE Ministry of Commerce is facilitating 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.

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

Four vehicles carrying 30 tonnes of masks were imported by one company via the Chinshwehaw trading zone yesterday.

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, consumer goods, vehicles, phone accessories confiscated



Confiscated commodities.

SUPERVISED by the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee, efforts are being made to take effective action against illegal trades across the country. On 24 February, combined teams led by the Ayeyawady Region Forest Department and the Regional Illegal Trade Eradication Special Task Force conducted inspections in Pathein Township and seized 29.9166 tonnes of illegal timbers (estimated value of K2,094,162) under the Forest Law.

Similarly, a Customs team on duty inspected at the Myanmar Industrial Port Container Inspection Station in Yangon and confiscated portable phone accessories (estimated value of K10,104,000) which were in excess of what was stated in the import declaration (ID) and action is taken under the Customs Law.

In addition, a Customs team on duty in Lashio, under the management of the Shan State Anti-Illegal Trade Special Task Force, conducted searches

according to a report near the Tangyan junction on the Mandalay-Lashio Union Highway and arrested three six-wheeled vehicles (estimated value of K36,000,000) carrying undocumented China-made consumer goods (estimated value of K113,003,500) under the Customs Law.

The departmental combined inspection team on duty at the Mayanchaung Permanent Checkpoint arrested two unregistered six-wheeled Mazda Titan vehicles (estimated value of K18,900,000) and action is taken under the Export/Import Law.

Moreover, a Customs team in Myeik, under the management of the Taninthayi Region Anti-illegal Trade Special Task Force, conducted inspections according to a report and confiscated ownerless 1,100 Thai-made cement bags (estimated value of K9,100,000) to be transported at the Pho La Min jetty at the special port across the Kyweku-Kyaukpaya bridge. Action is taken under the Customs Law.

On 25 February, inspection teams led by the Myanmar Police Force and managed by the Sagaing Region Anti-Illegal Trade Special Task Force conducted inspections in Kanbalu Township and arrested an unregistered vehicle (estimated value of K2,000,000) under the Export/Import Law.

Similarly, 4.3436 tonnes of illegal timbers (estimated value of K783,820) were seized in the Bago District Forest Reserve and action is taken under the Forest Law.

As a result, a total of 10 arrests (estimated value of K191,985,482) were made on 24 and 25 February, according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee. — MNA

Illegal drugs seized in townships across Myanmar

COMBINED teams consisting of members of the Anti-Illegal Police Force seized 2.32 kilogrammes of opium while conducting a search in the vehicle (Landcruiser) accompanied by four people at the 21st-mile combined checkpoint in Lwaikhaw village, Myitkyina Township on 23 February.

At around noon, on 23 February, a combined team consisting of members of the Mandalay Region Police Force searched the house of Kyaw Thiha Soe who lived in Konetanlay village, NanOolwin village-tract, Patheingyi Township, and confiscated 1,400 stimulant tablets, 0.005 kilogramme of opium, 2.4 kilogrammes of marijuana, 8.3 kilogramme of opium extract, 0.25 kilogrammes of ICE and a Mitsubishi Charlot vehicle from the compound.

On the same day, a combined team consisting of members of the Anti-illegal Drug Force arrested Thein Tun (a) Ba Chan (a) Jame and Nyan Lin Aung (a) Nyan Gyi with 2,070 stimulant tablets and a Toyota Caldina during a search in the house of Thein Tun on Moe-makha road, No (46) ward, Dagon Myothit (North) Township.

In the evening, the combined team searched the house of Kyi Min Thu (a) Kyi Min at No 151, Marga street, No. (40) ward, Dagon Myothit (North) and confiscated 7,000 stimulant tablets and four kilogrammes of marijuana. It is reported that action is being taken against the arrested suspects under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, according to MPF. — MNA

According to the investigation, the police searched the house of Bran Tawng on Shwe Road, Tatkon ward, Myitkyina at 4:30 pm, and confiscated 0.93 kilogramme of heroin, 900 stimulant tablets and K3 million.

On 24 February, the police searched the house of Aung Ko Ko on Nanyinchaung road, Nanyin ward, Moekaung, at around 1 pm and arrested him and his wife together with 1,720 stimulant tablets and K370,000. On the same day, the police searched the house of Saw Laik Htunt in Aung Theikdi ward, Tharmanya village, Hpa-

NyaungU growers sell chillies at different prices depending on strains

THE growers from Lat-panchaypaw village-tract in NyaungU township, Mandalay region are growing chillies on a large scale. Now, the growers are harvesting the chilli and selling them at different prices depending on the strains of chilli, said U Min Nyo from Ywathitgon village, Lat-panchaypaw village-tract.

The chilli growers from NyaungU township are running their farming businesses using underground water and hope to fetch better prices. This year, the chilli plantation is being grown successfully and yielded abundantly. But the chilli price varies depending on the types of chilli species.

“The chilli growers from NyaungU township grow two



The chilli growers from NyaungU township are running their farming businesses using underground water and hope to fetch better prices. This year, the chilli plantation is being grown successfully and yielded abundantly.

kinds of red arrow brand Aukswethi and red arrow brand Moe Htaung chilli species. During the harvested

season, the red arrow brand Aukswethi is sold for K600 per

viss while red arrow brand Moe Htaung is priced at K1,400 per viss,” said Daw Hnin Si, a chilli grower.

The chillies are grown within an enclosed space. After 45 days, the chillies are transplanted to the croplands and it is needed to put the water into the farms every five days. After one and a half months of transplanting into the fields, the chillies bloom and bear fruits. We have to hire labourers to pick up the chilli and it cost K3,000 per person for the whole day. The yielded chillies are sold at Pakokku, NyaungU, Myingyan and Mandalay markets. The chillies’ traders come and buy in the market. The price is different between Moe Htaung chilli and Aukswethi chilli, the chilli growers clarified. — Ko Htein (KPD)/GNLM

Agricultural export value contracts by \$576 mln as of 11 Feb



The agro exports topped \$2.14 billion in the corresponding period of the 2020-2021FY.

THE value of agricultural exports shrank to US\$1.56 billion as of 11 February in the current mini-budget period (Oct 2021-March 2022), indicating a significant drop of \$576.9 million as against the year-ago period, as per the statistic of the Ministry of Commerce.

The agro exports topped \$2.14 billion in the corresponding period of the 2020-2021FY.

Following the closure of Sino-Myanmar border posts triggered by COVID-19 impacts and changes in China’s Customs regulations, the export sees a drastic drop in the agriculture sector this year.

At present, some border posts are operating trade activities on a trial run.

Myanmar agro products are primarily exported to China, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka.

The country requires specific export plans for each agro product, as they are currently exported to external markets based upon supply and demand. The G-to-G pact also ensures a strong market for the farmers.

Contract farming systems, involvement of regional and state agriculture departments,

exporters, traders, and some grower groups, are required to meet production targets, the Agriculture Department stated.

The Commerce Ministry is endeavouring to help farmers deal with challenges such as high input costs, procurement of pedigree seeds, high cultivation costs, and erratic weather conditions.

The agricultural exports jumped to US\$4.6 billion in the last financial year 2020-2021, despite the downward trend in other export groups. — KK/GNLM

Kyaukse grows 8,485 acres of winter edible oil crops

KYAUKSE township is mainly growing winter edible oil crops such as peanut, sesame and sunflower crops in 2021-22 financial year to ensure sufficient supply for domestic consumption. So far, about 8,485 acres of edible oil crops were cultivated, according to the Township Department of Agriculture Land Management and Statistics.

The peanut crop is grown about 30 acres in station 1, 80 acres in station 2, 30 acres in station 2, five acres in station 6, 20 acres in station 11 and 167 acres in station 12. The sesame crop is grown about 81 acres in station 6, 780 acres in station 8, 287 acres in station 11 and 1,264 acres

in station 12. The sunflower crop is grown about 647 acres in station 1, 367 acres in station 2, 445 acres in station 4, 181 acres in station 5, 150 acres in station 6, 1,836 acres in station 8, 262 acres in station 9, 608 acres in station 10, 446 acres in station 11 and 819 acres in station 12.

Kyaukse township targeted to cultivate a total of 11,607 acres of winter crops, including 297 acres of peanut, 5,135 acres of sesame and 6,175 acres of sunflower.

Staff from the Township Agriculture Department are providing technical support to improve the winter crops yield. — Thet Maung (Kyaukse)/GNLM



Kyaukse township targeted to cultivate a total of 11,607 acres of winter crops, including 297 acres of peanut, 5,135 acres of sesame and 6,175 acres of sunflower.

NEWS
IN BRIEFBitcoin price drops
after Russia attacks
Ukraine

BITCOIN plummeted below \$35,000 early Thursday after Russian President Vladimir Putin announced a military campaign in Ukraine's Donbas region.

According to CoinMarketCap, Bitcoin was trading at \$34,969 as of 1:22 am ET. This is a drop of more than 8% from the previous day. Over the week-end, the world's most valuable cryptocurrency plummeted below \$40,000, and it has continued to fall as the Ukraine crisis worsens. Due to geopolitical concerns, the threat of interest rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve, and restrictions imposed by several major governments on digital assets, the currency has lost about half its value since its November peak of \$68,990.—AFP ■

Japan to sanction
chip exports to
Russia over Ukraine

JAPAN will impose sanctions on Russia targeting semiconductor exports and financial institutions, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Friday after G7 leaders agreed to punish Moscow economically for invading Ukraine.

The announcement came after Russian President Vladimir Putin unleashed a full-scale ground invasion and air assault on Thursday, with deadly battles reaching the outskirts of Kyiv.

Kishida said the world's third-largest economy planned "asset freezes and the suspension of visa issuance for Russian individuals and organizations" as well as asset freezes "targeting Russian financial institutions". "Thirdly, we will sanction exports to Russian military-related organizations, and exports to Russia of general-purpose goods such as semiconductors and items on a restricted list based on international agreements," he told reporters.

Kishida did not detail the scale of the sanctions or which individuals and institutions would be targeted. Semiconductors are essential components in products from cars to gaming consoles, and are in short supply worldwide.—AFP ■

IMF, World Bank chiefs warn of global
impacts from Ukraine war

THE leaders of the World Bank and IMF signalled Thursday they were ready to help Ukraine, while warning that Russia's invasion will have repercussions for the global economic recovery.

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said she was "deeply concerned" about the fighting's impact on the people of Ukraine, and cautioned in a tweet that the conflict "adds significant economic risk for the region & the world".

The International Monetary Fund continues to assess the economic impact, but will "stand ready to support our members as needed", she said.

The Washington-based crisis lender is in the process of deploying \$2.2 billion in assistance to Ukraine under a loan programme set to end in June.

Georgieva has said the fund could provide aid to other countries impacted by any spillover effects of the conflict, if needed.

World Bank President David Malpass said in a statement the Washington-based development lender "is horrified by the shocking violence and loss of life," and warned that "the devastating developments in Ukraine will have far-reaching economic and social impacts."

"We stand ready to provide immediate support to Ukraine and are preparing options for such support, including fast-disbursing financing," Malpass said, adding that the World Bank and IMF were coordinating to monitor the impacts of the Russian aggression.

The snowballing conflict already has sent oil prices soaring



The current crisis in Ukraine, in addition to threatening gas supplies to Europe and regional security, is wreaking havoc on the global economy. Dow Jones opens in New York. **PHOTO: AFP**

to their highest level since 2014, adding to worrying global inflation pressures.

In January, the IMF cut its world GDP forecast for 2022 to

4.4 per cent, half a point lower than its previous estimate in October, due to "impediments" caused by the latest coronavirus outbreak.—AFP ■

European stocks plunge, oil tops \$100 as
Russia invades Ukraine

Global oil prices rose to above \$100 a barrel on Thursday after Russia launched an invasion of Ukraine. **PHOTO: AFP**

RUSSIA'S invasion of Ukraine sent oil prices above \$100 a barrel and pummeled European equities on Thursday, while Wall

Street stocks finished solidly higher after rebounding during the session.

Both Frankfurt and Paris

shed as much as five per cent during a brutal round of trading, as investors fled risky equities, while haven investment gold rose to over \$1,923 per ounce.

"Russia's latest wave of aggression against Ukraine put a darker cloud over the global economy as higher oil threatens to exacerbate inflation risks," Joe Manimbo of Western Union Business Solutions said. "The crisis atmosphere in Eastern Europe, meanwhile, could thrust central banks back into support mode if stocks continue to falter."

After weeks of warnings from the United States and other powers, Russian Presi-

dent Vladimir Putin ordered a wide-ranging offensive into its neighbour, sparking fury from world leaders and new sanctions from the United States and its allies. In reaction, oil rocketed, with European benchmark Brent prices briefly cruising past \$105 per barrel for the first time since 2014, while aluminium and wheat surged to record peaks on fears output from major exporter Russia would be disrupted.

"The latest twist in the Russia-Ukraine crisis is likely to keep commodity prices elevated over the coming weeks and months," analysts at Capital Economics said.—AFP ■

Aluminium price hits record high on Ukraine attack

ALUMINIUM on Thursday hit a record-high price after key producer Russia launched a military attack on neighbouring Ukraine.

The industrial lightweight metal jumped as high as \$3,382.50 per tonne, beating the previous peak of \$3,380.15 reached in July 2008 during the global financial crisis.

Aluminium, used in a variety of items including drinks cans and aircraft components, later pulled back to \$3,372.50 per tonne on the London Metal Exchange.

"The rise of the aluminium price was to be expected once Russia attacked Ukraine," Commerzbank analyst Daniel Briesemann told AFP.

"Market participants clearly fear that aluminium supply from Russia will be affected in case of severe sanctions by the West and — probably — retaliatory measures by Russia."

The base metal was already trading at elevated levels owing to stretched global supplies of the base metal, particularly from China.—AFP ■



Aluminium rallied to a record in London, exceeding its 2008 peak, as the deepening Ukraine crisis added to supply risks in a market already seeing critical shortages of the most widely-used base metal. **PHOTO: AFP**

Engines giant Rolls-Royce back in profit, seeks CEO

ROLLS-ROYCE, the British maker of aircraft engines, announced Thursday a return to annual profit in 2021 after it slashed costs, adding that its long-serving chief executive would step down.

Rolls posted net profit of £120 million (\$162 million, 144 million euros) last year, compared with a loss after tax totalling £3.2 billion in 2020.

That year it axed thousands of jobs and launched a major divestment programme to navigate damaging pandemic fallout across the aviation industry.

Share price crash

Rolls on Thursday said that Warren East would leave his role as CEO at the end of 2022 after eight years in the top role.

“As a result, the board will now launch a thorough and extensive search for his successor,” a statement said.

The announcement of his departure, coupled with Russia’s military attack on neighbouring Ukraine, sent shares in Rolls tumbling 14 per cent in early London trading.

“Even though markets were already in a bad mood because of... Ukraine, shares in Rolls-Royce fell by even greater magnitude as investors reacted really badly to the resignation of CEO Warren East,” noted Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell.—AFP ■



A Rolls-Royce Trent 500 engine on display at the Dubai Airshow in 2019. The company relies on aerospace for just over half of its annual revenues. **PHOTO: AFP**

China expects robust rigid housing demand, aims to secure supply

CHINA expects robust rigid demand for housing, the country’s housing regulator said Thursday, with demand in the sector shored up by an influx of migrants to urban areas and people’s desire for better housing.

Over 11 million new jobs are created in urban areas every year, one factor that has generated rigid demand for housing in the country, Wang Menghui, minister of housing and urban-rural development, told a press conference. China is still in the stage of rapid urbanization, as indicated by the increase in population and the number of families in urban areas, Wang noted. Official data shows that the number of permanent urban residents in China had risen to 64.72 per cent of its population by the end of 2021, with the number expected to continue growing amid the country’s urbanization drive.

On top of demand from new arrivals in cities, Wang said that exiting city-dwellers also wish to improve their living environment and conditions, while residential communities built before 2000 are failing to satisfy the desire for bigger and better houses.—Xinhua ■

Drugmaker Shionogi applies for COVID pill approval in Japan



People wait in line in front of a drugstore in Tokyo to buy masks on 6 April 2021. **PHOTO: KYODO**

JAPANESE pharmaceutical firm Shionogi & Co. said Friday it has applied for approval of its oral COVID-19 drug, after mid-phase clinical trials showed efficacy in reducing the coronavirus in the body.

It is the first such pill developed by a Japanese drugmaker and will be administered to mild-to-moderate coronavirus patients, regardless of whether they are at risk of hospitalization, to prevent the virus from multiplying in the body.

The Osaka-based firm said it had filed with the Health, Labour and Welfare Ministry for conditional early approval of the drug known as S-217622, following the results of

phase-2 clinical trials.

The conditional early approval system allows drugmakers to skip the final stage of clinical trials once a certain level of efficacy and safety has been confirmed, according to the health ministry.

The system applies in cases where effective treatments for a disease are scarce and clinical trials may be protracted due to few test subjects.

Trials were conducted with a focus on people who became infected since the spread of the Omicron variant, Shionogi said in a press release.

During the process, patients took one dose of the drug daily over a period of five days and were found to show rapid reductions in viral load and improvement in symptoms compared with those who were given a placebo.

Shionogi has said it can start supplying between 400,000 and 500,000 doses of the drug in Japan by the end of February and 1 million doses by the end of March. The firm is known for its infectious diseases treatments, such as influenza drug Xofluza and Tivicay for HIV.—Kyodo ■

US weekly jobless claims fall to 232,000 after ticking up in previous week

INITIAL jobless claims in the United States last week fell to 232,000 after ticking up in the previous week amid Omicron surge, the US Labour Department reported on Thursday.

In the week ending 19 February, the number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits decreased by 17,000 from the previous week’s upwardly revised level of 249,000, according to a report released by the department’s Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS).

The four-week moving average, a method to iron out data volatility, decreased by 7,250 to 236,250, according to the report.

The latest jobless claims report also showed that the number of people continuing to collect reg-

ular state unemployment benefits in the week ending 12 February decreased by 112,000 to 1.476 million. That number peaked in April and May in 2020, when it was over 20 million.

The total number of people claiming benefits in all programmes — state and federal combined — for the week ending 5 February declined by 30,906 to 2.03 million. “Acute labor shortages leading into the current (Omicron) wave and a record-breaking number of workers out sick due to COVID have prompted many employers to hold onto more holiday hires than they did in the past,” Diane Swonk, chief economist at major accounting firm Grant Thornton, said in a recent blog.—Xinhua ■

The Global New Light of Myanmar

www.gnlm.com.mm

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V DA PING VOY.NO. (075)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V DA PING VOY.NO. (075)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-2-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINES

NEWS IN BRIEF

Biden meets with G7, addresses US on response to Russia

US President Joe Biden met with G7 allies Thursday to hammer out a raft of new sanctions against Russia after it invaded Ukraine, and was shortly to speak to the American people on a crisis that he warns will cause “catastrophic loss of life”.

After a virtual, closed-door meeting which lasted an hour and 10 minutes, the group of rich Western democracies -- Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States -- said in a joint statement that Russia posed “a serious threat to the rules-based international order”.

It said the seven industrial powers were “ready to act” to minimize disruptions to world energy markets as a result of Moscow’s assault on Ukraine and with sanctions already targeting a major pipeline from heavyweight energy producer Russia.—AFP ■

US expels Russian diplomat in tit-for-tat move amid Ukraine crisis

THE United States has expelled Russia’s number two diplomat in Washington in a tit-for-tat move after Moscow’s expulsion of a senior US envoy, a State Department official said Thursday.

Sergey Trepelkov, the second-highest ranking official at the Russian embassy, was informed Wednesday that he had to depart, after Moscow ordered the US deputy chief of mission in Russia, Bart Gorman, to leave earlier this month.

The State Department official stressed that the expulsion was unrelated to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Gorman’s expulsion, which was made public last week, was itself in response to previous US actions against Russian diplomats in the United States, the Kremlin said.—AFP ■

Some 100,000 displaced in Ukraine, thousands flee after Russia attack: UN

THE UN refugee agency said around 100,000 people had fled their homes within Ukraine and several thousand more had left the country since neighbouring Russia invaded early Thursday.

“We believe that some 100,000 people must have already left their homes and may be displaced inside the country, and several thousand have crossed international borders,” UNHCR spokeswoman Shabia Mantoo told AFP.

Refugee High Commissioner Filippo Grandi had voiced serious concern at the rapid deterioration of the situation as military operations unfolded across Ukraine and urged neighbouring countries to keep their borders open for those seeking safety and shelter. “We are continuing to closely follow the situation and are reinforcing our operations in Ukraine and neighbouring countries,” the agency said.—AFP ■

Ukrainian refugees camp out at Polish train station

REFUGEES from Ukraine, including dozens of children and two women with their cats, camped overnight at a train station in neighbouring Poland after fleeing Russia’s invasion on Thursday.

“I come from Kyiv. I heard the explosions next to my building... and I quickly packed, I took almost everything with me,” said Olha, a 36-year-old teacher at the Kyiv Polytechnic Institute, who gave only her first name.

Hours after fleeing the fighting in her homeland, she was among around 200 arrivals bedding down at the station in the town of Przemysl in southeast Poland, just a few kilometres from the Ukrainian border.

Mostly women, they filled almost every seat in the halls or huddled on yellow camping stretchers alongside their suitcases, many anxiously scrolling the news from the frontline on their phones. “I feel safe here but I cannot really help my relatives and friends. Many of them are in danger and cannot leave as quickly,” said Olha, who planned to travel to join her boyfriend in Switzerland.—AFP ■

Ukraine president says “left alone” to fight against Russian offensive

UKRAINE’S president said Friday his country had been left on its own to fight Russia after the Kremlin launched a large-scale invasion that killed 130 Ukrainians in the first day.

“We have been left alone to defend our state,” Volodymyr Zelensky said in a video address to the nation after midnight.

“Who is ready to fight alongside us? I don’t see anyone. Who is ready to give Ukraine a guarantee of NATO membership? Everyone is afraid,” he added.

Zelensky said that 137 Ukrainians, both military personnel and civilians, had been killed since the start of the attack early Thursday.



Some of the fiercest fighting was in east Ukraine, near the frontline with Moscow-backed rebel forces. **PHOTO: AFP**

Another 316 had been wounded, he said.

Zelensky also said that Russian “sabotage groups” had entered the capital Kyiv, and urged the city’s citizens to remain vigilant and observe a curfew.—AFP ■

Belarus says its army not taking part in Ukraine invasion

BELARUS’S leader Alexander Lukashenko said Thursday that his military is not taking part in the Russian invasion of Ukraine, as Kyiv said Moscow’s troops were entering the country from Belarusian territory.

“Our armed forces are not taking part in this operation,” said Lukashenko, an ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin. Moscow has stationed tens of thousands of troops in Belarus.

Ukraine’s border guards said Thursday their country was coming under artillery attack along its northern border with Russia and Belarus. Minsk said Putin called Lukashenko in the early hours of Thursday — “at around 5:00 am (0200 GMT) —



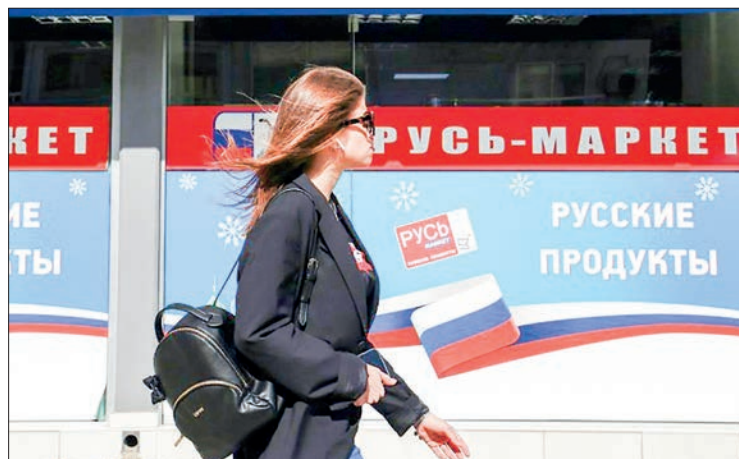
Service members of the Ukrainian Air Assault Forces take part in tactical drills at a training ground in an unknown location in Ukraine, in this handout picture released 18 February 2022. **PHOTO: PRESS SERVICE OF THE UKRAINIAN AIR ASSAULT FORCES /AFP**

to inform him that Moscow was launching a military operation on Ukraine.

After meeting his army

chiefs, Lukashenko said Putin had informed him about the “development” of the situation in the call.—AFP ■

Ukrainians in ‘Moscow on the Med’ look on in horror



A woman walks past a Russian supermarket in the Mediterranean seaside town of Limassol in southern Cyprus. **PHOTO: AFP**

UKRAINIANS living alongside fellow expats from “brother” Russia in the Mediterranean seaside town of Limassol in Cy-

prus looked on in horror Thursday at the Russian assault on their homeland.

“This is the worst-case sce-

nario we could have imagined. They are bombing all regions of Ukraine, attacking all our airports and bases,” said Evgeny Staroselskiy, a director of Russian Radio Cyprus based in Limassol.

He said nationals from both countries had awoken in shock to hear of the full-blown conflict unfolding between Ukraine and its giant neighbour.

“A lot of people have family on both sides of the border,” said the 60-year-old native of Kharkiv, a mainly Russian-speaking city in eastern Ukraine considered in the “red zone” because of its proximity to the border with Russia.—AFP ■

Putin discusses Ukraine issue with state leaders

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin held telephone conversations with leaders of several countries, the Kremlin said Thursday.

Putin had a telephone conversation with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, explaining how the situation around Ukraine is evolving.

Raisi expressed understanding with respect to Russia's security concerns caused by the destabilizing actions of the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Issues relating to the diplomatic efforts to preserve and fully implement the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on Iran's nuclear programme were reviewed, the Kremlin said, adding that it was noted that reaching a final agreement on the JCPOA would contribute to regional stability and security.

Putin also briefed Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi about Moscow's stance on the Ukraine issue. "When discussing the situation, Putin outlined his fundamental assessments

of Kiev's aggressive actions against the civilian population of Donbass, as well as about Kyiv's many years of destructive policy aimed at breaking the Minsk agreements," the Kremlin said.

Modi thanked Putin for the clarification and asked for assistance in ensuring the security of Indian citizens currently in Ukraine.

Putin and his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron also discussed the situation in Ukraine during a phone conversation.—Xinhua ■



Police and security personnel inspect the remains of a shell landed in a street in Kyiv on 24 February 2022. PHOTO: SERGEI SUPINSKY/AFP

Invading Russian forces press deep into Ukraine



Ukrainian servicemen prepare to repel an attack in Ukraine's Lugansk region. PHOTO: ANATOLI STEPANOV/ AFP

INVADING Russian forces pressed deep into Ukraine as deadly battles reached the outskirts of Kyiv, with explosions heard in the capital early Friday that the besieged government described as "horrific rocket strikes".

The blasts in Kyiv set off a second day of violence after Russian President Vladimir Putin defied Western warnings to unleash a full-scale ground invasion and air assault that quickly claimed dozens of lives and displaced at least 100,000 people.

The United States and its allies responded with a barrage of sanctions, but the Russian forces appeared intent Friday on pressing home their advantage after a string of key strategic victories on day one.

"Horrific Russian rocket strikes on Kyiv," Ukraine Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba posted on Twitter after explosions were heard in the capital before dawn.

"Last time our capital experienced anything like this was in 1941 when it was attacked by Nazi Germany. Ukraine defeated that evil and will defeat this one."

At least 137 "heroes" were killed during the first day of fighting, President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Thursday, as he called up conscripts and reservists nationwide to fight in a general mobilization.—AFP ■

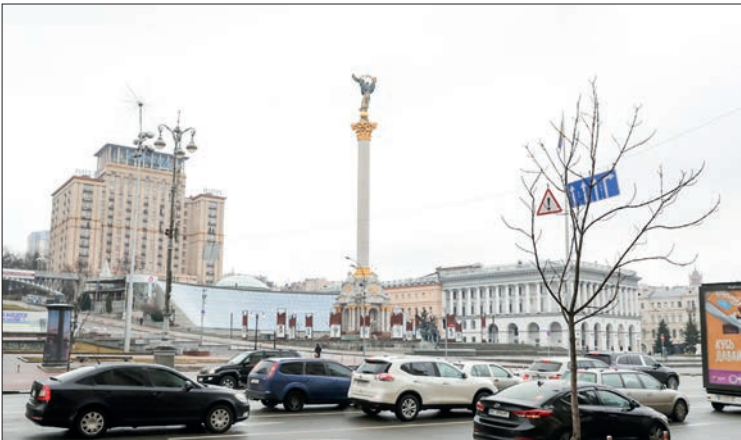
Russian soldiers drop from sky at edge of capital

THE Russian forces came in shooting as they dropped from the open doors of helicopters to gain control of a strategic airport on the edge of Kyiv.

Their advance was the closest Russian forces had managed to get to the capital on the first day of Kremlin chief Vladimir Putin's shock invasion of Ukraine.

They now represent an ominous presence at Kyiv's doorstep as Western-backed Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelensky tries to hold on to power in the face of the Russian onslaught.

Zelensky vowed that the Russian forces would be encircled and "destroyed".



Vehicles travel past the Independence Square in Kyiv, Ukraine, 24 Feb 2022. PHOTO: XINHUA/LI DONGXU

But witnesses told AFP that the Russian paratroopers had managed to establish control of

the airstrip after swooping in with helicopters and jets from the direction of Belarus.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

US to add 7,000 troops in Germany over Russian threat: Pentagon

THE United States will deploy 7,000 more troops to Europe, to be based in Germany, in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Pentagon announced Thursday.

"They will deploy to Germany to reassure NATO Allies, deter Russian aggression and be prepared to support a range of requirements in the region," a Pentagon official said, adding that they are expected to depart "in the coming days".—AFP ■

Battle underway for airbase on Kyiv outskirts

RUSSIAN and Ukrainian forces are battling for control of an airbase on the northern outskirts of Kyiv, a senior Ukrainian officer said Thursday, as dozens of attack helicopters swooped on the area.

"Fighting is underway for Gostomel airfield," armed forces chief Valeriy Zaluzhny said in a statement posted online. Shortly earlier, AFP reporters had seen helicopters flying low over the city from the north.

The Gostomel airfield, which is alongside the Antonov airport, is immediately on the northern edge of Kiev, and the fighting there is the closest that Russian forces had got to the capital on the first day of their invasion.—AFP ■

UNGA president calls on Russia, Ukraine to settle disputes through dialogue

ABDULLA Shahid, president of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), on Thursday called for an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine and peaceful means to settle disputes.

"I call for an immediate ceasefire, deescalation of tensions and a firm return to diplomacy and dialogue," said the UNGA president in a statement.

Underscoring that the UN Charter is based on the principle of sovereign equality, Shahid called on all member states to settle their international disputes by peaceful means. "I renew my call to all member states to uphold their obligations under international law and international humanitarian law," said the UNGA president.—AFP ■

Ukraine severs diplomatic relations with Russia

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky said Thursday that Kyiv decides to sever diplomatic relations with Moscow after Russia launched military operations in Donbass, the government-run Ukrainian news agency reported.

"Ukraine is defending itself," Zelensky said in a televised address. He added that more than 40 Ukrainian soldiers and around 10 civilians were killed in the conflict.

Earlier Thursday, Russian President Vladimir Putin authorized the "special military operation", and Ukraine confirmed that military installations across the country were under attack.—XINHUA ■

Aung La N Sang loses by unanimous decision as Bigdash settles trilogy



The referee (middle) nominates Vitaly Bigdash (Right) as a winner of the ONE Championship: Full Circle catchweight trilogy bout via unanimous decision at Singapore Indoor Stadium on 25 February 2022. **PHOTO: ONE CHAMPIONSHIP**

VITALY Bigdash defeated Aung La Na Sang via unanimous decision in their catchweight trilogy bout of ONE Championship: Full Circle event at Singapore Indoor Stadium yesterday night.

It was a meeting between two former middleweight world champions and the winner would have a chance to challenge for the title again. Both fighters showed their epic skills in all three rounds with no significant knockout result. Aung La N Sang still relied on his usual stand fight but at this

time Vitaly Bigdash changed Jujitsu style to focus on his ground skill. The first half was dominated by Bigdash with punches plus chokes over Aung La N Sang. The Russian fighter continued to pressure in the second half, connecting with a solid right hand and short left hook, which were followed by a takedown.

In the third or final round, Bigdash still stayed upon Aung La and collected points with his slow punches. Aung La N Sang lost the match, furthering his

chances of regaining the middleweight title.

In the Middleweight World Championship fight, Reinier De Ridder “The Dutch Knight” defeated Kiamrian Abbasov “Brazen” via submission (arm-triangle choke) at 0:57 minutes of round three.

Next, in the Light Heavyweight Kickboxing World Championship, Roman Kryklia made a win over Murat Aygun “The Butcher” via knockout at 2:32 minutes of round one. — GNLM

Paris to host UEFA Champions League final stripped from Saint Petersburg

PARIS will host this season’s Champions League final after Saint Petersburg was stripped of the match due to Russia’s military invasion of Ukraine, UEFA announced on Friday.

The showpiece occasion of the European club season will be

played at the Stade de France on Saturday, 28 May European football’s governing body said after holding an emergency meeting in response to the crisis.

“UEFA wishes to express its thanks and appreciation to French Republic President Em-

manuel Macron for his personal support and commitment to have European club football’s most prestigious game moved to France at a time of unparalleled crisis,” a statement said.

“Together with the French government, UEFA will fully support multi-stakeholder efforts to ensure the provision of rescue for football players and their families in Ukraine who face dire human suffering, destruction and displacement.” The final was supposed to be played at the Gazprom Arena in Saint Petersburg, which already hosted several matches at last year’s European Championship and at the 2018 World Cup held in Russia. UEFA made no reference to its relationship with Gazprom, the Russian state energy giant that is a key sponsor of European football’s governing body.— AFP ■



The Stade de France has hosted the Champions League final twice before, most recently in 2006. **PHOTO: AFP/ANNE-CHRISTINE POUJOULAT**

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.

Arsenal stage thrilling revival to boost top four bid



Arsenal’s Alexandre Lacazette (L) celebrates with Nicolas Pepe. **PHOTO: AFP**

MIKEL Arteta challenged Arsenal to seal a place in the Premier League’s top four after they struck twice in the final minutes to clinch a dramatic 2-1 win against Wolves. Arteta’s side trailed to Hwang Hee-chan’s early goal at the Emirates Stadium in Thursday’s crucial clash between the top four contenders.

But Nicolas Pepe came off the bench to equalise in the 82nd minute before Wolves keeper Jose Sa deflected Alexandre

Lacazette’s shot into his own net in the final seconds.

Arsenal’s third successive league victory moved them up to fifth place and they sit just one point behind fourth placed Manchester United with two games in hand in the race to qualify for the Champions League.

Arsenal’s tally of 14 league victories from September onwards has only been bettered by Manchester City and Liverpool.—AFP ■