

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Sunday, 27 February 2022

Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted and its mandated tasks, including the scrutiny of voter lists, shall be implemented in accordance with the law.
2. Effective measures will be taken with added momentum to prevent and manage the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Actions will be taken to ensure the speedy recovery of businesses from the impact of COVID-19.
4. Emphasis will be placed on achieving enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the agreements set out in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement.
5. Upon accomplishing the provisions of the state of emergency, free and fair multiparty democratic elections will be held in line with the 2008 Constitution, and further work will be undertaken to hand over State duties to the winning party in accordance with democratic standards.

YRTC to launch distance-based YPS card system

THE Yangon Region Transport Committee (YRTC) makes arrangements to develop a distance-based YPS (Yangon Payment Service) card system on YBS buses, according to the committee.

“Currently, we don’t have any plan to increase the YBS bus fares and we do not permit it officially. Some buses adopted a distance-based payment system in the past. Currently, we arrange to launch the payment-on-distance system using a YPS card. It does not mean to increase the bus fares. We took actions against the buses that collected K500 or K1,000



One of the YBS buses is seen commuting in Yangon. PHOTOS : NAING LIN AUNG (TAMWAY)

previously such as we revoke their permit for CNG for three months, six months and one year and suspended their work permit for one year. The YBS bus lines collected up to K400 according to distance since before,” said Joint Secretary of U Lyan Cin Mang from YRTC.

The YRTC took action starting November 2021 and 524 YBS buses were charged to date. The

YRTC cooperated with Asia Starmar Transport Intelligent Company Limited to resume the YPS card system on 194 buses operated by five YBS bus line companies.

“There were fixed prices of YBS bus fares K100, K200 and K300. For example, we have to pay K200 even if we take the bus just for one another bus stop or the whole trip when we take

YBS that fixed price at K200. Therefore, it did not make profits to the passengers who take a bus just for one or two bus stops. The distance-based payment system is suitable for short-trip passengers but not for the ones who ride the bus for the whole trip as it makes double charges. If the officials arrange the card system, we want them to operate adequate buses,” said a

daily commuter from Hmawby to Ahlon township.

The YRTC fixes the YPS card price at K2,000 and buyers do not need to pay for the cards if they use K3,000 top-up.

About 2,900 buses of 118 YBS bus lines carry nearly 600,000 passengers daily, according to the YRTC. — Naing Lin Aung (Tamway)/GNLM



Special programs, special shows and music performances on weekends.

- Modern Digital Glass Bridge
- Children Play Ground
- Jungle Footpath
- Suspension Bridge
- Souvenir Shop
- Food Court

Special arrangements are made for Package Tours and group Pilgrimages

Pwe Gauk

Waterfalls Resort

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

Proposed Geosites for Mount Popa National Geopark inspected



The MNREC deputy minister and party inspect the proposed Geosites for Mount Popa National Geopark yesterday.

CHAIRMAN of Geopark Working Committee Deputy Minister U Min Min Oo of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation inspected the proposed Geosites for Mount Popa National Geopark in Kyaukpadaung Township of Mandalay Region yesterday.

During the visit, the deputy minister told the officials

to set up a National Geopark which plays a key role in the establishment of UNESCO Global Geopark. He also said that he conducted a ground survey to approve the locations out of 16 Geosites in the forest areas in Mount Popa area proposed by Myanmar Geosciences Society to the ministry for Mount Popa National Geopark to become the first National Geopark as

there is no Local Geopark & National Geopark. Popa area is a very important cultural and geological area in Myanmar.

Then, the deputy minister and party inspected the Sandagu Forest and deer park, Medical Plant and museum, Lahar, Volcanic Mud Flow, Augite Andesite Stone Forest and Fossil Museum. —MNA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Statement of Interfaith Friendship Organization (Central)

- 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 Interfaith Friendship Organization (Central) welcomed their proper explanations.
- 3. The organization strongly condemns The Gambia for prosecuting Myanmar, standing with the extremists by neglecting the genocide against the minority ethnic races of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar such as Mro, Thet, Khami, and the dozens of Hindus committed by the majority of terrorist religious extremists.
- 4. The organization appreciates 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 organization supports and stands with the Myanmar delegation led by Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing and Union Minister Attorney-General Dr Thida Oo.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Interfaith Friendship Organization (Central)

2,402 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 26 February, total figure rises to 584,239

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 584,239 after 2,402 new cases were reported on 26 February 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 532,202 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached 19,360 after 4 died.—MNA

To build strength within the country!

- In the first, our economy will be developed by our internal strength. We have abundant natural resources and human resources. We have weakness in the socio-economic development of the people as we have been relying on external products or exports rather than our domestic production.
- Secondly, we will build our political strength internally. Building a Union and multiparty democratic system based on democracy and federalism will certainly enhance our political strength.
- Thirdly, the defence capability of the country should be strengthened with the participation of all ethnic national people. With united strength both in weals and woes, we all will build the defence capability of our country with modern military prowess (Army, Navy and Air Force).

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

CASE CONCERNING
APPLICATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE
PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT
OF THE CRIME OF GENOCIDE
(THE GAMBIA V. MYANMAR)
25 FEBRUARY 2022
U KO KO HLAING
AGENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR
CLOSING STATEMENT OF THE AGENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF THE UNION OF MYANMAR

Madam President, distinguished Members of the Court,

1. Counsels for Myanmar have dutifully presented their arguments to the court. As this stage of the proceedings is concerned only with matters of law concerning jurisdiction and the admissibility of the case, that has been our focus. We have refrained from entering into matters relevant to the merits.
2. Unfortunately, on Wednesday, counsel for The Gambia made many factual and political allegations that were not relevant to the preliminary objections. The tone of these statements was inappropriate to a court of law at this stage of the proceedings. Myanmar will not respond to these allegations as now is neither the right place nor time to do so. We will not waste the Court's valuable time by making statements not really addressed to the Court but to an audience outside the Great Hall of Justice. In my understanding, these allegations were aimed at intimidating to the Members of the Court and the public that the authorities in Myanmar should be considered perpetrators of genocide, even before there has been any decision on whether there will be a merits phase, let alone any decision by this Court.



- 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.
3. I must respond by emphasizing, first, that Myanmar is exercising its right as Respondent by submitting these preliminary objections, as clearly foreseen by paragraph 85 of the Provisional Measures Order. Secondly, a Respondent has the right not to be prejudged on the merits at the preliminary objections phase. At any merits phase, the burden of proof would be on The Gambia as an applicant

- to prove its claims. However, it cannot seek to discharge that burden now or speak as if that burden had already been discharged. As of today, The Gambia's claims have neither been admitted to be heard nor have they been proved, and The Gambia should not act as if it were otherwise.
4. Nevertheless, given that The Gambia has used this hearing as a platform to make allegations about the merits, as Agent for Myanmar I cannot just sit here in silence without responding at all. In my closing remarks, I would like to take just a moment to say that Myanmar is committed to ensuring compliance with

- the Genocide Convention. For instance, on 25 August 2021, Myanmar amended its Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure in order to insert additional articles criminalising genocide and providing for the trial and punishment of perpetrators. Myanmar, as a responsible party, is also implementing its obligations under the Provisional Measures Order.
5. There also are continuous efforts to improve the general situation on the ground. The region now is relatively calm and peaceful without any significant incidents of violence.
 6. Before concluding with the reading of Myanmar's final

- submissions, I would like to thank you all for your careful and patient attention to the arguments presented. I am very grateful to the Registrar and all the staff of the Registry who have enabled the smooth and efficient conduct of this hearing, including the interpreters.
7. It now falls to me, in accordance with Article 60, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Court to read the final submissions of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. These are as follows:

- For the reasons given in Myanmar's written preliminary objections and in its oral arguments at the hearing of the preliminary objections, and for any other reasons the Court might deem appropriate, Myanmar respectfully requests the Court to adjudge and declare:
1. that the Court lacks jurisdiction to hear the case brought by The Gambia against Myanmar; and/or
 2. that The Gambia's Application is inadmissible.

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

8. That concludes the arguments of Myanmar at this hearing of the preliminary objections. I thank you.

YRIC endorses 12 foreign enterprises during mini-budget period

THE Yangon Region Investment Committee (YRIC) has endorsed ten foreign enterprises and two joint ventures in the manufacturing sector, with an estimated capital of US\$25.955 million, between October 2021 and February 2022 of the current six-month mini-budget period, according to the statistics released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

Additionally, two domestic enterprises are also given the go-ahead, with a capital of K3.629 billion.

Those enterprises are to create a total of 6,657 jobs. They will execute manufacturing of bags, footwear, underwear and garments on a Cutting, Making, and Packing (CMP) basis, manufacturing of construction materials, production and sales of aluminium ingot, grinding and manufacturing of pulses and beans, footwear and production and distribution of fish sauce, YRIC stated.

The manufacturing sector has attracted the most foreign investments in Yangon Region, with enterprises engaging in the production of pharmaceuticals, vehicles, container boxes, and garments on a Cutting, Making, and Packing (CMP) basis.

To date, foreign investments from China, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea, Viet Nam, India, China (Taipei), Malaysia, the British Virgin Islands and Seychelles are arriving in the region.

To simplify the verification of investment projects, the Myanmar Investment Law allows the region and state Investment Committees to grant permissions for local and foreign proposals, where the initial investment does not exceed K6 billion, or \$5 million. — Htet Myat/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.

Two tonnes of masks were imported by one company via the Chinshwehaw trading zone yesterday. From 1 to 26 February, four oxygen plants were imported through international seaports in Yangon and a total of 549 tonnes of masks were imported by 83 vehicles of 34 companies.

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



A lorry is seen ready to transport the imported anti-Covid items to states/ regions.

Terrorists hiding in Chinpon village arrested with arms, ammunition



TERRORISTS incited violence, killing innocent civilians and civil servants, mining public places, forcibly extorting bribes from local people and tourists in some villages in Yinmabin Township, Sagaing Region,

Therefore, security forces are stepping up security and the rule of law issues in Yinmabin Township.

According to reports, the terrorists were hiding in Chinpon village when they came into contact with the village monastery and the school to carry out the necessary inspections, and the terrorists fled to the north-east and west with many injuries.

Some dead bodies of the terrorist, 18 handguns, four hand-made mortars, 14 hand grenades, 68 rounds of M-22 ammunition, 37 rounds of 9mm ammunition and other accessories, one Kluger car, two Skat vehicles, two light trucks, one Surf-type vehicle, 45 motorcycles, one drone, walkie-talkies, 36 passports and one 100-foot-wide training ground were captured.

Terrorists have targeted religious and non-military places, and attacks on educational buildings and homes and Camp-based attacks are a war crime under the Geneva Conventions and international law and will continue to be prosecuted under the Anti-Terrorism Penal Code and applicable laws.

Security forces will continue to work with the people to fight terrorism. — MNA

An aerial view of the Chinpon village school and monastery where PDF terrorists were hiding.

Bago Region pulls over \$110 mln foreign investment, K8.3 bln domestic investment in one year

BETWEEN 1 February 2021 and 1 February 2022, Bago Region attracted foreign investments of US\$110.8 million and K8.329 billion of domestic investments made by Myanmar citizens, which creates 4,953 job opportunities for residents, according to the Bago Region Investment Committee (BRIC).

At the BRIC's meeting held on 25 February, Bago Region Chief Minister U Myo Swe Win delivered a remark that Bago Region is mainly depending on agriculture and livestock. As the region has an abundant source of raw materials to produce natural fertilizer, the chief minister urged BRIC to invite investment for fertilizer plants. Furthermore,

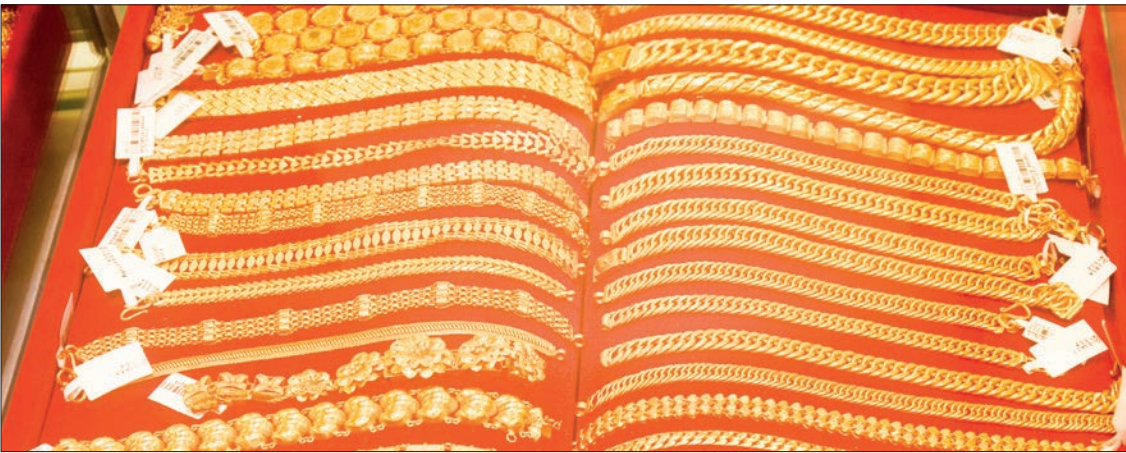


the labour-intensive garment businesses on a Cutting, Making and Packing basis are also prioritized as the regions have a strong workforce. The endorsements are granted only

after conducting the social and environmental impact assessments. The investors are mandatory to strictly adhere to the rules and regulations of the Industrial Zone Law. Starting from the coming monsoon season, the shade trees will be grown. The chief minister directed the officials concerned not to have illegal squatting in the zone as well.

Afterwards, BRIC Director U Ko Ko Lat explained capital expansion and extension of time in construction matters. The committee members also discussed investment-related matters and Bago Region Chief Minister guided the committee to process under the existing law, rules and regulations. — Tin Soe (Bago)/GNLM

Precious yellow metal price jumps up to K1.94 mln per tical



The pure gold price was up to K2,220,000 per tical in September in the domestic market, while the US dollar exchange rate touches a high of above US\$3,000 per dollar.

THE price of precious yellow metal surges again up to K1,934,000 per tical (0.578 ounce), according to the Yangon Region Gold Entrepreneurs Association (YGEA). Following a rise in the global gold market, the domestic gold price hit on an upward trend. Currently, the global gold price is ranging between US\$1917 and \$1914 per ounce. Besides, the dollar exchange rate against the Myanmar kyat currently stood around K1,990 per dollar. “Following the Kyat depreciation against the US dollar and rise in the global gold market, the gold prices in the domestic market remains mounting,” said YGEA Chair U Myo Myint. In the next coming period, the domestic gold price isn't likely to fall. The gold price in

the domestic market will decrease only if Kyat strengthens against the US dollar in the local forex market and the global gold price slides, he added. The domestic gold price is positively related to the global gold price and the local currency value. The pure gold price was up to K2,220,000 per tical in September in the domestic market, while the US dollar exchange rate touches a high of above US\$3,000 per dollar. Under the guidance of the Central Committee on Ensuring Smooth Flow of Trade and Goods, the Monitoring and Steering Committee on Gold and Currency Market was formed on 17 December 2021 as gold and currency market stability play a crucial role in trade facilitation. The objectives of the com-

mittee are inspecting and prosecuting market manipulation, checking if there is compliance to payment rules or not, proceeding against those unscrupulous traders who intend to interfere with the free and fair operation of the market under the existing laws, by-laws and regulations in line with the official directives, illegal procurement of foreign currency, illegal trade and taking legal actions against price manipulators. Besides, the officials concerned will crack down on those people involved in charging a percentage for money withdrawals at banks as shadow money. In January 2021, the gold price was ranged between the minimum of K1,821,500 per tical (6 January) and the maximum of K1,885,000 per tical (25 January). — NN/GNLM

Corn price bullish in brisk market

THE prices of corn stay upward trend on the back of strong demand in the Mandalay market, according to Mandalay corn traders. The corns from the northern Shan State, Kachin State and Sagaing Region are primarily flowing into the Mandalay market. The corn prices tremendously soar to K44,500 per 54-viss bag from K31,000 recorded during the year-ago period, Soe Win Myin commodity depot stated. “The corn can be cultivated throughout all seasons- winter, summer and monsoon. It can be produced in hill regions like Shan and Kachin states. The yield rate is increasing year over year. Corn is a lucrative crop that can allow growers to earn regular income the whole year. Despite the suspension

of corn trade with China, corn market remains strong on account of the leading buyer Thailand”, Soe Win Myint explained. Thailand has granted tax exemption on corn imports between February and August. However, Thailand imposed a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn import to protect the rights of their growers if the corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand. Both the domestic and the foreign demand hike up the corn prices for now. The local feed processing factory also makes competitive buying with the exporters engaged in the Myawady border post. As corn has market prospects, it is suggested to increase corn acreage, he elaborated. — Min Htet Aung (Man Sub-printing House)/GNLM



Both the domestic and the foreign demand hike up the corn prices for now. PHOTO: MIN HTET AUNG

Seintalone mangoes cultivated hoping for external markets



The mangoes are early yielding in lower Myanmar because it is close to the equator. Then, Mangoes yield in Yangon and Mandalay. **PHOTO: LULAY**

SEINTALONE mangoes have been cultivated hoping for external markets, said U Than Tun Oo, the head of the Agriculture Department in Kanbalu town.

“We couldn’t sell a lot of fruit in the domestic market. But we can make good trading of Seintalone mango in the Muse market. There is a demand from China. We can make only a few trading of mango in the domestic market like Yangon and Mandalay. We couldn’t rely on the domestic market. So, we are hoping for international markets,” he was quoted as saying.

Last year, we faced some difficulties like unwanted delays to enter mango trucks to China, resulting in poor quality of fruit and low prices.

“The market condition depends on the pandemic. We don’t know exactly what will happen this year as well. China demands mango fruits as yield as we can. But it will take four or five days to reach China because there is a roadblock on the way due to COVID-19,” said a Seintalone mango grower.

“The early mangoes are harvested mostly in Mawlamyine and Taninthayi. The mangoes are early yielding in lower Myanmar because it is close to the equator. Then, Mangoes yield in Yangon and Mandalay. Depending on the distance from the equator, the mangoes are usually yielding in the Kanbalu area from 15 May to 15 June,” U Than Tun Oo clarified. — Lu Lay/GNLM

Myanmar’s border trade reaches over \$2.67 bln as of 18 Feb

MYANMAR’S trade with foreign countries through border gates reached over US\$2.67 billion as of 18 February in mini budget year 2021-22 financial year which started in October, according to figures released by the Ministry of Commence.

During the period, the country’s export via border gates earned \$1.94 billion while its import shared \$730 million.

According to the ministry’s figures, this fiscal year’s border trade decreased by \$1.92 billion, compared to the same period of last fiscal year 2020-2021 when it recorded \$4.59 billion.

Myawady topped the list of border checkpoints with the most trade value of \$998 million, followed

by Hteekhee with \$776 million.

The country conducts border trade with neighbouring China through Muse, Lweijel, Kampaiti, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung, with Thailand via Tachilek, Myawady, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung and Maese borders, with Bangladesh via Sittway and Maungtaung and with India through Tamu and Reed borders, respectively.

Myanmar mainly exports agricultural products, animal products, marine products, minerals, forest products, manufacturing goods and others while capital goods, intermediate goods and consumer goods are imported to the country. —ZYA/GNLM



Myanmar mainly exports agricultural products, animal products, marine products, minerals, forest products, manufacturing goods and others while capital goods, intermediate goods and consumer goods are imported to the country.

Corn price soars to over K900 per viss

THE price of corn has increased these days, touching over K900 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes), according to the Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung Commodity Depot).

The foreign demand and US dollar exchange rate are driving the sellers to raise the corn price in the market. Currently, the Yangon market price of a viss of corn is K900 to K920 depending on the corn quality,

Myanmar is allowed for corn export to Thailand between 1 February and 31 August with Form-D, under zero tariff. That is the reason, the corn is being exported to Thailand through the Myawady bor-



Farm workers are seen working for one of the corn plantations.

der trade zone.

Thailand imposed a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn import to protect the rights of their growers if the corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand.

Consequently, the corns are being shipped daily to Thailand through Myawady border trade starting from 1 February. Now, the warehouses in Myawady are full of corn crops more than any other commodities, said U Min Khaing, chairman of Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

Last 2020-21 financial year, Myanmar shipped over 1.7 million tonnes of corn to Thailand. And, the association targeted to export about 1.5 million of corn

to Thailand in this 2021-22FY, U Min Khaing added.

Last FY 2020-21, Myanmar exported about 2.3 million tonnes of corn to the international market, according to the association.

Of 2.3 million tonnes, the majority of corn was delivered to Thailand, whereas the remaining corn was conveyed to China, India and Viet Nam.

At present, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. Myanmar has three corn seasons — winter, summer and monsoon.

The country yearly produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn. — NN/GNLM

COVID-19 vaccine drive continues in various states, regions

DOCTORS and nurses from public hospitals, Tatmadaw medical teams, healthcare workers and volunteers are working hard to give COVID-19 vaccines in different states and regions as the vaccination programme is one of the most important activities in the prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19 disease.

COVID-19 vaccine is administered daily to target groups regardless of race or religion, including Buddhist monks and nuns, local people over the age of 40, students, religious leaders,

prisoners, people with disabilities, ethnic armed organizations, people with chronic diseases, people in IDP camps and over 12-year-old students, respectively.

On 26 February, doctors and nurses from public hospitals, medical teams from the Tatmadaw, relevant healthcare workers in collaboration with volunteers gave COVID-19 vaccines to 4,208 people from 12 townships in Mon and Kayin states, 1,250 people from Myeik and Palaw townships in Taninthayi Region,

13,384 people from 26 townships in Ayeyawady Region, 6,665 people from five townships in Rakhine State and 7,710 people from seven districts in Mandalay Region, respectively.

Similarly, healthcare officials gave the vaccines to 434 students from 26 townships in Ayeyawady Region yesterday.

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



Residents receive vaccination in Ponnagyun Township.

CRIME NEWS

Illegal furniture, consumer goods, electronics seized



Confiscated commodities at Myanmar Industrial Port Container Inspection Station.

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

A joint inspection team led by the Forestry Department conducted inspections under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force on 23 and 24 February.

A total of 2.6844 tonnes of illegal teak furniture (estimated at K805,320) was seized in Hmawby and Htantabin townships, and action is taken under the forest law.

Similarly, the Anti-Trafficking Task Force and the Customs Department carried out an inspection at the Myanmar Industrial Port Container Inspection Station.

A total of K81,231,000 worth of goods including

goods not listed in the import declaration ID and equipment and printer spare parts (estimated at K55,231,000) and consumer goods (estimated value of K26,000,000) were seized and action is taken under the Customs Law. Similarly, a joint inspection team conducted inspections at the Kawkareik (Tadakyoe) Joint Inspection Station under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force.

Illegal Thai-made household goods (estimated at K4,225,000) were seized from a truck bound for Myawady to Mawlamyine with undocumented goods, and action is taken under the Customs Law.

Therefore, a total of six arrests (approximately K86,261,320) were made three consecutive days, according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee. —MNA



Seized teak furniture in Yangon Region.



From Kayin State.

Illegal drugs seized in townships across Myanmar

TEAMS consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force arrested Ko Naing (a) Eik Shen together with 0.33 kilogramme of heroin and 5,850 stimulant tablets on the Bhamo-Shwegu road near Manwaine village in Mansi Township on 25 February.

Similarly, combined teams consisting of members of Yangon Region Police Force searched a motorcycle driven by Naing Lin Aung accompanied Wei Yan Soe

on Kyansittha road, No 8 Ward, Hlinethaya (East) Township on 24 February and seized 2,700 stimulant tablets, 0.01 kilogramme of marijuana, 0.002 kilogramme of ICE and K300,000 from them. According to the investigation, the police arrested Win Pyae Kyaw and Htet Shane who live in Dhana Theikdhi street, west Kannar Ward, Insein Township at their house.

On 25 February, a combined

team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force searched Hor Sii near Shauksinsu Village, Kunlong Township and arrested him together with 0.02 kilogramme of heroin and 2,000 stimulant tablets.

It is reported that action is being taken against the arrested suspects under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, according to MPF. — MNA



An arrestee is seen along with seized drugs.

Be dutiful to society and the environment for booming fish sources

EVERYBODY needs to uphold an attitude to be grateful to the benefactors. All human beings should be dutiful to their society as well as the environment if they have taken something special from them.

Myanmar is rich in natural resources including underwater and above water sources. Myanmar's territorial waters consist of various species of water creatures, especially small and large fish species.

Fish species in the Myanmar waters are the invaluable deposit of the country. Utilizing such a deposit, Myanmar can earn income from the exportation process in addition to the supply of foods to the families. As such, all Myanmar people are responsible for the prevention of fish and marine animal species not being extinct. They all need to participate in taking preservation measures of water animals.

Moreover, the Government is operating 11 conservation sites for Hilsa across the nation with the aim of supporting the fishery industry as much as possible.

Whatever it may be, they are dutiful to the country and the environment.

their businesses and income sources. So also, the people of Myanmar will encounter high prices of fish and shortages of marine products. Consequently, the new generations will face the deficiency of elements to be taken from the fish and marine products.

Now is the best time. Today's conservation for the water animals will be a bigger source for the future. If so, the booming fish deposit will be invaluable for the whole of Myanmar.

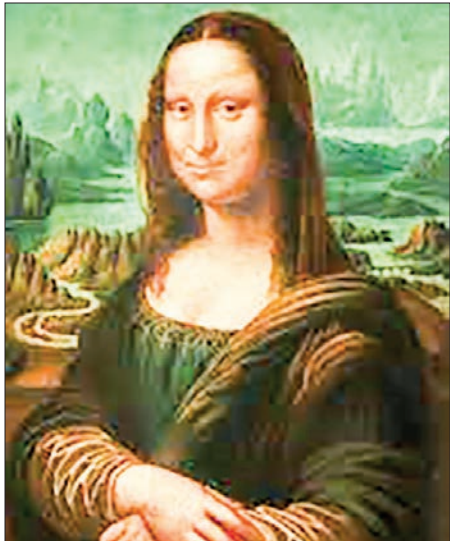
Recently, the Rakhine State authorities and relevant departments set up the conservation areas of Hilsa in various water sources in Myebon and Minbya townships of MraukU District in Rakhine State. Initially, a total of 2,065 acres of watercourse along Minchaung River in Myebon Township was set up as the Hilsa seasonal protection area.

Moreover, the Government is operating 11 conservation sites for Hilsa across the nation with the aim of supporting the fishery industry as much as possible. Whatever it may be, they are dutiful to the country and the environment.



Leonardo da Vinci and Earthshine

By Mg. Han Tin



LEONARDO di ser Piero da Vinci was an Italian polymath (person with knowledge of many subjects) of the **High Renaissance** (A revival of art and learning in Europe in the 14th – 16th centuries) who was active as a painter, draughtsman, engineer, scientist, theorist, sculptor and architect. He was born in Anchiano, Italy on 15 April 1452 and died in Chateau du Clos Luce, Amboise, France on May 2, 1519, at the age of sixty-seven. **Leonardo da Vinci** was one of the greatest artists of the Italian Renaissance. While he is best known as an artist, his work as a scientist and an inventor make him a true **Renaissance man** (a person who has wide interests and is an expert in several areas). Although

he is best known for his dramatic and expressive artwork, he also conducted dozens of carefully thought out experiments and created futuristic inventions that were groundbreaking for the time. He was a vegetarian who loved animals and despised war, yet he worked as a military engineer to invent advanced and deadly weapons.

Leonardo was an insatiable learner. He studied everything he could see: the flow of water, the way smoke rises through the air, how a woodpecker uses its tongue. And he had insights that were ahead of his time. Leonardo is most famous for paintings like the Mona Lisa and The Last Supper. (He had studied all the muscles involved in smiling and therefore was able to give

Mona Lisa that mysterious look on her face. He had also spent countless hours understanding how our eyes perceive objects at a distance and therefore he could make the perspective lines work flawlessly in *The Last Supper*.)

But in his mind, Leonardo was not primarily a painter. He thought of himself as an engineer first. In a letter to the ruler of Milan listing his strengths, sent in the early 1480s, Leonardo mentioned 10 different skills (such as: designing bridges, tunnels, chariots and catapults, for example) before adding at the end that he could also paint. By examining his surroundings so closely, Leonardo was able to develop new techniques that advanced his field and portrayed the world in a way no one had ever seen before. In other words, he was an innovator. He developed a theory about the working of a certain heart valve that researchers only verified a few decades ago. The earliest images of submarines came from him in the 16th century. Leonardo sketched a primitive submarine around 1515. (Bill Gates believes he was one of the most innovative thinkers ever.)

Little-known to most, one of his finest works is not a painting or an invention, but rather something from astronomy: Five hundred years ago, Leonardo Da Vinci solved an ancient astronomical riddle (mystery) of Earthshine. Leonardo was the first person who correctly

explained why we can see light between the two points of the crescent moon, the phenomenon we now call **earthshine** (Sunlight reflected from the earth that illuminates the dark part of the moon and reflected again to earth.) It is also called **earthlight**, and also sometimes called ashen glow, the old Moon in the new Moon's arms, or the Da Vinci glow, after Leonardo da Vinci explained the phenomenon for the first time in recorded history.



A Waxing Crescent Moon lit up by earthshine

Earthshine is a dull glow that lights up the unlit part of the Moon because the Sun's light reflects off the Earth's surface and back onto the Moon. It is the diffuse reflection of sunlight reflected

from the Earth's surface and clouds. At this time an observer on the Moon would see the Earth as a bright body, four times the diameter of the Moon as seen from Earth, almost completely illuminated by the Sun. We can see Earthshine whenever there's a crescent Moon on the horizon at sunset. Look between the horns of the crescent for a ghostly image of the full Moon. That's **Earthshine**.

Reference:-
TIME
Wikipedia
(timeanddate) <https://www.timeand-date.com/astronomy/earthshine.html>

General Assembly holds debate to boost momentum for universal COVID-19 vaccination

THE President of the UN General Assembly appealed on Friday for greater global solidarity to vaccinate the entire world against COVID-19.

Addressing a high-level debate on universal vaccination, Abdulla Shahid highlighted the persistent inequity in access to these lifesaving medicines and the failure of the international community to protect everyone against the disease.

Immoral and impractical

"Let me be clear: vaccine inequity is immoral, and it is impractical," he said, speaking from the iconic UN General Assembly Hall in New York. As of Friday, there were more than 428.5 million cases of COVID-19 globally, and 5.9 million deaths, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Mr Shahid said that although more than 10 billion vaccines have been administered around the



Doctor Akay Kaya, right, and a nurse Yildiz Ayten from the Bahcesaray public hospital, arrive in the remote village of Guneyyamac in eastern Turkey, to vaccinate residents aged 65 or over with the Sinovac CoronaVac Covid-19 vaccine, on 15 February 2021. PHOTO: BULENT KILIC/AFP

world so far – enough to inoculate every person on the planet – some 83 per cent of the population of the African Union (AU) has yet to receive a single dose. "It is not okay

that 27 countries have vaccinated less than 10 per cent of their populations while others are rolling out boosters or lifting restrictions entirely," he said.

Strength in solidarity

Mr Shahid convened the day-long debate to galvanize momentum towards ensuring everyone

can receive vaccines, bringing together world leaders, senior UN officials, civil society and non-profit representatives, private sector stakeholders, front-line first responders and even celebrities.

"If the pandemic has shown us anything, it is the importance of collective action – that our strength lies in solidarity," he said.

In a video message to the meeting, UN Secretary-General António Guterres called vaccine inequity "a moral indictment of our times", as it costs lives, damages economies, and allows the virus to circulate and mutate.

Prioritize COVAX initiative

For the UN chief, galvanizing momentum means that countries step up vaccine dose-sharing, as well as donations, to the COVAX solidarity mechanism. "It means manufacturers prioritizing and fulfilling vaccine contracts with COVAX, ensuring full transparency on

monthly production and creating the conditions for the local or regional production of tests, vaccines and treatments," he added. At the same time, pharmaceutical companies must share licences, know-how and technology to support vaccine production across regions.

Funding from donors and international financial institutions also needs to be ramped up, as does the fight against the "plague" of vaccine misinformation.

Ensure fair and full access

The President of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Collen Vixen Kelapile, addressed the dichotomy of the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the one hand, the crisis has shattered lives and livelihoods, among other fallout, and wiped out advances in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

SOURCE: UN



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Saturday 26 February 2022)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 27 February 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region and Kachin State. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy in Sagaing Region and (Northern and Eastern)Shan and Chin states and generally fair in the remaining regions and states.

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

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

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27 February 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27 February 2022: Generally fair weather.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 27 February 2022: Generally fair weather.

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NEWS
IN BRIEFPlastic treaty would be historic for planet:
UNEP chief

THE world has a rare opportunity to clean up the planet for future generations by uniting behind an ambitious treaty to tackle plastic trash, the UN environment chief told AFP.

Inger Andersen said a global plastics treaty being negotiated in Nairobi “holds the potential and the promise of being the biggest multilateral environmental breakthrough” since the Paris climate accords signed in 2015.

“This is a big moment. This is one for the history books,” the executive director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) told AFP in an interview.

The framework for a legally binding plastics agreement is still being hammered out ahead of a UN environment summit starting on Monday in Nairobi, where UNEP is headquartered.—AFP ■

Global Fund seeks 18 bln USD to restore
progress against AIDS, TB, malaria

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the presidents of five African countries on Wednesday launched a fundraising campaign aiming at 18 billion US dollars to restore progress against AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome), tuberculosis and malaria that has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“In the face of the catastrophic impact of COVID-19 on the fight against HIV, TB and malaria, the choice is stark: We either increase funding, or we abandon hope of finally defeating these epidemics by 2030,” said Peter Sands, executive director of the Global Fund. He thanked the presidents of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal and South Africa for co-launching the campaign.—Xinhua ■

US-Russia tensions spill into
space, but ISS safe — for now

The International Space Station, a symbol of US-Russian cooperation, has been continuously inhabited for more than 21 years.

PHOTO: NASA/ROSCOSMOS/AFP/FILE

RUSSIA'S invasion of Ukraine has placed a question mark over the future of the International Space Station, long a symbol of post Cold War cooperation, where astronauts and cosmonauts proudly live and work side-by-side.

The outpost was the subject of a menacing Twitter thread by Russian space agency head Dmitry Rogozin, who warned Thursday that US sanctions could “destroy our cooperation”

and said the research platform would plummet to the Earth without his nation's help.

Experts view such threats as inflated political rhetoric, given the two sides' reliance on one another for the safety of their personnel. But it could hasten a long expected divorce in their fragile marriage.

“Nobody wants to put the lives of astronauts and cosmonauts in danger by political manoeuvring,” John Logsdon, a

professor and space analyst at George Washington University, told AFP.

“It was a very conscious decision when Russia was brought into the station partnership in 1994 to make the station interdependent,” he added — a decision taken at the time with cost and speed concerns in mind.

Hostile tweets

The ISS, a collaboration among the US, Canada, Japan, the European Space Agency and Russia, is split into two sections: the US Orbital Segment, and the Russian Orbital Segment.

At present, the ISS depends on a Russian propulsion system to maintain its orbit, some 250 miles (400 kilometres) above sea level, with the US segment responsible for electricity and life support systems. Rogozin referenced this co-dependence in a series of hostile tweets posted shortly after US President Joe Biden announced sanctions aimed at Russia's aerospace industry.—AFP ■

Deadly floods hit
eastern Australia

TORRENTIAL downpours lashed eastern Australia on Saturday, raising deadly floodwaters to decades-long highs, swamping homes and sweeping away cars, including one carrying a team of rescuers.

Authorities in the eastern state of Queensland said two people were killed overnight, bringing the flooding death toll to four since early this week. Another two people are still missing. Images broadcast on Australian media showed homes and roads swamped, areas of land transformed into

lakes and a large chunk of a concrete pier floating down a fast-running river.

The waters snatched the car of a team of four emergency services workers who were heading to rescue a family from their flooded home, said state police disaster coordinator Steve Gollschewski. “The vehicle in which they were travelling was swept off the road into floodwaters. Three of our members were rescued. One of those members is deceased,” Gollschewski told a news conference.—AFP ■



Four people have been killed in floods in eastern Australia as the state of Queensland sees some of the heaviest rains in decades. PHOTO: AFP

Ukraine warns of radiation after
Chernobyl seized by Russians

The Chernobyl nuclear power plant, seen here in April 2021, is one of the most radioactive places on earth. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

UKRAINIAN authorities warned Friday that radiation levels had increased in the Chernobyl exclusion zone since it was seized by invading Russian troops, however the UN's nuclear watchdog said it currently “posed no danger”.

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday ordered his troops to invade Ukraine and on the same day they seized the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in one of the most radioactive places on earth. Ukrainian authorities

also said that they had informed the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that they had lost control of highly radioactive fuel rods from the power plant. “In the terrible hands of the aggressor, this significant amount of plutonium-239 can become a nuclear bomb that will turn thousands of hectares into a dead, lifeless desert,” said Ukraine's environmental protection ministry. “The humanitarian and environmental consequences of such

a catastrophe have no borders,” the ministry added, stressing that “they will have terrible consequences for people.” However the IAEA said the radiation levels remained low and did not pose a threat. “The IAEA assesses that the readings reported by the regulator... are low and remain within the operational range measured in the exclusion zone since it was established, and therefore do not pose any danger to the public,” it said in a statement.—AFP ■

Indian Army gifts 1,00,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses to Nepali Army

INDIAN Army on Thursday gifted 1,00,000 COVID-19 doses of 'Made-in-India' vaccines to the Nepali Army under the "Vaccine Maitri" initiative by the Government of India.

The vaccines were gifted in a ceremony at Nepali Army Headquarters, Tundikhel, read a statement of Embassy of India in Kathmandu.

The vaccines were handed over by Lt-Gen PN Ananthanarayanan, SM, President Gorkha Brigade to Lt-Gen Bal Krishna Karki, VCOAS of the Nepali Army.

Lt-Gen PN Ananthanarayanan, SM, President Gorkha Brigade also lauded



Indian Army gifts 1,00,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses to Nepali Army. **PHOTO: ANI**

the gallantry and commitment of the Gorkha soldiers in the Indian Army and expressed his commitment to serve the

Gorkha community, added the statement.

The VCOAS Nepali Army welcomed the gift of vaccines and expressed happiness over the cooperation extended by the Indian Army.

The Indian Army has been assisting the Nepali Army to fight COVID-19 through various kinds of assistance since 2020 including the Covishield vaccine, medical equipment, ambulances, etc.

This latest gift of vaccines is another testament to the close cooperation between the two armies and the two countries, particularly in times of need, said the statement. —ANI ■

Hong Kong: COVID-19 cases surge above 10,000 to new daily record

HONG Kong reported a new record of 10,010 confirmed COVID-19 infections over the past 24 hours on Friday (25 February) and 47 deaths.

Long queues of residents were sighted at a testing center, with daily infections on a trajectory described by authorities as "exponential", despite the city deploying the most draconian social restrictions since the start of the pandemic two years ago. Some experts predict the city could have 180,000 cases per day in March.

The government has contracted a Chinese firm to build

eight isolation and treatment facilities to help fight a worsening COVID-19 outbreak. The temporary facilities, to be built by China State Construction International Holdings Ltd and with a combined capacity of 50,000 beds, will be spread across Hong Kong, including on private land lent for free by developers. The time-frame for completion of the new facilities was not clear. The move follows promises of "staunch support" from mainland Chinese authorities, with Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam doubling down on the official goal of bringing infections to zero.— AFP ■



Hong Kong is in the midst of its worst coronavirus wave since the beginning of the pandemic. **PHOTO: AFP**

Covid rages in Iraq as vaccinations lag



Medics in Iraq are struggling to cope with the coronavirus in a country where vaccines are viewed with suspicion and the sick see hospitals as the last resort. **PHOTO: AFP**

IN the stores and buses of Iraq masks are rare even as Covid-19 spreads widely, vaccines

are viewed with suspicion and the sick see hospitals as a last resort.

At Al-Shifaa Hospital in the capital Baghdad, the ramifications are clear.

"More than 95 per cent of those sick with Covid-19 in intensive care are unvaccinated," said Ali Abdel Hussein Kazem, assistant director of the facility.

Half of the 40 intensive care beds are occupied in the department, where irregular beeping from monitors and IV machines is constantly heard.

Al-Shifaa hospital has been turned into a Covid treatment centre since the start of the pandemic and can treat 175 patients.

Linked to breathing devices, an old man and a young woman share a large room, where

a family member is allowed to monitor them — masked and in a white protective outfit.

Next door, a man in his 60s fidgets, pushing away his blanket. An asthmatic, he is also hooked up to a ventilator.

"He says he is suffocating," an alarmed relative said, summoning a doctor.

Iraq's public health system, already worn down by decades of war, under-investment and corruption, has struggled to cope with the coronavirus. Since January, Iraq's 40 million people have been confronted with a fourth coronavirus wave but — unlike other countries — the government has not imposed any restrictions.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Possible changes to covid guidance from White House team

JEN PSAKI spoke to the White House Press Corps Thursday. She said while there is a large focus on the conflict in Ukraine, that the President is still on track to reveal his Supreme Court nominee in the coming days. She also said Mr. Biden is preparing for his State of the Union speech, which is scheduled for next week. Psaki revealed that among one of the focuses of the President's State of the Union speech will be the covid-19 pandemic. She also said the President is in talks with his covid response team and looking at changing its strategy as cases continue to decline.— AFP ■

Venice Carnival gets into full swing with parties and strolls along the canals

STROLLING along the canals during the day and dancing at night in exclusive private parties, the revellers celebrated the Carnival tradition, slowly returning to normality after the coronavirus pandemic took a hit on the two previous editions. The 2020 Venice carnival was curtailed when the pandemic broke out in Italy in February that year and the event that usually draws tourists from around the world was cancelled the following year as the government sought to contain infections.—AFP ■

Hong Kong's Omicron-fuelled outbreak spreads within prisons

HONG KONG'S prisons on Friday reported a worsening coronavirus outbreak involving more than 200 inmates at a time when hundreds of political activists and protesters are behind bars. The city is in the throes of its worst-ever Covid-19 wave, registering thousands of cases every day that are overwhelming hospitals and government efforts to isolate infected people.

The outbreak — fuelled by the extremely transmissible Omicron variant — has also breached the city's prisons, where more than 7,200 people are currently detained.—AFP ■

Chinese banks limit financing for Russian purchases: Bloomberg

SEVERAL Chinese public banks are limiting financing to purchase raw materials from Russia for fear of Western sanctions following the invasion of Ukraine, Bloomberg news agency reported on Saturday.

China and Russia have strengthened their ties considerably since Moscow's 2014 annexation of Crimea and subsequent Western sanctions.

To power its growth, the Asian giant has also increased its purchases of Russian commodities, with about 30 per cent of Russian oil and gas now sold to China.

With the Russian invasion of



Pedestrians walk past a branch of ICBC (Industrial and Commercial Bank of China) in Chongqing municipality, 14 December 2013. **PHOTO: IC/XINHUA/FILE**

Ukraine, at least two of China's largest state-owned banks, ICBC and Bank of China, are restricting funding for the purchase of Russian commodities, Bloomberg said.

The decision was taken for fear that allowing funding could be perceived as support for Moscow's invasion and risk sanctions from the United States and its allies, the US news agency said, citing unidentified sources.

Bloomberg said the move may only be temporary.

ICBC is the world's largest bank by assets, while Bank of China is the country's largest commercial bank for currency

trading. US sanctions could potentially deprive them of access to the dollar.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine on Thursday sparked a wave of international sanctions against Moscow, mainly from Western countries.

Washington has, among other things, imposed sanctions on energy giant Gazprom and other large Russian companies, which will no longer be able to raise money on Western financial markets.

China is walking a diplomatic tightrope over the Ukraine conflict.—AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Russia banks try to reassure clients after Western sanctions

RUSSIAN banks reacted Friday to sanctions imposed over Russia's invasion of Ukraine, some trying to reassure clients and one protesting the punitive measures against it.

The United States has announced severe economic penalties against Russia for sending troops into neighbouring Ukraine.

The European Union has also approved a broad package of measures intended to hammer Russia's financial, energy and transport sectors, and curb the ability of Russians to keep large amounts of cash in EU banks.—AFP ■

UN to allocate 20 mln USD from CERF to meet urgent needs in Ukraine

UNITED Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced Thursday that the world body will allocate 20 million US dollars from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to meet the urgent needs in Ukraine, which is in the midst of a military conflict with Russia.

"Today I am announcing that we will immediately allocate 20 million US dollars from the Central Emergency Response Fund to meet urgent needs," the UN chief told reporters at the UN headquarters in New York. "We and our humanitarian partners are committed to staying and delivering, to support people in Ukraine in their time of need," said the secretary-general.—Xinhua ■

More volatility expected on Wall Street amid Ukraine tensions, Fed tightening

US equities reversed their earlier massive losses to finish higher on Thursday, snapping a four-day losing streak. But, it is not yet the time for investors to pop the champagne. Analysts cautioned that continued volatility is expected amid uncertainty over the Ukraine crisis coupled with policy tightening from the US Federal Reserve. The news that the Russia-Ukraine tensions have escalated into a military conflict overnight caused Wall Street to open Thursday's session with a plunge. The Dow Jones Industrial Average then managed to close up 92.07 points, erasing an 859-point plunge.

The S&P 500 climbed 1.50 per cent, after falling as far as 2.6 per cent earlier in the session. The Nasdaq Composite Index increased 3.34 per cent, after shedding nearly 3.5 per cent at the session low. Despite the stunning



A Los Angeles gas station's price display on Wednesday, a day before the global benchmark Brent crude futures hit \$100 a barrel. **PHOTO: FREDERIC J. BROWN/AFP**

reversal, the S&P 500 remained in correction territory, down more than 10 percent from its record close set on 3 January. The tech-heavy Nasdaq was still about 16 per cent off from its November closing record. "I think today was a knee-jerk reaction. You saw a margin selling on the opening,

and then the market firmed up after that," Larry Benedict, CEO & founder of The Opportunistic Trader, a US market research firm, told Xinhua. It was "relief rally in very very beaten-down stocks," he said, noting that "the market is not out of the woods".—Xinhua ■

Arabs fear for wheat supplies after Russia invades Ukraine



A Yemeni state employee carries a bag of wheat in Sanaa, Yemen, on 25 May 2018. **PHOTO: IMAGO / XINHUA/FILE**

RUSSIA'S invasion of Ukraine could mean less bread on the table in Egypt, Lebanon, Yemen and elsewhere in the Arab world where millions already struggle to survive.

The region is heavily dependent on wheat supplies from the two countries which are now at war, and any shortages of the staple food have potential to bring unrest.

If those supplies are disrupted, "the Ukraine crisis could trigger renewed protests and instability" in several Middle East

and North Africa countries, the Washington-based Middle East Institute said.

The generals now ruling in Khartoum after an October coup have not forgotten: In 2019 one of their own, Field Marshall Omar al-Bashir, Sudan's longtime autocrat, was toppled by his military under pressure from mass demonstrations triggered by a tripling of the bread price.

Sudan is already facing regular anti-coup protests but seems to have taken the initiative to avoid demonstrations

over bread.

When Russia's invasion began on Thursday, the second-highest figure in Sudan's ruling Sovereign Council was in Moscow to discuss trade ties.

Bread is already a luxury for millions in Yemen, where a seven-year war has pushed the country to the brink of famine.

"Most people can barely afford the basic foods," and the war in Ukraine will only "make things worse", Walid Salah, 35, a civil servant in the rebel-held capital Sanaa, told AFP.—AFP ■

Japan, EU arrange additional LNG supplies to Europe over Ukraine

JAPAN is discussing with the European Union about coordinating further diversion of part of its liquefied natural gas imports to Europe, government sources said Saturday, as the region faces the threat of Russia restricting its gas exports.

The Japanese government will likely provide additional LNG supplies from April as long as it can ensure sufficient energy supplies for its domestic market after receiving further requests from the European Union, the sources said.

Japan, a major LNG importer, announced earlier this month it will provide part of its imports to Europe for March, with the amount expected to total around several hundred thousand tonnes.

The Japanese government will ask domestic firms to consider additionally diverting their LNG imports to Europe from April after securing stable supplies, the sources said.

Russia accounts for around 40 per cent of European imports of LNG, putting the continent in a highly vulnerable position.



A ship containing tanks of LNG (liquefied natural gas) arrives in Mie Prefecture in January 2020. PHOTO: KYODO

There is mounting concern that Russia could cut its gas supply to retaliate for international sanctions triggered by its invasion of Ukraine since Thursday.—Kyodo ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Facebook bans Russia state media from running ads, monetizing

FACEBOOK on Friday restricted Russian state media's ability to earn money on the social media platform as Moscow's invasion of neighbouring Ukraine reached the streets of Kyiv.

"We are now prohibiting Russian state media from running ads or monetizing on our platform anywhere in the world," Nathaniel Gleicher, the social media giant's security policy head, said on Twitter.

He added that Facebook would "continue to apply labels to additional Russian state media." Facebook's parent company Meta said earlier Friday that Russia would hit its services with restrictions after it refused authorities' order to stop using fact-checkers and content warning labels on its platforms.—AFP ■

Japan firm-owned cargo ship hit by missile off Ukraine, 1 hurt

A cargo ship owned by a Japanese firm was hit by a missile off the coast of Ukraine in the Black Sea on Friday, injuring one crew member, the marine transportation firm in western Japan said Saturday, as heavy fighting ensued following the Russian invasion of its former Soviet neighbour. The Panamanian-registered cargo ship Namura Queen was damaged and one of the 20 Filipino crew sustained a non-life threatening injury to his shoulder, according to the firm based in Imabari, Ehime Prefecture.—Kyodo ■

Chinese-funded companies in Pakistan committed to corporate social responsibility: official

PAKISTAN'S State Minister for Information and Broadcasting Farrukh Habib said that the Chinese-funded companies operating in Pakistan are strongly committed to corporate social responsibility.

Chinese-funded corporations, including those working on projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), are playing a very responsible role in bringing about sustainable social, environmental and economic benefits for the welfare of people of Pakistan, Habib said while attending the 14th Annual Corporate Social Responsibility Summit on Thursday.

"The projects under CPEC are promoting the green development of the country ... The state-of-the-art infrastructure and energy projects give impetus to the



Chinese-funded corporations work on projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Photo taken on 24 October 2020 shows an Orange Line metro train pilot test run in Pakistan's eastern city of Lahore. The Orange Line Metro Train project is one of the CPEC early-harvest projects. PHOTO: XINHUA

economic growth of Pakistan," the state minister told Xinhua, adding that the early completion of the CPEC projects is the foremost priority of the Pakistani government. On the occasion, the National Forum for Environment and Health also gave awards related to corporate social responsibility to dozens of corporations including several Chinese-funded companies.—Xinhua ■

Fuel prices raised in Sri Lanka as energy crisis worsens



The island is in the grip of an economic crisis after the tourism sector, a key foreign-exchange earner, collapsed in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. PHOTO: AFP

ONE of Sri Lanka's biggest fuel suppliers put up its prices by as much as 12 per cent on Saturday, as the cash-strapped island's energy crisis worsened.

Lanka IOC, a fuel retailer which accounts for a third of the market, said it was increasing prices for diesel – commonly used by public transport – by 12 per cent, and petrol up 11 per cent.

The increases came after a seven per cent price rise three weeks ago and will add to the upward pressure on inflation,

already at a record high. The island is in the grips of an economic crisis after the tourism sector, a key foreign-exchange earner, collapsed in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. The government imposed a broad import ban in March 2020 in an effort to save foreign currency. The country is now suffering widespread shortages, including fuel, electricity, automotive parts and cement, with supermarkets forced to ration staple foods including rice, sugar and milk powder. The

shortages pushed food inflation to 25 per cent last month with overall inflation at 16.8 per cent. There was no immediate energy price revision by the state-run Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC), but most of its pumps have been out of fuel for days.

Energy minister Udaya Gammanpila announced this week that he expected fuel shortages to ease in "days", but warned that a sharp price increase was necessary to retain the viability of the loss-making CPC.—AFP ■

Chinese FM elaborates China’s basic position on Ukrainian issue



Russian forces approached Kyiv on the second day of the attack. PHOTO: AFP

CHINESE State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Friday elaborated China’s basic position on the Ukrainian issue.

He made these remarks and exchanged views on the situation in Ukraine during his phone talks with British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, the European Union’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell as well as Emmanuel Bonne, diplomatic counsellor to French President Emmanuel Macron, respectively.

Wang expounded on China’s basic position on the Ukrainian issue in the following five points.

First, China firmly stands for respecting and safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries and earnestly abiding by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, said Wang.

Secondly, China advocates the concept of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, he said.

Thirdly, he said, “China has been following the evolution of the Ukrainian issue, and the present situation is something we do not want to see.”

Fourth, the Chinese side supports and encourages all diplomatic efforts conducive to the peaceful settlement of the Ukrainian crisis. Fifth, China believes that the UN Security Council should play a constructive role in resolving the Ukrainian issue and that regional peace and stability as well as the security of all countries should be the priorities, he added.—Xinhua ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

US Indo-Pacific strategy overshadowed as Russian threat looms large

Over the past year, the US administration of President Joe Biden has made clear its pivot to the Indo-Pacific region, singling out China as the “only competitor” potentially able to mount a sustained challenge to a stable and open international system.

But Russia’s invasion of Ukraine on Thursday has underscored that the United States does not have the luxury of dealing only with the China challenge, while possibly complicating Biden’s Indo-Pacific strategy that views Europe’s engagement as a key part of the “collective capacity” Washington seeks to build in pushing back against Beijing.

Israel seeks ‘delicate balance’ in Ukraine crisis

With Russian forces in neighbouring Syria, Washington its unswerving ally and about a million citizens with ties to the former Soviet Union, Israel is seeking a delicate balance in the Ukraine crisis. For residents of Bat Yam, just south of Tel Aviv and home to many Jews with roots in Russia and Ukraine, the Russian invasion launched Thursday triggered shock and concern for relatives.

“I didn’t expect it, when I got the message from my parents (in Ukraine),” said Natalia Kogan. “People are stressed,” added the 57-year-old, who works at a supermarket catering for people from the former USSR, where Ukrainian and Russian beers are stocked side-by-side on shelves.

UK freezes Putin, Lavrov assets over Ukraine invasion

THE UK government on Friday ordered all assets of President Vladimir Putin and his Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov frozen over Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Britain and nine other northern European defence allies from the so-called Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) agreed in a call that further sanctions were needed on Russia.

“The leaders agreed that more sanctions were needed, including focusing on President Putin’s inner circle, building on the measures that had already been agreed,” Johnson’s office said after the meeting.

SOURCE: AFP/XINHUA

Russia targets Ukraine military infrastructure with cruise missiles



Russia has launched a barrage of air and missile strikes on Ukraine early Thursday and Ukrainian officials said that Russian troops have rolled into the country from the north, east and south. PHOTO: AFP

THE Russian army has targeted Ukraine’s military infrastructure with cruise missiles from the air and sea, the defence ministry said on Saturday, as Moscow pressed on with the

invasion of the pro-Western country.

“During the night, the armed forces of the Russian Federation launched a strike with long-range precision weapons using air- and sea-launched cruise missiles against the military infrastructure of Ukraine,” defence ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said in televised remarks.

He said that the Russian army only targeted military infrastructure without damaging “residential and social infrastructure”

That claim came despite evidence on the ground of residential buildings being hit. —AFP ■

Ukrainians wait for hours to cross the border into Poland

UKRAINIANS crossing the border at Poland’s town of Medyka on Friday (25 February) said they had been waiting for hours to get into the country and seek shelter from Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Aleksandra, who said she had come from Lviv, said she had waited 12 hours to get through. She said Lviv, Ukraine’s western-most large city, was still quiet for the time being but there were fears it could face shelling similar to the capital Kyiv and second city Kharkiv further east.—AFP ■



Refugees from eastern of Ukraine wait for their departure. PHOTO: AFP

Russia vetoes UN resolution deploring ‘aggression’ in Ukraine

RUSSIA, as expected, vetoed a UN Security Council resolution on Friday that deplored “in the strongest terms” the country’s “aggression” against Ukraine and demanded the immediate withdrawal of its troops.

Eleven of the council’s 15 members voted for the motion, which was co-written by the United States and Albania. China, India and the United Arab Emirates abstained.

The resolution was always doomed to fail because of Moscow’s veto power as a permanent member of the council.

However the debate offered member nations an opportunity to voice condemnation of President Vladimir Putin’s decision to launch a full-scale offensive against Russia’s neighbour.

“Let me make one thing clear,” US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield said after the vote. “Russia, you can veto this resolution, but you cannot veto our voices, you cannot veto the truth, you cannot veto our principles, you cannot veto



A Ukrainian military medic approaches the bodies of Russian servicemen wearing a Ukrainian service uniform and lying beside and inside a vehicle after being shot during a skirmish in Kyiv. PHOTO: AFP

the Ukrainian people.”

The wording of the draft text put before the Security Council was watered down in the hours before the vote to gain more support.

The word “condemns” was replaced by “deplores” and a reference to Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, which allows members to take military action to restore peace, was deleted.

The resolution reaffirmed the sovereignty of Ukraine and called for Russia to “immediately cease its use of force against Ukraine”.

Ultimately, more than 70 countries co-sponsored the resolution. “Make no mistake, Russia is isolated. It has no support for the invasion of Ukraine,” said Britain’s ambassador to the UN, Barbara Woodward.—AFP ■

Russia-Ukraine conflicts intensify, sending shock waves across world



Firefighters in front of a damaged residential building on Koshytsa Street, a Kyiv suburb, where a military shell reportedly hit, 25 February 2022. PHOTO: GENYA SAVILOV/AFP

RUSSIA and Ukraine are plunging deeper into the mire of military conflict, sending shock waves across the world.

According to the latest information released by the two sides, multiple military targets across Ukraine were under attack; fighting was reported across several fronts; explosions were heard in the centre of Ukraine’s capital Kyiv.

The shock waves of the conflicts have battered the world’s

major markets, bringing stocks down to new lows. Due to fears of supply disruptions, crude oil and natural gas prices jumped to multi-year highs.

INTENSIFYING CONFLICT

The Russian Defence Ministry said Friday that the Russian Armed Forces have disabled 118 military infrastructure facilities in Ukraine.

Eleven military airfields, 13 command posts and commu-

nication centres of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, 14 S-300 and Osa anti-aircraft missile systems, and 36 radar stations were among the facilities put out of order; the ministry’s Zvezda broadcaster reported, citing Defence Ministry Spokesman Igor Konashenkov.

On Friday morning, serial explosions rocked Kyiv, which Ukrainian Interior Ministry adviser Anton Gerashchenko later called “attacks by our air defences on enemy planes or drones,” citing operative information.

Mayor Vitali Klitschko tweeted that three people were injured, among whom one was in critical condition, after missile debris hit a residential building.

He also posted a photo showing a building with part of its wall torn down and emergency services present at the scene.

Advisor to head of the President’s Office of Ukraine Mykhailo Podoliak said Russian forces have seized the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, Interfax-Ukraine news agency reported on Thursday.—Xinhua ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Putin ready to send delegation to Minsk for talks with Ukraine

PUTIN is ready to send a Russian delegation to Minsk for negotiations with Ukraine at the level of representatives of the Defense Ministry, the foreign ministry and the presidential administration, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Friday.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko said Belarus will create necessary conditions for negotiations between Russia and Ukraine. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Friday that Ukraine is not afraid of negotiating with Russia on issues like the guarantee of Ukraine’s security and neutral status. Later, Zelensky in a televised address reiterated his hope for negotiation with Russia. On Thursday, Putin authorized “a special military operation” in response to the appeal of the leaders of Lugansk and Donetsk in the Donbass region, three days after he signed two decrees recognizing the two “republics” as “independent and sovereign states”, and Ukraine confirmed that military installations across the country were under attack.

Defiant Zelensky vows ‘I’m here’ after Russian attack

AFTER Ukrainian forces said they had repulsed a Russian attack on their capital Saturday, President Volodymyr Zelensky shot a selfie-style video to vow to stay and fight on.

“I am here. We will not lay down any weapons. We will defend our state, because our weapons are our truth,” he declared, denouncing as disinformation claims that he had surrendered or fled. “A lot of fake information has appeared on the internet saying that I allegedly called on our army to lay down its arms and that evacuation is underway,” he said outside his office.

Wearing olive green military-style clothing and looking tired but determined, he declared: “Our truth is that this is our land, our country, our children and we will protect all of this.”

‘This war will last,’ warns Macron

THE world must brace for a long war between Russia and Ukraine after Moscow launched an invasion of its pro-Western neighbour, French President Emmanuel Macron warned on Saturday.

“If can tell you one thing this morning it is that this war will last.... This crisis will last, this war will last and all the crises that come with it will have lasting consequences,” Macron’s told France’s annual agriculture fair, warning: “We must be prepared”.

Fighting in Kyiv as Putin calls for Ukraine coup, dozens dead

UKRAINIAN forces fought off Russian troops in the capital Kyiv on Friday on the second day of a conflict that has claimed dozens of lives, as Russian President Vladimir Putin called on the Ukrainian army to remove the country’s leadership. Small arms fire and explosions were heard in the city’s northern district of Obolonsky as what appeared to be an advance party of Russia’s invasion force left a trail of destruction. Putin defied Western warnings to unleash a full-scale invasion on Thursday that has displaced at least 100,000 people and prompted the European Union to adopt personal sanctions against him. In a televised address, Putin described the Ukrainian government as “terrorists” and “a gang of drug addicts and neo-Nazis”.

Kyiv apartment block hit by missile

A high-rise apartment block was hit by shelling overnight in Kyiv as fighting raged between Russian attackers and Ukrainian forces, emergency services said Saturday. The authorities said the number of victims was “being specified” and that an evacuation was underway. They posted a picture online of the tower block with a hole covering at least five floors blasted into the side and rubble strewn across the street below.

SOURCE: AFP

Myanmar U-22 team to play international matches before SEA Games

MYANMAR U-22 men's football team is planning to play international matches before the 31st SEA Games in May, according to the Myanmar Football Federation.

The Myanmar squad will be preparing for the SEA Games in the coming days and will have around 30 preliminary players, football officials said.

The Myanmar U-22 team competed in the 2022 ASEAN U-23 Championship in Cambodia

but withdrew from the tourney due to a positive test for the COVID-19 virus.

The team Myanmar also competed in the 2022 Asian Cup U-23 Championship held in Kyrgyzstan at the end of October 2021 and has been constantly preparing since then.

The Myanmar U-22 team that will compete in the SEA Games has been reorganized with most of the players who competed in the previous com-

petitions and will be headed by Bulgarian Popov.

The team will have more than two months to prepare for the SEA Games, and football authorities are trying to arrange international matches for the team Myanmar.

The team tried to play an international friendly match before the ASEAN U-23 Championship but could not play due to the COVID-19 pandemic, officials added. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Klopp urges Liverpool to seize their chance in League Cup final against Chelsea



Liverpool and Chelsea will clash in Sunday's League Cup final.
PHOTO: AFP

JURGEN Klopp wants Liverpool to take a step towards immortality when they target the first trophy in their historic quadruple bid in Sunday's League Cup final against Chelsea.

Klopp's side are chasing silverware in all four major competitions after closing the gap on Premier League leaders Manchester City to three points.

The Reds have made it to their first domestic cup final since 2016, are on course for the Champions League quarter-finals after a last 16 first leg win at Inter Milan and host Norwich in the FA Cup fifth round on Wednesday.

Klopp has already delivered Champions League glory in 2019 and a long-awaited Premier

League title in 2020, but the German knows only sustained success will see his group ranked alongside the club's 1970s and 1980s legends.

"We all know that in the moment the people are really happy," Klopp said.

"But in 20 years if you want to talk about this team, I would not be surprised if people would then say if we don't win anything any more, 'Yeah they were good, but they should have won more'.

"That's why we should try now to win a few things. And the next chance, the best chance we have this weekend, is against Chelsea when it's really tricky."

Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson believes victory at Wembley would be the perfect springboard for even greater success in the final weeks of the season. No English club has ever won the top four trophies available in a single campaign and Henderson said: "It is a big moment. To get a trophy so early on in the season can give the squad a big boost." — AFP ■

Poland refuses to play 2022 World Cup play-off against Russia

POLAND will not play their 2022 World Cup play-off with Russia in Moscow on March 24 due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine the president of the Polish football federation said on Saturday.

The conflict entered the third day on Saturday since Russian leader Vladimir Putin unleashed a full-scale invasion that has killed dozens of people, forced more than 50,000 to flee

Ukraine in just 48 hours and sparked fears of a wider conflict in Europe.

"The time for talking is over. It is time to act. Due to the escalation of the Russian Federation's aggression in Ukraine, the Polish team does not envisage playing the play-off against Russia," wrote Cezary Kulesza, adding it was the "only correct decision". He said he

would work with the Swedish and Czech federations — the winners of their match would have to play in Russia (on 29 March) if the latter beat Poland — to present a unified position to Fifa.

The three federations issued a joint statement on Thursday demanding Fifa move the respective play-offs from Russia. — AFP ■

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

- (a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.
- (b) To emphasize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
- (c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy.

2. Economic affairs

- (a) To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern techniques and strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.
- (b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
- (c) To promote and support local businesses to create employment opportunities and increase domestic production.

3. Social affairs

- (a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
- (b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National peoples and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national characteristics.
- (c) To enhance the health, fitness and education quality of the entire nation.

Nadal beats Medvedev again to reach Acapulco ATP final



Spain's Rafael Nadal on the way to a semi-final victory over Russian Daniil Medvedev in the semi-finals of the ATP Mexico Open at Acapulco. **PHOTO: AFP**

RAFAEL Nadal beat Daniil Medvedev 6-3, 6-3 on Friday to reach the final of the ATP Mexico Open and insure the Russian will not celebrate his rise to number one with the Acapulco trophy. Medvedev was unable to avenge his loss to Nadal in the Australian Open final, where the Spaniard rallied from two sets down to triumph in five and claim a record-setting 21st Grand Slam singles title.

But the 26-year-old Rus-

sian departs Mexico knowing he'll move to number one in the world on Monday. He was assured of reaching the summit when Serbian star Novak Djokovic fell in the quarter-finals at Dubai on Thursday. Nadal pushed his perfect 2022 record to 14-0, but it wasn't as simple as the scoreline might suggest. He powered through the first set without facing a break point and broke Medvedev in the opening game of the second.—AFP ■