MODERNIZE THE COUNTRY WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SMART VILLAGES PAGE-8 (OPINION)

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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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.

Farmers from Yathedaung study cultivation of edible oil crops at Farmers' Education Farm in Sittway

FARMERS from Yathedaung Township visited the Farmers' Education Farm in Sittway Township, Rakhine State, on 12 March to study the cultivation of edible oil crops and to expand sown acreage next winter.

The Farmers' Education Farm was established in Uyintha village-tract in Sittway Township by the Department of Agriculture in Rakhine State, where farmers are educated to increase their agricultural knowledge.

During the study tour, department officials explained the cultivation of crops grown in the demonstration plots, seed production process, and the process of storing seeds for each crop, and the farmers asked questions about the cultivation methods and conditions for producing edible oil, and production and use of quality seeds.

U Hla Tun, a farmer who came to the farm from Padaukmyaing village, Yathedaung Township, said, "We currently grow peanuts and cow peas for family consumption. These crops can be grown and cultivated with a little water. It is also convenient to grow these crops because they do not need to be fed a lot of fertilizer. That's why I came to study and expand cultivation in the coming winter."

Farmers from Mayukan and Musekyun villages in Yathedaung Township visit thriving sunflower plantation at Farmers' Education Farm in Sittway on 12 March 2022.

"We are doing traditional farming, so we are cultivating in the traditional way. When we came here, we were educated by agronomists who explained their farming methods," he continued.

"If we combined the knowledge gained here with what we are cultivating, we hope the yield will increase," he added.

Farmers from villages in Mayukan and Musekyun, Yathedaung Township, came and study the model farms and seed production farms at the Farmers' Education Farm in Sittway, where sunflower, peas and beans, potato and onion are cultivated as model farms.—Tin Htun (IPRD)/GNLM

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Objectives of 77th Anniversary Armed Forces Day

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

State Administration Council
Press Release
Re-invitation to Myanmar citizens who reside in various regions for many reasons

1. Some student youths, State service personnel and citizens, with worries, have evaded to areas of EAOs and foreign countries due to the incitements and intimidation of NLD members, extremist followers, unlawful associations and terrorist groups such as CRPH and NUG, stimulation of CDM, and persons and organizations at home and abroad not wishing to restore peace and stability of the State since Tatmadaw assumed the State responsibilities on 1 February 2021.
2. They are further worried about the dictatorship statement and speeches of unlawful association and terrorist group CRPH and NUG, and some relevant persons. As they face no security guarantee and difficulties in socio-economic life in those areas, they wish to return to their native lands.
3. **The State Administration Council will specifically ease restrictions for service personnel, intellectuals and intelligentsia, and persons from various arenas and citizens who, with worries, absconded from the country except for persons who committed murders, robberies, setting fires, mine explosions and intentional attacks on security troops, those who crowded to attack public service personnel and some people, those who destroyed government and private-owned buildings and those who are highly involved in the CDM activities by providing monetary assistance and other means.**
4. As those who evade their native areas are also citizens, the State Administration Council will arrange their returns from the evaded areas to various parts of Myanmar.
5. As such, the information was released that if those who evaded to various areas, except for persons who committed any kinds of crime, wish to return to their native lands in Myanmar of their own accord due to multiple worries, the citizens abroad can contact nearby ward, village, township and district administration bodies and relevant embassies, military attaché offices and consulates in accord with the easing restrictions under the law.

Information Team
State Administration Council

THE State Administration Council will specifically ease restrictions for service personnel, intellectuals and intelligentsia, and persons from various arenas and citizens who, with worries, absconded from the country except for persons who committed murders, robberies, setting fires, mine explosions and intentional attacks on security troops, those who crowded to attack public service personnel and some people, those who destroyed government and private-owned buildings and those who are highly involved in the CDM activities by providing monetary assistance and other means.

High demand drives dried chilli price up

Workers are sorting quality chilli for exportation in Minbu District.

THE price of dried chilli has remarkably risen in Minbu District, Magway Region on account of strong demand, Daw Sein Mya, an owner of Ywathar depot elaborated.

The prices of dried chilli this year are exorbitantly high as against the year-ago period, ranging from K7,000 to K7,600 per viss (a viss equals to 1.6 kg), said U Thar Paw, a merchant said.

Sinbyukyun, Yenangyoung, Pwintbyu, Kalaw, Aungban, Pyinmana, Thazi, Yamethin and Sagu townships mainly supply the dried chilli to the warehouses in Minbu city, with approximately 8,000-10,000 visses daily circulated in the market.

Next, Myanmar's chilli pepper is primarily conveyed to Thailand and China. Nonetheless, the closure of the major border Muse post between Myanmar and China from 8 July 2021 brought Myanmar's fresh chilli pepper export to China to a halt last year. Consequently, the chilli pepper produced by Kyaukse area, which was supposed to be conveyed to China, was shifted to Thailand through Myawady border post last year.

It is commonly grown in Ayeyawady, Mandalay and Magway regions and Shan State. The export varieties of fresh chilli peppers are 692, 777, 999, Demon, Sunshine and Lucky one.—IPRD (Minbu)/GNLM

487 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 13 March, total figure rises to 605,347

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **605,347** after **487** new cases were reported on 13 March 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **557,810** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **19,409** after **3** died.

COVID-19 vaccine is being injected to those of priority groups in regions and states for prevention and control of the disease. Up to 12-3-2022, a total of **24,819,640** people have been vaccinated. Of them, **21,427,957** people have been fully vaccinated and **3,391,683** people are yet to get the second shots.—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 capibility 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)

8th State Central Working Committee of the Sangha holds 2nd session of 4th Meeting

State Central Working Committee of the Sangha Chairman Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dr Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa gives Uyojana Katha at second day of the fourth metting of the 8th State Central Working Committee of the Sangha in Maha Pasana Cave on Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Hill in Yangon on 13 March.

THE second day of the fourth meeting of the Eighth State Central Working Committee of the Sangha took place at the Maha Pasana Cave on Thiri Mingala Kaba Aye Hill in Mayangon Township, Yangon Region, yesterday.

The meeting was attended by the State Ovadacariya Sayadaws, State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee member Sayadaws, members of State Central Working Committee of the Sangha, and officials of Religious Affairs Department.

State Central Working Committee of the Sangha Chairman Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dr Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa presided over the meeting and Joint Secretary Sayadaw Agga Maha Pandita Bhaddanta Sihanada acted as the master of ceremonies.

Afterwards, certificates of State Vinaya Panel of Judges were presented to Sayadaws of the State Separate Vinaya Panel of Judges and the State Vinaya Panel of Judges. Fifteen Ovadacariya Sayadaws, Chairman Sayadaw, Secretary Sayadaw, and a representative each from region/state and Ganas signed the substitutions, decisions, confirmations, and records made at the third and fourth meetings of the 8th State Central Working Committee of the Sangha recorded in the Religious History Book.

The third and fourth meetings of the 8th State Central Working Committee of the Sangha successfully concluded after the Sayadaws listening to the concluding remarks of Chairman Sayadaw Abhidhaja Maha Rattha Guru Abhidhaja Agga Maha Saddhamma Jotika Dr Bhaddanta Kumara Bhivamsa and recited the verse started with "Jayanto Bodhiyamule" three times.

The Senior General Than Shwe (Retired) and wife Daw Kyaing Kyaing and family, Vice-Senior General Maung Aye (Retired) and wife Daw Mya Mya San and family, Agga Maha Thray Sithu Agga Maha Thiri Thudamma U Thein Sein, the President (Retired) and wife Daw Khin Khin Win and family, Maha Thray Sithu (General Soe Win-Retired) and wife Daw Than Than Nwe and family, Maha Thayay Sithu Lt-Gen Tin Aye (Retired) and wife (Daw Kyi Kyi Ohn) and family, Zeya Kyaw Htin Maj-Gen Tin Ngwe (Retired) and Daw Nan Khin Hla Win and family, Maha Thray Sithu Lt-Gen Khin Maung Than (Retired) and wife Daw Marlar Tint and family, Maha Thray Sithu Lt-Gen Aung Htwe (Retired) and wife Daw Khin Hnin Wai and family, Maha Thray Sithu Lt-Gen Maung Bo (Retired) and wife Daw Khin Lay Myint and family, Maha Thray Sithu Lt-Gen Ye Myint (Retired) and wife Dr Daw Tin Lin Myint and family offered alms for the whole day to the Sayadaws who attended the ceremony yesterday.—MNA

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

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

A total of 200 empty oxygen cylinders, an oxygen plant and 25.29 tonnes of masks were imported by four vehicles of three companies via the Chinshwehaw border trade post yesterday.

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

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

Empty oxygen cylinders.

Pearl production reaches 128 per cent at 12 camps

UNION Minister for Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation U Khin Maung Yi arrived at the Done Paleaw Pearl Farm in Kyunsu Township in Taninthayi Region yesterday morning, and officials explained the working conditions.

Upon the explanation, the Union Minister said the Myanmar Pearl Enterprise is engaged in pearl farming with 12 camps and the production rate was 128 per cent in the fiscal year 2020-2021. It also created job opportunities for local people.

He highlighted the need to continue the local development projects, to try to get more market in the international market as there are people who like pearls depending on the quality and size. As it is very important to obtain good quality pieces of pearl in the farming process, it is necessary for the enterprise and the company to cooperate more and follow the rules and regulations according to the process, he said.

Union Minister for MoNREC U Khin Maung Yi views pearl production farming work in Kyunsu Township of Taninthayi Region on 13 March.

He also stressed the need to carry out to further develop the mother-of-pearl finishing industry which uses the by-products of pearl farming, the oyster shell, and the need to pay attention to environmental conservation, as only good biodiversity and marine ecosystems can help successful oyster farming.

Afterwards, the Union Minister provided 20 set of solar panels to the local people in two Salone villages near Done Paleaw Island, and inspected the pearl farming processes near the island.

In the afternoon, the Union Minister inspected the oyster farming with the use of Surface Long Line System in Natthamee Yedwin Island and Pyinsabu Island in Kyunsu Township.

Afterwards, he attended to the need of pearl production process in Domel Island in Bokpyin Township, and inspected the oyster farming using the Surface Long Line System in Zinyaw Island.—MNA

Deputy Information Minister inspects media activities in Magway, Bago, Yangon regions

Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Tint meets officials and staff of IPRD offices in Magway, Bago and Yangon regions on 12 and 13 March.

DEPUTY Minister for Information U Ye Tint met an assistant director and staff from the Thayet District Information and Public Relations Department, Magway Region and township heads from Sinbaungwe, Kanma and Mindon townships, followed by giving instructions and inspected the Kanma township IPRD office on the morning of 12 March.

In the afternoon, the Deputy Information Minister met the assistant director and staffs of Pyay District IPRD, and township heads from Paukkaung, Shwedaung, Padaung, Thegon and Paungde townships and officials and staffs from MRTV retransmission station and discussed working processes.

Yesterday morning, the Deputy Minister met officials and staff of the Thayawady District IPRD, and township heads from Nattalin, Zigon, Gyobingauk, Minhla, Letpadan, Okpo and Monyo townships and the head of Minhla MRTV retransmission station.

In the afternoon, he inspected the Hmawby Township IPRD, and met officials and staff, township heads from Insein, Shwepyitha, Taikkyi, Hmawby, Htantabin, Hlegu and Mingaladon townships and discussed working matters.

During the meeting, the Deputy Minister urged staffs to have a correct understanding of the current situation in the country and to make people aware of the State's efforts for peace, stability and development through public relations.

Knowledge development for students, correcting the idea and nurturing young people is important, the deputy minister said.

He said that employees should read the literature themselves and accumulate their knowledge.

He instructed officials to share their knowledge with the public and to make their work successful and coordinated the submissions of the staff.—MNA

Daily newspapers available online

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Pharmaceutical entrepreneurs discuss export/import and financial issues

CHAIRMAN of the COVID-19 Control Working Committee on Commodity Trade Deputy Minister for Commerce U Nyunt Aung attended the Zoom Meeting of the Republic of the Union Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) on export/ import and financial matters for pharmaceutical importers.

The Deputy Minister addressed the meeting, and Joint Secretary of the Central Committee on Ensuring the Smooth Flow of Trade and Goods Brig-Gen Yan Naung Soe, Central Committee's Secretary and Chairman of the Task Force (Yangon) to facilitate the import of COVID-19 medicines and medical supplies U Moe Myint, Chairman and officials of the Myanmar Pharmaceutical and Medical Equipment Entrepreneurs Association discussed the export/import and financial issues and difficulties encountered in doing business with banks.

Upon the discussions, the Deputy Minister coordinated with relevant departments.—MNA

The meeting on export/ import and financial issues of pharmaceutical entrepreneurs in progress on 13 March.

Yangon mayor inspects Hlaing River-Hlawga Water Resilient Project

Yangon Mayor U Bo Htay inspects development undertakings in Yangon City on 13 March.

YANGON Mayor U Bo Htay, in his capacity as chair of Yangon Region City Development Committee, inspected cleaning and sanitation activities at Inya Lake in Mayangon Township and Sawbwagyigon Ward, Insein Township, Hlaing River-Hlawga water resilient project in Hmawby Township, activity to keep Hmawhaywun Park clean and green on the morning of 13 March.

The mayor observed the maintenance of 507 feet long retaining walls at Inya Lake, removing trash, weed and debris with the use of aquamarine equipment and greenery activity at the Lake. The mayor instructed them to accomplish the matters regarding grading, maintenance and planting grass for a lawn between the retaining wall and the pavement.

Later, they checked the cleaning and sanitation activities to ensure smooth drainage in Sawbwagyigon Ward. He made a remark for site grading and greenery activities.

At the briefing room of Hlaing River-Hlawha water resilient project in the compound of Myanmar Rice Research Centre in Hmawby Township, the mayor stated that the project can contribute to the irrigation system for 100 acres of summer paddy and drinking water supply network for Yangon Region.

He coordinated the requirements and instructed the officials concerned to fulfill them and accelerate the efforts in reconstruction and maintenance activity.

The project helps to maintain the storage capacity of Hlawga reservoir, with daily capacity of 60 million gallons of water through 1600 mm HDPE pipe connected from Phugyi water storage facility to Hlawga one, supported by Kankalay river water pump PS1 and PS2 in Hmawby Township.

The project is slated to complete in the end of March 2022 and will start to support Hlawga water distribution network.

Finally, they inspected the water storage facilities, pumping station and water treatment plants and gave some remarks.—MNA

Wholesale Palm Oil Reference Price announced

THE Committee for the Supervision of the Import and Distribution of Edible Oils, Ministry of Commerce, has been working to regulate domestic oil prices in line with changes in world palm oil prices. FOB prices in Malaysia and Indonesia, the main producers and exporters of palm oil, are monitored on a daily basis, and the basic wholesale reference price for trading in the domestic market is released weekly, after including transportation costs, bank charges and taxes.

According to the current international situation, the price of palm oil is rising in the world's palm oil exporting countries. According to calculation based on FOB prices incurrent in the week, it has been announced that from 14 to 20 March, the basic reference of the Yangon wholesale price will be from the lowest price of 5,940 kyats per viss to the highest price of 6,576 kyats per viss.

These basic wholesale quote prices can be found on the Department of Consumer Affairs website: www.doca.gov.mm and on the Facebook page of the Myanmar Oil Traders and Oil Entrepreneurs Association.—MNA

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

MoLA publishes translated legal books from No 1 to No 10

THE Ministry of Legal Affairs has been publishing books translated by the Legal Translation Commission into Myanmar and has already published books numbers 1 to 10.

The Legal Translation Commission was formed in 2015 under the Legal Translation Commission Law and is chaired by the Union Minister for Legal Affairs and the Attorney General of the Union and formed with a team of lawyers and subject-wise experts.

The Legal Translation Commission in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has translated and published existing laws enacted in English during the British colonial era into Myanmar and has now translated 30 laws.

The Chairman of the Commission has issued an order stating that the books of Law Translation No. 1 to 10 containing the 30 translated laws have the same authority as the original text under Section 12 of the Legal Translation Commission Law. These are valuable books that can be used as a legal reference for lawyers and those who want to study laws.

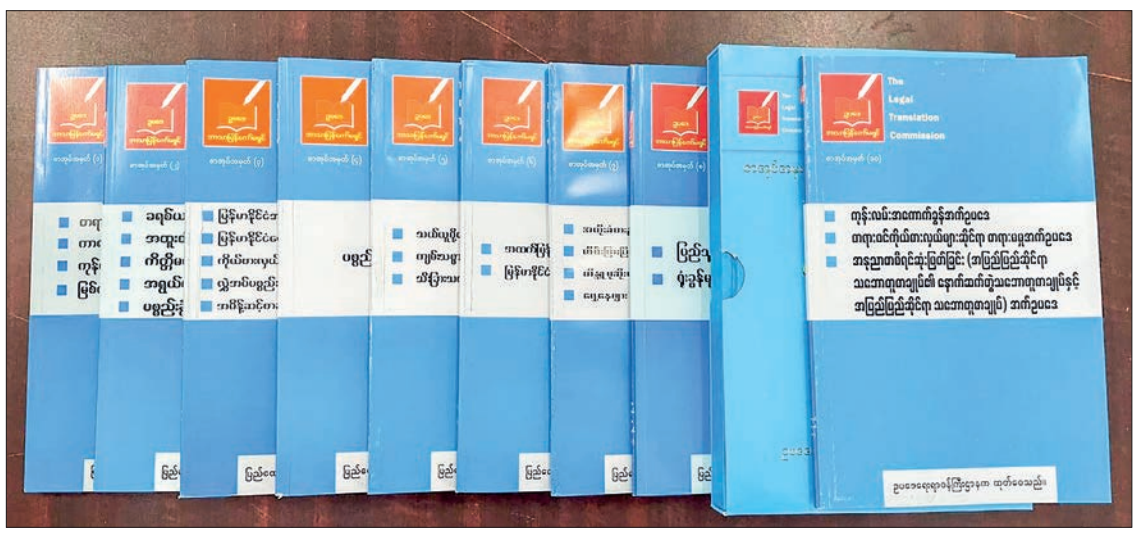


Photo shows translated legal books from No 1 to No 10 published by Ministry of Legal Affairs.

The book No 1 includes the Bar Council Act, the Limitation Act, the Sale of Goods Act and the Defile Traffic Act. The book No 2 features the Christian Marriage Act, the Special Marriage Act, the Registration of Kittima Adoptions Act, the Majority Act and the Partition Act. The book No 3 comprises the Myanmar Official Secrets Act, the Myanmar Carriage by Air Act, the Power of Attorney Act, the Official Trustees Act and the Process Fees Act. The book No 4 consists of the Transfer of Property Act. The book No 5 comprises the Carriers Act, the Oath Act and the Specific Relief Act. The book No 6 carries the Upper Myanmar Land and Revenue Regulations and the Myanmar Divorce Act. The book No 7 includes the Interest Act, the Married Women's Property Act, the Hindu Widow's Re-Marriage Act and the Legal Practitioners Act. The book No 8 includes the Public Property Protection Act and the Court Fees Act. The book No 9 features the Penal Code. The book No 10 includes the Land Customs Act, the Legal Representatives Suits Act and the Arbitration (Protocol and Convention) Act).

The books can be ordered individually or in batches from the No 1 to No 10, it is reported.—MNA

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timber, consumer goods and fuel seized

UNDER the supervision of the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee, effective action is being taken to prevent illegal trade in accordance with the law.

On 12 March, the port duty inspection team carried out inspections at the Myanmar Industrial Port Container Inspection Station and seized various sizes of steel pipes (estimated at K17.8 million) imported in violation of import licences were seized and action is being taken in accordance with the customs law.

Similarly, combined inspection teams conducted inspections at the Mayangchaung Permanent Checkpoint in Mon State.

Illegal garments that do not show any official documents and carried more than what is stated in the import declaration (ID) (estimated at K2,044,700) was seized on a truck leaving Myawady for Yangon, and action is being taken in accordance with customs law.

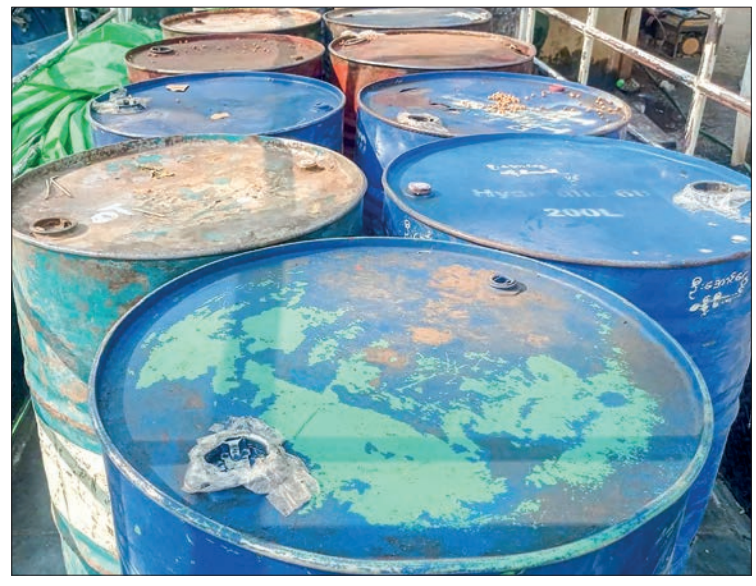
Similarly, inspections were carried out by inspection teams under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force in Sagaing Region on 13 March.

In Yinmabin Township, 34.48 tonnes of illegal gum-kino (estimated at K10,344,000) were confiscated under the Forest Law.

In Monywa Township, illegal fuel (estimated at K4.18 million) was confiscated under the Petroleum Products Law thus a total estimated value of K14.524 million has been arrested and action is being taken.

In addition, a combined inspection team led by Bago Region Forest Department reportedly carried out inspections under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force in Bago Region.

A total of 4.7704 tonnes of illegal teak and hardwood timber (estimated at K1,335,420) were seized in the forest reserve in Bago District and action was taken in accordance with the forest law.



Barrels bear illegal fuel was seized in Yinmabin Township on 13 March.

Thus, a total of five arrests were made on 12 and 13 March (estimated value is K35,704,120), according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee.—MNA

Drugs worth over K26.93 billion seized in Amarapura Township

Driver Than Htike (a) Than Naing is seen with truck and K26.93 billion worth of drugs in Amarapura Township on 11 March.

A total of K26.93 billion worth of drugs were seized in Amarapura Township, Mandalay Region, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

A combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force reportedly searched a 22-wheeler driven by Than Htike (alias) Than Naing inside the Swetaw Bus Terminal in Amarapura Township, Mandalay Region at 5:30 am on 11 March.

Police confiscated 1.18 tonnes of methamphetamine and 111 kilogrammes of ketamine worth K26.93 billion, which were covered under bags of maize, and took action against the perpetrators, according to the MPF.—MNA

2,900 companies struck off register due to the absence of AR as of 1 March: DICA

A total of 2,900 companies have been struck off the register as of 1 March 2022 since July 2021 as they fail to submit annual return (AR) on the online registry system, MyCO, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The DICA has notified any registered company which fails to submit its AR on MyCO are to be suspended, under Section 430 (F) of Myanmar Companies Law, according to the DICA's notification.

All registered companies need to file AR on the MyCO registry system within two months of incorporation, and at least once every year (not later than one month after the anniversary of the incorporation), according to the Section 97 of the law.

In accord with the Section 266 (a) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public companies must submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5) simultaneously.

Photo depicts office of Myanmar Investment Commission in Yangon.

All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within 28 days of the financial year ending, as per Section 53 (A-1) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

As per DICA's report, more than 16,000 companies were suspended for failing to submit AR forms within the timeframe. Newly established companies are required to submit ARs within two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns.

The DICA has notified that any company which fails to submit its AR within 13 months will be notified of its suspension (I-9A). If it fails to submit the AR within 28 days of receiving the notice, the system will show the company's status as suspended. Companies can restore their status only after shelling out a fine of K50,000 for AR fee, K100,000 for restoration of the company on the register, and K100,000 for late filing of documents, totaling K250,000.

If a company fails to restore its status within six months of suspension, the registrar will strike its name off the register, according to the DICA notice.

The registration and re-registration of companies on the MyCO website was commenced on 1 August 2018, in keeping with the Myanmar Companies Law 2017. The number of companies registered on the online registry system, MyCO, totalled 2,100 in the past two months (Jan-Feb) 2022, the statistics released by the DICA.

At present, 100 per cent of the applicants are using the online registration platform, according to the data provided by the DICA.—GNLM

Prices of black sesame seeds soar to K235,000 per bag

Harvested sesame stocks are under sunray for winnowing on the ground of farmland.

PRICE of black sesame seeds bounced to K235,000 per three-basket bag in domestic market in recent days, according to the statistics released by Bayintnaung market.

The price rise is attributed to the Kyat weakening against US dollar and strong demand, said a dealer.

The prices of various sesame seeds moved in the range of K155,000 and 235,000 per bag.

Normally, Myanmar exports about 80 per cent of sesame production to foreign markets. Normally, Myanmar's sesame is shipped to China, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Singapore, European Union countries and China Taipei (Taiwan).

The EU markets prefer organic-farming sesame seeds from Myanmar. Japan prefers Myanmar black sesame seeds, cultivated under good agricultural practices (GAP), and purchases them after a quality assessment.

The country is relying heavily on the Chinese market and facing a hurdle to place the sesame on other foreign countries at present. Both raw sesame seeds and valued-added sesame seeds are conveyed to China. When the transportation barriers triggered by the coronavirus are eased, the sesame market will raise its head again for sure, a depot owner from Bayintnaung wholesale market said.

Sesame is cultivated in the country throughout the year. Magway Region, which has gained a reputation as the oil pot of Myanmar, is the main producer of sesame seeds. The seeds are also grown in Mandalay and Sagaing regions.

Of the cooking oil crops grown in Myanmar, the acreage under sesame seed is the highest, accounting for 51.3 per cent of the overall oil crop plantation. About 600,000-800,000 tonnes of sesame seeds are yearly produced.—KK/GNLM

Chin State Agriculture Dept distributes 15,000 visses of elephant foot yam seeds

THE Chin State Department of Agriculture supplied 15,000 visses of elephant foot yam seeds to the growers in the state.

"The department has been implementing a three-year project to increase the production of elephant foot yam between 2020-2021 and 2022-2023 financial years, with a view to enhancing the livelihood and reducing the poverty. "Out of 130 yam species, white, red and yellow yams are primarily grown. The department has distributed the yam seeds to the growers for the current season," U Aung Myo Oo, director of the department quoted in his sayings.

Under the three-year project, 3,000 visses of yam seeds were delivered in Haka District, 10,000 in Falam District, and 2,000 in Matupi District during the 2021-2022 season, totalling 15,000 visses.

Last season, the department provided 9,829 visses of yam seeds in Haka District, 20,733 in Falam District, 3,920 in Matupi District and 7,940 in Mindat District, accumulating 42,423 visses. The elephant food yam is a native plant in Chin State. Nevertheless, the growing number of diggers caused scarcity of yam varieties. In a bid to generate annual income for the small skills growers, end shifting cultivation and adopt sedentary farming, this three year project from 2020-2021 to 2022-2023 is being undertaken.—Lu Lay/GNLM

Elephant foot yam plants are thriving in hilly area of Chin State. **PHOTO : LU LAY**

14 MARCH 2022
THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Modernize the country with the establishment of smart villages

EVERY country is based on urban and rural areas. In developing countries, the rural area is larger than the urban one because of widening the development gap between both areas.

The living standard and socio-economic status of rural people, accounting for more than 70 per cent of the total population of Myanmar, depends on the development of rural areas. All the townships across the nation are formed with lesser urban areas and larger rural regions.

Currently, the Department of Rural Development under the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development cooperates with relevant departments and organizations to establish the smart villages contributing to ensuring higher living standards, booming economy and implementing the green development projects with the aim of narrowing the development gap.

> Improvement of living standard of rural people depends on the development of health, education, social, environmental affairs and employment opportunities. As such, it is necessary to establish smart villages for the lives of rural people, reflecting the future and fortune of the nation.

The establishment of smart villages aims to modernize the villages to be sustainable for the enhancement of village social organizations, traditional culture, communications and services through digital technologies, innovations and modernized knowledge. The village social organizations, traditional culture, communications and services are based on existing advantages of villages, property and development opportunities.

In so doing, the requirements of villages must be exposed through the people-centred system to carry out their development and efforts for increasing the family incomes as well as the growth of the rural economy under the groups of people and the cooperative system. Hence, relevant departments need to cooperate with each other in modernizing the villages with fulfillments in infrastructures and agriculture and livestock-based businesses similar to that of urban areas.

The pilot project for smart villages is being implemented in KyunU Village in Pyinmana Township, Thawhmawkon Village in Lewe Township and Gwaybin Village in Tatkon Township of Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory. A plan is underway to choose three villages each from regions and states for similar projects. According to the information, the project period will last for two years and six months from 2021-22 financial year to 2023-24 financial year.

Functions for smart villages comprise aid for the development of rural infrastructures, inputs and monetary services, improvement of livelihoods, uplift of the rural economy, strengthening of associations, transfer of technologies, social protection and environmental conservation.

Improvement of living standard of rural people depends on the development of health, education, social, environmental affairs and employment opportunities. As such, it is necessary to establish smart villages for the lives of rural people, reflecting the future and fortune of the nation.

■ ■ ■

Japanese Government whistled, but the private sector doesn't dance – Japanese companies suffering from a shortage of digital human resources

By Yoshida Suzuka

ON 26 February, Kojima Industries Corporation, which supplies parts to Toyota Motor Corporation, was damaged by a cyberattack. On the 23rd of the same month, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan issued a warning to all Japanese companies to take cyber security measures, and on the 24th, the Financial Services Agency issued the same warning. The Japanese government's warning was as if it had foreseen the damage to Kojima Industries.

Toyota Motor is the world's largest producer, and 15 companies form the Toyota Group. There are 41,417 companies that do business with the Toyota Group, and the largest number of subcontractors is 1821 that is software contract development (as of 2019 announcement). Group companies in which Toyota shares capital can afford to hire a large number of human resources dedicated to cyber security measures. However, like the companies that were attacked this time, subcontractors that deliver parts do not have much surplus profit and cannot afford to hire experts for cyber security measures. This is because the number of engineers in the digital field, including security measures, is insufficient in Japan as a whole, and the cost of human resources is extremely high.

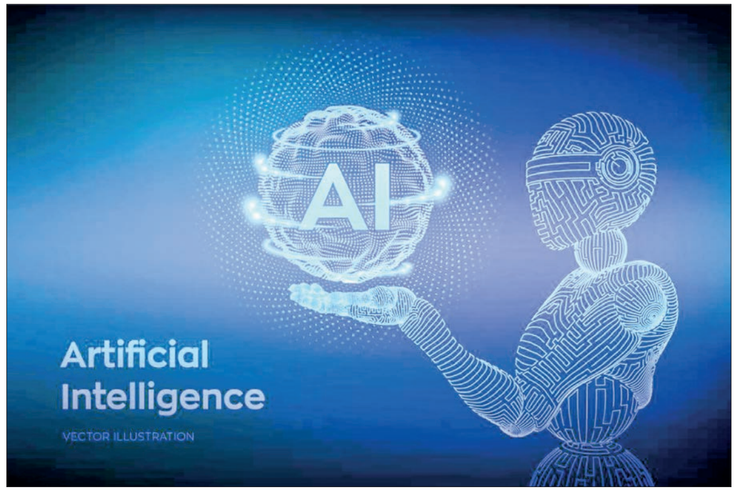


Image of AI

Then why is there a shortage of digital human resources? Japan has traditionally focused on the manufacturing industry because it creates employment. Technology is stored in each company, and young people learn technology from senior human resources after getting a job at the company. However, in the fields of AI and data utilization, which are relatively new technologies, the speed of technology updates is so fast and there are no human resources who can catch up with innovation, so there is no technology transfer among AI and digital fields that can be seen in the field of manufacturing.

On June 14, 2019, the Government of Japan announced the "World's Most Advanced Digital National Creation Declaration / Public-Private Data Utilization Promotion Basic Plan" by the Cabinet decision. According to the plan, the supply-demand gap for digital human resources in Japan as a whole is about 220,000 in 2018, and it is predicted that it will expand to about 450,000 in 2030. In particular, the output gap for AI human resources is estimated to widen from 34,000 in 2018 to 124,000 in 2030. Therefore, it was decided that all the people would develop knowledge and skills related to mathematics, data science, and AI, and provide AI education at all levels such as elementary, junior high and high school, colleges of technology, and universities. It is also a policy that advanced human resources are expected to discover and resolve actual problems with AI by themselves. Name it "AI Strategy 2019".

However, nearly three years have passed since the plan was announced, but it has not progressed. There is a shortage of human resources to teach because the company hires human resources with knowledge and skills internally and does not appear in the educational field. The output gap for digital human resources is only widening. Private companies are so cynical of the government to say that the government may just advocate the policy and actually leave it to the private sector.

■ ■ ■

Exercise may treat long COVID-induced diabetes, depression: Study

THERE are no medical treatments that exist for long COVID, but, according to a new study, exercise might break the vicious cycle of inflammation that could lead to developing diabetes and depression months after a person recovered from the virus.

The study was published in the journal, 'Exercise and Sports Sciences Reviews'.

"We know that long COVID causes depression, and we know that it can increase blood glucose levels to the point where people develop diabetic ketoacidosis, a potentially life-threatening condition common among people with type 1 diabetes," said Candida Rebello, PhD, a research scientist at Pennington Biomedical Research Centre.

Exercise takes care of the inflammation

"Exercise can help. Exercise takes care of the inflammation that leads to elevated blood glucose and the development and progression of diabetes and clinical depression," she added.

It's unclear how many people suffer from long COVID? But estimates range from 15 per cent to 80 per cent of the people infected. Based on those figures, it's possible that as many as 1 million of Louisiana's residents suffer from long COVID.

Long COVID causes what the Centres for Disease Control describes as "a constellation of other debilitating symptoms" including brain fog, muscle pain, and fatigue that can last for months after a person recovers from the initial infection.

"For example, a person may not get very sick from COVID-19, but six months later, long after the cough or fever is gone, they develop diabetes," Dr Rebello said.

One solution is exercise. Dr Rebello and her co-authors described their hypothesis in "Exercise as a Moderator of Persistent Neuroendocrine Symptoms of COVID-19."

"You don't have to run a mile or even walk a mile at a brisk pace," Dr Rebello said.

Walking slowly is also exercising

"Walking slowly is also exercising. Ideally, you would do a 30-minute session of exercise. But if you can only do 15 minutes at a time, try to do two 15-minute sessions. If you can only walk 15 minutes once a day, do that. The important thing is to try. It doesn't matter where you begin. You can gradually build-up to the recommended level of exercise," she added. "We know that physical activity is a key component to a healthy life. This research shows that exercise can be used to break the chain reaction of inflammation that leads to high blood sugar levels, and then to the development or progression of type 2 diabetes," said Pennington Biomedical Executive Director John Kirwan, PhD, who is also a co-author of the paper. — ANI

Home fitness has been in our lives for decades – and it's taken on a new role since the Covid-19 pandemic closed gyms around the world. **PHOTO: AFP**

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Sunday 13 March 2022)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL AFTERNOON OF THE 14 March 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Taninthayi Region and isolated in Bago, Yangon, and Ayeyawady regions and (South and East) Shan, Kayin and Mon states. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be partly cloudy 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 Eastern Shan, Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 March 2022: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 March 2022: Likelihood of isolated rain or thundershowers. Degree of certainty is (60%).

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 14 March 2022: Partly cloudy.

EARTHQUAKE NEWS

(Issued at 08:00 hour MST)

A slight earthquake of magnitude (4.9) Richter Scale with its epicenter inside Myanmar (about (10) miles south of Mingin), latitude 22.74 °N, longitude 94.50 °E, depth (97) kilometers, about (58) miles east of Haka seismological observatory was recorded at (07) hr (41) min (02) sec MST on 13 March 2022.

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India needs USD 20 billion investments each year to achieve climate targets: Report

A chapter of the report titled 'Unlocking Green Finance' explores India's readiness to access and deliver climate finance and other related aspects such as uniform carbon tax policy and green taxonomy for enhancing investor confidence. **PHOTO: ANI/REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE**

INDIA needs USD 20 billion worth of investments each year to achieve its climate targets and fund its green transition, according to an industry report released on Saturday.

The report titled 'ESG - Into the Mainstream' done jointly by the industry body FICCI and Trilegal, notes that India would require a large budget allocation, international finance from bilateral and multilateral sources and green private investments to fund the programmes needed to achieve climate targets.

The report released by Rajesh Verma, Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, comes at a timely juncture as ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) considerations are increasingly influencing the way in which businesses measure success.

The expectations of key business stakeholders such as investors, regulators, customers, and employees are also bringing these parameters into sharp focus.

The narrative around ESG has changed significantly over the last couple of years, from being seen as compliance imperative to taking the centre stage at boardroom discussions and driving investment and business strategy decisions, FICCI said in a statement.

A chapter of the report titled 'Unlocking Green Finance' explores India's readiness to access and deliver climate finance and other related aspects such as uniform carbon tax policy and green taxonomy for enhancing investor confidence. —ANI ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Chinese scientists create fertile mouse without father

CHINESE scientists bred a live rodent offspring derived from a single unfertilized oocyte, and the mouse grew into a fertile adult.

A new life usually starts with sexual reproduction or the fusion of an oocyte and a sperm cell in mammals. They cannot reproduce without fertilization because of "genomic imprinting," a phenomenon that causes genes to be expressed or not, depending on whether they are inherited from the mother or the father. A previous study found that imprinting is realized via the methylation of DNA sequence in the process of fertilization. In 2015, Chinese zoologists managed to breed a mouse with two mothers by modifying the genomic imprinting, taking the first step towards asexual reproduction. A group of scientists from Renji Hospital affiliated with Shanghai Jiao Tong University used the gene-editing tool to rewrite seven imprinting control regions of multiple unfertilized mouse oocytes.—Xinhua ■

Record deforestation in Brazilian Amazon in February

DEFORESTATION in the Brazilian Amazon set a new record for the month of February, according to official data released Friday, the latest sign of a surge in destruction under President Jair Bolsonaro.

Satellite images show 199 square kilometers (77 square miles) of forest cover – an area more than half the size of the US capital Washington – were lost in Brazil's Amazon region last month, according to Brazilian space agency INPE's Deter monitoring programme. That was the highest figure for February since the programme began in August 2015, and a 62 percent increase from February last year. Environmentalists said the figure was all the more worrying given that February is the rainy season in the Amazon, typically a low period for deforestation.—AFP ■

Paralympians fear for future of winter sports as climate change takes hold

AS Winter Paralympians prepare to return home from Beijing, many fear the effects of climate change in their countries and how a lack of snowfall could inhibit training for the Milano-Cortina Games in 2026.

When she should have been skiing during Norway's traditional snow season last winter, Birgit Skarstein was still rowing a scull boat on lakes that usually freeze over.

The Paralympian, who rows at summer games and skis at the winter edition, says she is on the frontline of observing the effects of climate change in Norway.

"This year I wasn't able to ski on really good tracks until the end of January," Skarstein told AFP, adding that normally the natural snowfall comes in November.

"I was hunting mountain tops. Over November, December, January I was moving from mountain top to mountain top to find snow and it was only artificial snow."

With temperatures rising globally, the 33-year-old cautions about the future of snow sports.

Liang Zilu of China competes in the Para Alpine skiing men's giant slalom sitting of Beijing 2022 Paralympic Winter Games, 10 March 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA/LAN HONGGUANG**

"Everybody who loves snow and everybody who loves winter sports should care about climate change," she said.

"We were rowing until New Year's… it was crazy," she says, pointing out that venues for winter-sport training are becoming increasingly scarce.

Both natural snowfall and the amount of water available for artificial snow are diminishing around the world, said Climate Council of Australia research director Dr Martin Rice.

"In fact, of the 21 venues used for the Winter Olympic Games since 1924 and Paralympic Games since 1976, only 10 will have the 'climate suitability' and natural snowfall levels to host an event by 2050," he told AFP.—AFP ■

Tens of thousands march for the climate in France

TENS of thousands of people protested across France on Saturday to call for more attention to the climate crisis in the runup to presidential polls next month.

"Look up," read one message in giant orange letters demonstrators held up in Paris, urging politicians to make protecting the planet a priority.

The sign was a nod to Netflix hit "Don't Look Up", in which astronomers who discover a comet will wipe out the earth try in vain to get politicians to take the threat seriously.

"When are we going to talk about it?" read another sign.

The climate crisis took up only 1.5 percent of talking points in media coverage of the election campaign from 28 February to 6 March, a recent survey by climate justice NGOs has found.

Organisers said 80,000 protesters took part across the country, including 32,000 people in Paris. The interior ministry however said just around 40,000 demonstrated, of whom 11,000 in the capital. —AFP ■

French climate activists want candidates running in next month's presidential elections to pay more attention to the planet. **PHOTO: AFP**

China to introduce rapid antigen tests for first time as Covid outbreaks spread

A medical worker takes a swab sample from a citizen for nucleic acid test at a testing site in Chaoyang district of Changchun, Jilin province, 10 March 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

CHINA will begin using COVID-19 antigen tests as a supplementary method to improve its early detection capability, the National Health Commission said in a notice on Friday.

Compared to nucleic acid testing — the dominant tool widely deployed in the country's mass testing campaigns, antigen tests give results more quickly but are generally less accurate.

The use of rapid, at home antigen tests is widespread in some countries, but they are much less common in China as only nucleic acid test results are considered the gold standard.

The commission said the inclusion of antigen tests in its tool kit is aimed at upgrading its testing strategy in face of demands arising from the changing virus control situation.

"Confirming the infection of coronavirus still requires a nucleic acid test result. Antigen testing can be used as an additional measure to screen target groups and improve our capability to detect new infections swiftly," the commission said in a statement explaining the notice. Three categories of people will be able to take an antigen test, according to the commission. They are people who visit grassroots medical facilities after feeling suspicious respiratory symptoms or having a fever within five days; people undergoing centralized or home isolation; and residents in need of such tests due to personal reasons.—Xinhua ■

S Korea reports record high of 383,665 daily COVID-19 cases

SOUTH Korea reported a record high of 383,665 daily COVID-19 cases as of midnight Friday compared to 24 hours ago, raising the total number of infections to 6,206,277, the health authorities said Saturday.

The daily caseload was sharply up from 282,983 in the previous day, surpassing the previous high of 342,433 tallied on Wednesday, according to the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency (KDCA).

The recent resurgence was driven by infections in the Seoul metropolitan area amid the Omicron variant spread.

Of the new cases, 80,437 were Seoul residents. The number of the newly infected people living in Gyeonggi province and the western port city of Incheon was 107,941 and 23,735 respectively.

Pedestrians wearing face masks cross the road in central Seoul. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

The virus spread also raged in the non-metropolitan region. The number of new infections in the non-capital areas was 171,477, or 44.7 percent of the total local transmission.

Among the new cases, 75 were imported from overseas, lifting the total to 30,206.—Xinhua ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

France to start administering 4th COVID-19 vaccine dose

France will start offering on Monday a fourth COVID-19 vaccination shot to people over 80 years old who have received their booster dose, French Prime Minister Jean Castex told daily Le Parisien in an interview published on Saturday.

The vaccination campaign will also be extended to people having an immunocompromised system who were not eligible for the vaccine until now, Le Parisien reported.

Of France's 4.1 million people over the age of 80, 3.1 million have already had the booster shot, it said.

France is witnessing a rebound of COVID-19 cases. The National Health Agency on Saturday reported 72,443 new cases.

France is to drop the vaccine pass requirement before entering public spaces and indoor mask mandate on Monday.–Xinhua ■

Vietnam logs 168,719 new COVID-19 cases

Vietnam reported 168,719 new COVID-19 cases on Saturday, down 395 cases from Friday, according to its Ministry of Health.

The new infections, logged in 63 localities nationwide, included 168,704 domestically transmitted and 15 imported.

Vietnamese capital Hanoi remained the epidemic hotspot with 30,693 cases on Saturday, followed by central Nghe An province with 11,666 cases, and northern Phu Tho province with 7,216 cases.

On the same day, health authorities also documented 285,493 COVID-19 cases detected earlier in four northern localities namely Hanoi, Nam Dinh, Hung Yen, and Phu Tho.

The infections brought the total tally to 5,903,147 with 41,290 deaths. Nationwide, as many as 3,068,033 COVID-19 patients, or 52 percent of the infections, have so far recovered.

Around 200 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in the country, including 182.9 million shots on people aged 18 and above, said the ministry.–Xinhua ■

COVID-19 cases surge after Ireland lifts mask mandate

THE daily number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Ireland has more than tripled in less than two weeks after the country lifted the mask mandate, according to the figures released by the Irish Department of Health on Friday.

Ireland reported 9,186 PCR-confirmed cases on Friday, an increase of more than 300 percent from the 2,277 cases recorded on 28 February, the day when the country scrapped most of its remaining COVID-19 restrictions, including the mandate for mask wearing in public indoor settings and on public transport.

According to the department, 907 COVID-19 patients are currently being treated in hospitals across the country, up nearly 49 percent compared with the figure recorded at the end of last month.

Despite the surge in the daily numbers of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, the number of COVID-19 patients being treated in intensive cares units (ICUs) in Ireland declined for the third day in a row – down to 37 from 51 on Tuesday.–Xinhua ■

A man waits at the reception of testing station in Duisburg, western Germany, on 12 November 2021, amid the ongoing coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. **PHOTO: INA FASSBENDER / AFP**

Germany in new Covid 'critical' situation

GERMANY is sliding into a new "critical" health situation with coronavirus cases soaring to new records, its health minister warned Friday, as he pleaded with vaccine holdouts to get jabbed.

"I often read that the Omicron variant is less virulent. That's only partially true," said Karl Lauterbach at a press conference, stressing that 249 people died from the disease on Thursday alone.

"Germany is in a critical situation," he said, warning that intensive care services could get overwhelmed and cases of so-called long Covid could grow.

Lauterbach said the public and political mood was deceptive — that "we have mastered the pandemic." But "we cannot be satisfied with a situation where 200 to 250 people are dying a day," a toll that could worsen in the coming weeks, he argued.

Germany is planning to further ease Covid curbs from 20 March, including ditching the requirement for employees to work from home whenever possible.

But it reported on Friday more than a quarter of a million new infections.— AFP ■

China-Laos Railway puts freight transport on fast track

THE freight volume of the China-Laos Railway has hit 1.2 million tonnes, as the landmark project of high-quality Belt and Road cooperation marked 100 days of operation Saturday.

Opening to traffic on 3 December 2021, the China-Laos Railway stretches over 1,000 km and links Kunming, capital of southwest China's Yunnan Province, to the Laotian capital Vientiane.

According to the China Railway Kunming Group Co., Ltd., 13 provinces and municipalities including Beijing, Shanghai, and Sichuan have opened cross-border freight train service on the railway.

As of 100 days of its operation, the imported goods via the China-Laos Railway exceeded 120,000 tonnes with the value exceeding 500 million yuan (78.98 million US dollars), while the exports hit 70,000 tonnes with a value of over 1.7 billion yuan.

Workers lay tracks at the construction site of the China-Laos railway in Vientiane, Laos, 27 March 2020. **PHOTO: KAIKEO SAIYASANE/XINHUA/FILE**

The product portfolio in the freight trains has expanded from rubber and fertilizer at the initial stage to electronic products, communication equipment, automobiles, and flowers.

To further facilitate the logistic transport, operators have launched the Lancang-Mekong Express service, which takes 26 hours from Kunming to Vientiane, shorter than the general freight transport. Meanwhile, the passenger service on the railway has maintained a steady increase. It has so far transported over 1.8 million passengers since its launch, with an average of 23.5 pairs of passenger trains every day along the route on the China side.— Xinhua ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Overseas institutional investors buy more yuan bonds in February

OVERSEAS institutional investors bought more Chinese bonds in February, according to data from the China Foreign Exchange Trading System.

Last month, overseas institutional investors bought 523.4 billion yuan (about 82.9 billion US dollars) in Chinese bonds and sold 507.9 billion yuan, the data showed.

These transactions led to a net purchase of 15.5 billion yuan.

Last month, spot transactions of yuan bonds made by overseas institutional investors totaled 1.03 trillion yuan, down 28 percent from January. –Xinhua ■

Rising food prices shake North Africa as Ukraine war rages

HOUSEHOLDS across North Africa are rushing to stock up on flour, semolina and other staples as food prices rise following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, both key wheat exporters to the region.

The scramble is worse coming just weeks before the start of the holy month of Ramadan, when Muslims traditionally break a dawn-to-dusk fast with lavish family meals.

Tunisia, Morocco and Libya, along with several other Arab countries, import much of their wheat from Ukraine and Russia.

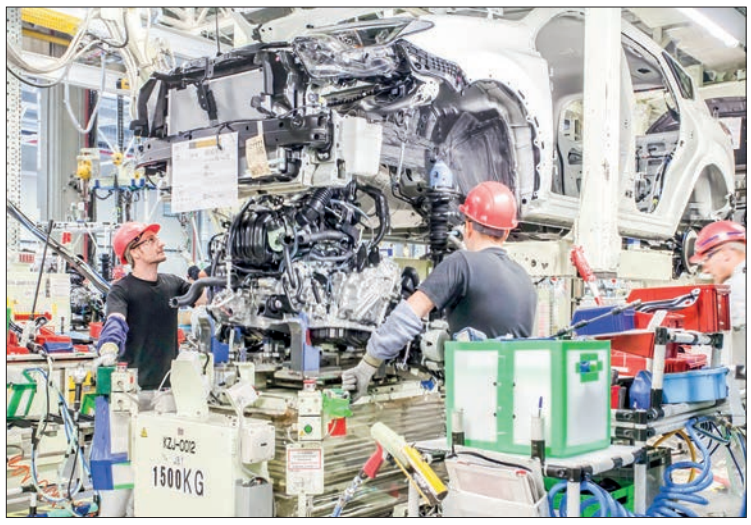
Some fear the Russian invasion could lead to hunger and unrest, with memories of how rising food prices played a role in several Arab uprisings last decade.

In one supermarket in the Tunisian capital, the shelves were bare of flour or semolina, and only three packs of sugar sat on a shelf near a sign that read: "One kilo per customer, please".

Store managers said the problem was "panic buying", not shortages.

Shopper Houda Hjeij, who said she hadn't been able to find rice or flour for two weeks, blamed the authorities.–AFP ■

Business exodus from Russia has limited impact on Japan economy



A total 347 Japanese firms were operating in Russia as of February, of which 45 percent were carmakers and other manufacturers. Toyota's manufacturing facility in Saint Petersburg, Russia. **PHOTO: TOYOTA73.RU/KYODO**

COMPANIES across the globe have been fleeing Russia as the country faces increasing sanctions due to its ongoing invasion of Ukraine, raising concerns over the ramifications the crisis may have on the global economy.

Major Japanese manufacturers have added their names to the ever growing list of businesses halting operations in Russia, but economists note that the direct negative impact on Japanese firms is likely to be limited even though resource supply chain woes could cause long-lasting headaches.

"The ratio of business that Japanese firms do in Russia (to their whole overseas operations) remains quite small," said Manabu Shimoyashiro, senior director of the Overseas Research Department in the Japan External Trade Organization. Since Russia is "not a major market" for them, the firms' withdrawal "is not expected to greatly affect" Japan's economy.

A total 347 Japanese firms were operating in Russia as of February, of which 45 percent were carmakers and other manufacturers, according to credit research company Teikoku Databank Ltd.

Among major automakers, Toyota suspended its plant in St. Petersburg earlier this month due to supply chain disruptions and ordered its Japanese staff back home.—Kyodo ■

Greek gas station owners call for lower taxes on fuel as prices skyrocket

IN Greece, motorists queuing to fill up their cars this week have to dig deeper into their pockets, as fuel prices have dramatically increased amid the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

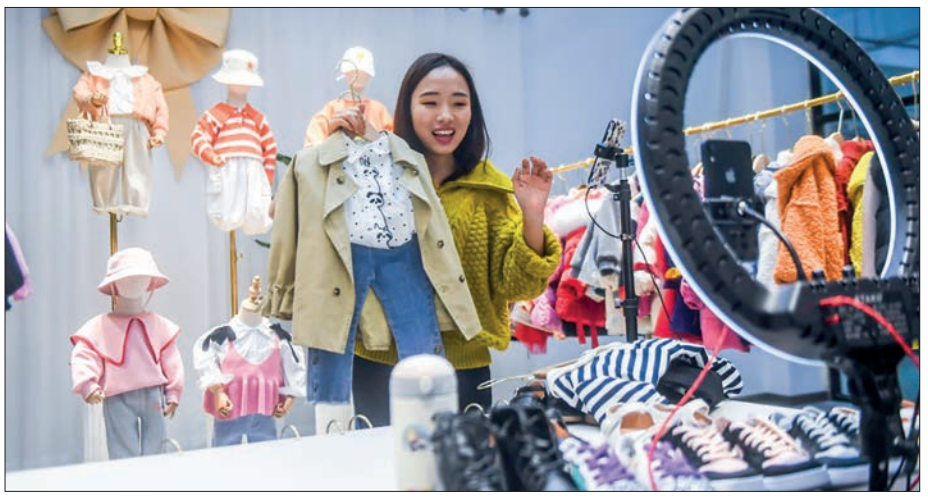
The average price of unleaded gasoline nationwide now exceeds 2 euros (2.19 US dollars) per liter and diesel follows closely, while on 1 January 2022, the prices were 1.74 and 1.68 euros per liter (1.90 and 1.83 dollars) respectively, according to data from the Development and Investments Ministry. Gas station owners are calling for an immediate easing of taxation on fuel, as they see consumers cutting back on fuel and seeking alternative ways to commute. "The situation in our country in terms of fuel prices is very difficult. Things are difficult for the sector, gas station owners and consumers. Fuel is now a sort of luxury product, and we forget that it is a social good. People need it to go to work," Maria Zagka, president of Attica's Gas Station Owners' Association, told Xinhua in a recent interview.

Although many commuters still feel uncomfortable using public transport due to fear of COVID-19, Zagka and her colleagues have seen their sales shrinking lately by some 20 percent, she said.

She sees motorists hesitantly turning to public transport or trying carpooling. Giorgos Asmatoglou, president of the Panhellenic Federation of Gas Station Owners, expressed concern that the situation will deteriorate for all, as the price of unleaded gasoline is estimated to reach 2.5 euros (2.73 dollars) per liter next week, he told local media.—Xinhua ■

Gas station owners are calling for an immediate easing of taxation on fuel, as they see consumers cutting back on fuel and seeking alternative ways to commute. **PHOTO: TWITTER/XINHUA**

Asian-Australian business driving global links: report



Live-stream e-commerce has been booming in mainland China. A woman sells children's clothes on a live-stream in Huzhou, China, on 8 February. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

A new report delivered by the University of Sydney Business School and the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) has shown the unique role Asian businesses play in expanding Australia's business links in Asia.

The "Asian Business in Australia Research Report" released on Thursday, compiled the results of surveys of 72 Asian Australian businesses across Australia.

It found that over half of the businesses had foreign suppliers, and 29 percent had partnerships in research and development with overseas organizations. "A new generation of Asian-Australian entrepreneurs are looking for opportunities in their ancestral countries and pioneering transnational collaboration in areas such as manufacturing, digitalization and e-commerce," read the report.

The report noted that overall Australia is more integrated with Asian economies, mainly China, Japan, India and South Korea, and that Asian businesses had better capacity to engage these markets.

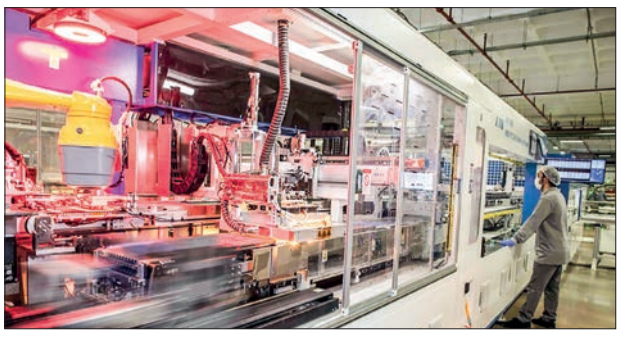
A total of 44 percent of the businesses included in the report said they increased their number of employees during the COVID-19 pandemic, compared with just 10 percent nationally, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The report also found that Asian-owned businesses had more resilient supply chains during the pandemic, as they were able to quickly diversify suppliers.—Xinhua ■

China, Turkey to build world's largest rooftop solar power plant

CHINESE tech giant Huawei and Turkish steel manufacturer Tosyali Holding co-launched a project on Friday to build the world's largest rooftop solar power plant in Turkey's Mediterranean province of Osmaniye.

With a total investment of 71 million US dollars, the two companies will build a "solar photovoltaic system" at Tosyali's plant in Osmaniye, combing Huawei's smart solar inverters with the tech expertise of SolarAPEX, Turkish leading solar power installer. The project is planned to complete by 2023 with a total installed power of 140 MW, which would help cut carbon emissions from steel production in Turkey by 116,525 metric tonnes per year, Tosyali chair of the board Fuat Tosyali said in a press release.—Xinhua ■



A worker is working in HT Solar Energy in Istanbul, Turkey, on 7 May 2021. **PHOTO: OSMAN ORSAL/XINHUA**

Saudi women drive for extra cash as costs climb

LIKE other Saudi women, Fahda Fahd couldn't legally drive until 2018, but her lime-green Kia is now a route to extra cash as living costs rise in the conservative kingdom.

When she's not working full time at a healthcare call centre, the 54-year-old picks up fares in the capital Riyadh from a ride-hailing app exclusively for women.

Fahd said her family was supportive of her second job, on two conditions: no long trips or men as passengers. "I decided to work as a taxi driver to earn extra income," said Fahd, wearing a black head covering and an anti-coronavirus face mask.

"My salary is not enough for my three children, and especially for my daughter who has special needs," she told AFP. Sweeping social reforms, including lifting the infamous ban on women driving, have transformed life for many Saudis, but rising costs are increasingly problematic.—AFP ■

LIN HTET LIN COMPANY LIMITED
COMPANY REGISTRATION NO.109112755
(Incorporated in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar)
(the "Company")

Notice of the Appointment of Liquidator

Lin Htet Lin Company Limited hereby announces to public that the Company appoints U Aung Nyein as the liquidator on the account of handling the winding up processes of the Company and the Company shall carry out all processes regarding voluntary winding up of the Company in accordance with the existing laws of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar including but not limited to Insolvency Law and Insolvency Rules, pursuant to the Special Resolution at the Extraordinary General Meeting to be held within three weeks starting from the date of this notice. For all financial matters, the appointed liquidator shall solve the payment and claims as well as other relevant matters for voluntary winding up process.

Notice to the Creditors to submit Proof of Debts or Claims

In compliance with Section 201 of Insolvency Law and Rule 87 of Insolvency Rules, it is hereby notified to the creditor, Tatung (Thailand) Co., Ltd. (Registration No. 0105532103932), a company duly registered in Thailand to submit Proof of Debts or Claims within 28 days after the date of this Notice at Unit 10&12, Level 15, Myanmar Center, Tower 1, No. 192, Kabar Aya Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, Myanmar, email address myanmartataung@gmail.com. Failing to do so, the creditor, as per Rule 87 (e) of Insolvency Rules, will be excluded from the benefit of a distribution made before its debt or claim is admitted and objecting to that distribution. The Notice has been sent to the Creditor together with the prescribed form named "Form 11" as mentioned under Insolvency Rules.

U Aung Nyein (17047)
Advocate
Liquidator
Unit 10 & 12, Level 15, Myanmar Center, Tower 1,
No. 192, Kabar Aye Pagoda Road, Bahan
Township, Yangon

Mr. Wang Hsi Sheng
Director
Lin Htet Lin Company Limited

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V NUUK MAERSK VOY.NO. (209W/210E)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V NUUK MAERSK VOY.NO. (209W/210E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **14-3-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT/MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SEALAND MAERSK ASIA PTE LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V VENUS C VOY.NO. (2206S/2207N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V VENUS C VOY.NO. (2206S/2207N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **14-3-2022** 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 SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD

Supporters of India's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) celebrate partial vote counts for the Uttar Pradesh state assembly elections. **PHOTO: AFP**

India's ruling party BJP wins 4 states, credit given to Modi's pro-poor policies

INDIAN Prime Minister Narendra Modi got a shot in the arm when his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won four states — Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur, in the election results that came in till late Thursday night.

One state, Punjab, went to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), the current ruling party in Delhi as the country's main opposition Indian National Congress (INC) couldn't show much presence.

Final results were compiled by the Election Commission of India (ECI) and put up on its official website late Thursday night. According to the ECI's official data, the BJP won 255 Assembly constituencies out of the total 403 in Uttar Pradesh, 47 of the 70 in Uttarakhand, 20 of the 40 in Goa, and 32 of the 60 in Manipur.

The encouraging results of the BJP, the main ruling party in India since 2014, is seen as an outcome of Modi's pro-poor "public welfare schemes," especially during the COVID-19 pandemic when the federal government distributed free food to the economically weaker sections of the society. Besides, the Modi government ensured free COVID-19 vaccines to different groups of the country's population. The latest victories of the BJP are also seen as a stamp on Modi's anti-corruption programmes and policies.—Xinhua ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sri Lanka becomes 1st in South Asia to trial 5G technology

Sri Lanka's Dialog Axiata PLC has become the first company in South Asia to successfully trial "the most advanced" 5G Standalone (5G SA) network, local media reported here Friday.

The latest breakthrough achievement came after Dialog in 2018 became the first telecommunications service provider in the South Asian region to demonstrate 5G capabilities, the local media quoted a statement from Dialog as saying.

Dialog said with this successful 5G SA trial, Sri Lanka's connectivity provider further advanced the nation's 5G journey and would enable more advanced use cases that required 5G SA support.

Dialog further said 5G SA can bring more advanced features in 5G, which enable use cases such as autonomous driving and enhanced real-time immersive services.—Xinhua ■

Colombians vote to short-list presidential contenders

COLOMBIANS vote Sunday to draw up a shortlist of candidates for presidential elections polls suggest may yield the country's first-ever leftist leader.

Nearly 39 million of Colombia's 50 million inhabitants are eligible to cast their ballot in a complex but critical election in a country plagued by violence and growing poverty levels.

On one part of the ballot, voters will determine the composition of the Senate and House of Representatives, currently in the hands of right-wing parties.—AFP ■

China planning global system for precision meteorological monitoring

CHINA is planning the construction of a new global system for gathering high-precision meteorological data based on the interpretation of signals beamed down from satellites, according to the second institute of the China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation Ltd. (CASIC).

A Long March-4C rocket carrying the satellite Gaofen-3 02 blasts off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China, 23 November 2021. **PHOTO: WANG JIANGBO/XINHUA/FILE**

The "global occultation meteorological detection constellation" will measure the frequency, phase and amplitude of signals transmitted by navigation satellites, recording how they change after passing through the ionosphere and atmosphere. The resulting data will allow meteorologists to calculate the temperature, humidity and pressure of the atmosphere, as well as the ionospheric electron density. According to CASIC, the occultation detection technique is capable of providing uniformly distributed neutral atmosphere and ionosphere information around the globe, permitting the monitoring and forecasting of the ionospheric environment, numerical weather forecasts, typhoon forecasts, near-space environment monitoring and aviation meteorology.

As one of the most promising methods of atmospheric probing, it has the advantages of high vertical resolution, long-term stability, no need for calibration, global coverage and all-weather operations, making up for the inadequacies of traditional methods of meteorological observation.

Ma Jie, an official with CASIC's second institute, said that a test satellite for the occultation meteorological detection constellation was launched into orbit in 2021, and is capable of detecting and generating nearly 1,000 atmospheric data profiles per day.—Xinhua ■

EU foreign policy chief says "pause needed" in Iran nuclear talks

THE European Union's foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said Friday that a pause is needed in talks on reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), citing "external factors."

"I will, with my team, continue to be in touch with all JCPOA participants and the US to overcome the current situation and to close the agreement," he tweeted, while noting that a final text of an agreement is "essentially ready and on the table."

Borrell did not give further details on when the negotiations will be reconvened.

Enrique Mora, the European Union (EU) coordinator in the Vienna talks, said after Borrell's announcement that the negotiators are "almost there" on reaching a deal and "have a text in which almost everything is done."

Mora said both Iran and the United States had taken a very constructive and positive approach in the negotiations.

"In order to keep this good spirit and atmosphere, it's better to pause," he said, adding that he hopes the talks could resume "very soon." The sudden suspension of the Vienna talks came as participants of the negotiations revealed in recent days they were closing in on an agreement despite a few outstanding issues.—Xinhua ■

Austrian police officers walk past the Palais Coburg Hotel in Vienna, hosting the Iran nuclear talks. **PHOTO: AFP**

Putin, Macron, Scholz discuss Ukraine crisis over phone

THE Russia-Ukraine conflict continues on Sunday as relevant parties are working to broker a peaceful solution. Following are the latest developments of the situation:

Russian President Vladimir Putin had a telephone conversation with French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz on Saturday, and urged them to influence the Kiev authorities to stop "criminal acts" of Ukrainian "nationalist battalions," according to the Kremlin.

Russian President Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting in Moscow on 28 February. **PHOTO: ALEXEY NIKOLSKY/SPUTNIK/AFP/FILE**

Macron and Scholz urged an immediate ceasefire and a diplomatic solution to the conflict in Ukraine, the German government said in a statement, noting the 75-minute talk as part of the ongoing international efforts to end the conflict. The three leaders agreed to continue contacts on Ukrainian issues, the Kremlin said.—Xinhua ■

Russian troops advance towards Kyiv, Zelenskyy ready for negotiations in Jerusalem

Photo taken on 25 February 2022 shows a screen reading "Dear customers, we will soon resume the work" in a subway station in Kyiv, capital of Ukraine. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

AS the war between Russia and Ukraine entered its seventeenth day, the latest satellite images issued by US company Maxar revealed that Russian forces are getting ready for a massive offensive in the Ukrainian capital city of Kyiv.

The images unveiled Russian forces' activities, including armoured units and towed artillery, close to the Hostomel Airfield, a strategic location near Kyiv.

Amid escalating war between Moscow and Kyiv, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy expressed his readiness for negotiations with Russia in Jerusalem. Zelenskyy said that he requested that Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett convene peace talks.—ANI ■

UN official urges Russia, Ukraine to end conflict through dialogue, diplomacy

A high-ranking UN official on Friday urged Russia and Ukraine to cease the ongoing conflict through dialogue and diplomacy at a Security Council meeting called by Russia to discuss the United States' alleged military biological research in Ukraine.

"The need for negotiations to stop the war in Ukraine could not be more urgent," said UN Under-secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs Rosemary DiCarlo at the meeting, noting that three rounds of talks held thus far between Ukrainian and Russian delegations must be intensified, notably to secure humanitarian and ceasefire arrangements as a priority.—Xinhua ■

Ukrainian servicemen get ready to repel an attack in Ukraine's Lugansk region on 24 February 2022. **PHOTO: ANATOLII STEPANOV /AFP**

NEWS DIGEST

Russia-Ukraine News Rolling updates

Here are the latest developments in Russia's war in Ukraine:

US President Joe Biden again rules out any direct intervention by the United States to halt Russia's invasion of Ukraine, warning that such conflict pitting the NATO alliance against the Kremlin "is World War III".

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The United Nations will have multiple meetings this week about Russia's war in Ukraine, though it is unclear if they will lead to the adoption of an official text, diplomats said.

On Monday, the Security Council will discuss the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Polish foreign minister Zbigniew Rau is expected to speak during the session, one of the diplomatic sources told AFP Saturday.

Although this is an annual meeting, it will place special focus on the war in Ukraine and will likely see fresh calls for peace.

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Russian forces advance ever closer to the capital from the north, west and northeast. Russian strikes also destroy an airport in the town of Vasylkiv, south of the city.

Presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak says Kiev is already effectively "under siege" as the army and volunteers prepare to defend the city, street by street.

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The head of Russian space agency Roscosmos warns that Western sanctions could cause the International Space Station to crash.

Dmitry Rogozin says the sanctions are affecting supplies to the Russian part of the station, which corrects the station's orbit.

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Zelensky said at a media briefing on Saturday that "around 1,300" Ukrainian troops had been killed since the conflict started.

It was the first time Kiev had given such a toll since the beginning of the conflict.

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Russia will publish individual sanctions against the West in the near future, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said on Saturday. "The lists are ready," Ryabkov said on Russian broadcaster Channel One, adding that the sanctions will be made public soon. According to Ryabkov, Moscow sees no indication that the United States was ready to continue dialogue on Ukraine.

The diplomat also warned Washington against transferring weapons to Ukraine, adding that these weapons will become legitimate targets for the Russian forces.

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Prime Minister Fumio Kishida indicated Saturday that Japan will consider concrete steps for additional sanctions on Russia in coordination with other Group of Seven members over its aggression in Ukraine.

"Each country is about to work on concrete steps now," Kishida told reporters in Ishinomaki in Miyagi Prefecture, northeastern Japan. "We would like to take specific actions in partnership with other G-7 members."

Source: Xinhua/Kyodo/AFP

Two Myanmar players compete in 2022 Asian Snooker Championship

TWO Myanmar players are competing in the 2022 Asian Snooker Championships in Doha, Qatar.

Qatar will host the 2022 Asian Billiards and Snooker Championships after the World Snooker Championships.

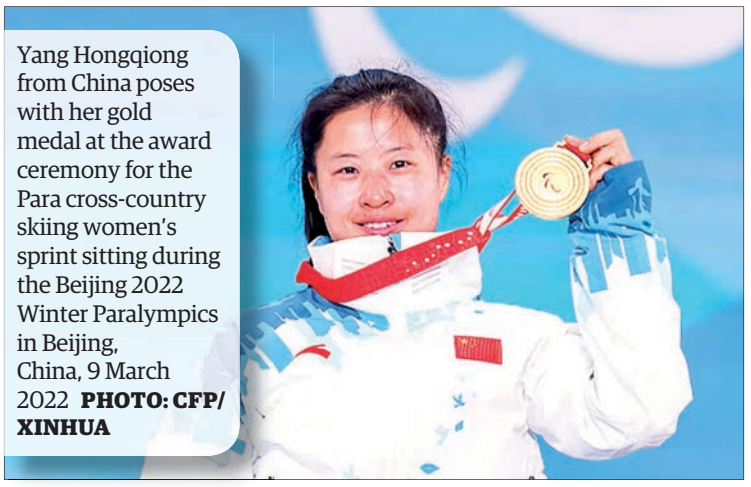
The Asian Snooker Championship is being held from 12 to 16 March, with Myanmar snooker players Aung Phyo and Win Ko Ko competing.

Win Ko Ko is in Group F with Qatar, Bahrain and Bangladesh have won last two matches. Win Ko Ko beat Ahmed of Bangladesh by 4-0 while Sarkwa of Pakistan by 4-0.

Aung Phyo is in Group L with Thailand, Qatar and Pakistan lost 4-3 to Pakistani player Asif in the first match of the group on 12 March.

The two players are competing in the Asian Championships after the World Championship, with Aung Phyo knocking out Round of 32 and Win Ko Ko out of the group stage. The Asian Billiards Championship will be held from 16 to 19 March.—Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM ■

Team China flagbearer named for 2022 Winter Paralympics closing ceremony



Yang Hongqiong from China poses with her gold medal at the award ceremony for the Para cross-country skiing women's sprint sitting during the Beijing 2022 Winter Paralympics in Beijing, China, 9 March 2022 **PHOTO: CFP/XINHUA**

TEAM China announced on Sunday that Yang Hongqiong will be the flagbearer for the closing ceremony of the Beijing 2022 Winter Paralympic Games.

Yang, 32, clinched three gold medals, in Para cross-country skiing women's long distance sitting, middle distance sitting, and sprint sitting, during the Beijing Games. She had been a wheelchair basketball player before switching to Para cross-country skiing in 2018.—Xinhua ■

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.

Winter Paralympics to close after Ukraine, China athletes star

THE flame will be extinguished on Beijing's Winter Paralympics on Sunday after a week of stellar performances from the host nation and Ukrainian athletes reeling from Moscow's invasion.

The Bird's Nest stadium will host the closing ceremony where China will hand the baton to Italy's Milano-Cortina, who will stage the 2026 Winter Games. At the opening ceremony, China's state broadcaster CCTV censored International Paralympic Committee (IPC) President Andrew Parsons' forceful anti-war speech. More than a week later, CCTV has not responded to the IPC's questions or provided any guarantees that it will not act in similar fashion during the closing ceremony. The lead-up to the Games was overshadowed by controversy over whether athletes from Russia and ally Belarus should be allowed to compete. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) had urged sporting federations across the world to exclude athletes from those nations.—AFP ■

Naomi Osaka brought to tears by heckler at US tournament

FOUR-TIME Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka was brought to tears by a heckler Saturday on the way to a 6-0, 6-4 loss to Veronika Kudermetova in the Indian Wells WTA hardcourt tournament.

Japan's Osaka, ranked 78th in the world after her third-round exit at the Australian Open, was rocked early in the first set when someone in the crowd yelled "Naomi, you suck." She pleaded with the chair umpire to take action to no avail, and at 0-3 down in the second-round match, her emotions spilled over. Osaka pulled herself together and resumed the match, but Kudermetova, the 21st seed, raced through the opening set before Osaka managed to hold serve to open the second.—AFP ■

Beijing Paralympic Winter Games a "spectacular adventure", says Spanish Para skier

Spanish Para cross-country skier Pol Makuri thought highly of the Beijing Winter Paralympics, saying it's a well organized event and a spectacular adventure. **PHOTO: EUROPA PRESS/XINHUA**

SPANISH Para cross-country skier Pol Makuri thought highly of the Beijing Winter Paralympics, saying it's a well organized event and a spectacular adventure.

"I'm really amazed by the international structure they've set up, both in a competitive and a logistical sense," Makuri said in a video sent to Xinhua.

In the selfie-style video, Makuri reveals how comfortable he feels in the Paralympic Village and points out some highlights that have made an impression on him, such as the facilities for the athletes, including shops, a laundry, and leisure and entertainment area.

"There are different zones in the village, such as the dining area where we can spend time with other athletes. Due to COVID-19 there are very few places to meet other athletes and technical staff, but the dining area is one of them," said Makuri, one of two athletes representing Spain in the Paralympics.

"It really is the most spectacular set-up I've ever experienced and everything is very well organized," added the 31-year-old skier.

Makuri, who has competed in international events for 12 years, also expressed satisfaction with the sporting facilities in the Zhangjiakou competition zone. "The venue is comfortable and it's great to ski and compete on. The trials we've done so far have gone well," he added, referring to the 20km cross-country classic and the freestyle sprint, in which he placed 14th and 25th respectively.

Makuri, who has suffered from the movement disorder cerebral palsy since birth, is the first Spanish athlete with cerebral palsy to compete in a Paralympic Winter Games.—Xinhua ■