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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.

All undertakings in new financial year must be put on record with boldness: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the meeting 1/2022 of the National Planning Commission in Nay Pyi Taw on 15 March 2022.

PREPARATIONS must be made for minimizing risks in implementing the projects after taking lessons on advantages and disadvantages, said Chairman of the National Planning Commission Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting 1/2022 of the National Planning Commission at the SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw

yesterday afternoon.

In his address, the Senior General said the new financial year will be implemented from April to March. All undertakings in the new financial year must be put on record with boldness. Preparations must be made for minimizing risks in implementing the projects after taking lessons on advantages and disadvantages.

The 2022-2023 financial

year's national plan is based on the five-year national development project framework. Coming governments need to take responsibility for adjusting such a framework must with annual plans. The State Administration Council will implement the projects for sufficiency of basic needs for the people and road-map of the State during the state of emergency.

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The State Administration Council will implement the projects for sufficiency of basic needs for the people and road-map of the State during the state of emergency.

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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

Myanmar Announces Direct Border Trade Currency Settlement with Thailand; Plans Similar Non-Dollar Convertibility with India in Near Future

Myanmar to Implement Commitments under ASEAN Economic Pillar

NAY PYI TAW, 15 March 2022

– The Myanmar Government has agreed to accept the Thai baht as an official currency for settling border trade starting this month. Thailand is the second country after China to permit its national currency to be exchangeable with the Myanmar kyat for border trade activities.

Myanmar’s Minister of Information (MOI) Mr Maung Maung Ohn and Minister of Investments and Foreign Economic Relations (MIFER) Mr Aung Naing Oo said in a joint statement today that the kyat-baht initiative is a significant development as Thailand is Myanmar’s second largest trading partner after China. The Myanmar Government intends to initiate similar currency convertibility for the Indian rupee for trade along the border it shares with India

Myanmar and China commenced kyat-renminbi settlement for border trades in January 2022. The increasing use of non-US dollar direct currency settlement for border trade underscores the strong bilateral relations that Myanmar enjoys with its neighbours.

The kyat-baht settlement arrangement was endorsed by an official notification and guidelines issued by the Central Bank earlier this month. All settlements will be conducted online as opposed to cash transactions previously.

In Financial Year (FY) 2020-2021 (November-to-October) border trade along five checkpoints of the Myanmar-Thai border – Tachilek, Myawady,

Kawthoung, Myeik and Hteekehe, – amounted to USD4.3 billion equivalent, up from USD3.9 billion in FY 2019-2020.

Starting this month merchants along the Myanmar-Thai border who are registered with the Myanmar Economic Bank can conduct trade based on the kyat-baht exchange rate announced daily by the Central Bank of Myanmar.

In FY 2020-2021 Thailand accounted for 17.61 per cent of Myanmar’s total trade which rose to USD5.3 billion from USD5.2 billion in FY2019-2020. Myanmar’s main exports to Thailand include natural gas, base metals, electronic goods, pulses, and garments. In turn, Myanmar imports from Thailand machinery, appliances transport equipment and manufactured goods.

“Myanmar’s immediate neighbours account for up to 70% of the country’s total trade volume. Direct non-dollar currency settlements will help to broaden and facilitate bilateral trade, flow of goods and other forms of payment and settlement with the respective countries.

“As Myanmar gradually adopts full bilateral currency swap arrangements with various countries, regional economic cooperation will also be strengthened. By reducing dependence on the US dollar, we will mitigate the risk of sudden exchange rate swings due to external geopolitical factors. Myanmar can also reduce physical money in circulation as more trade transactions migrate online. If we can succeed

with such arrangements with our immediate neighbours, Myanmar can gradually reduce the dependence on the US dollar for up to 70% of Myanmar’s national trade volume,” the two Ministers added.

The currency arrangements will also help Myanmar reduce inflation caused by the rise of the U.S. dollar, while alleviating concerns of currency shortage within the country. The arrangements will also contribute to the economic recovery of the country which – despite rising energy prices – expects to record modest GDP growth in the current fiscal year ending October 2022.

The currency shortage and weaker kyat last year was stoked by economic sabotage by the opponents including so-called People’s Defence Force (PDF) which tried to sow distrust in the local banking and financial system. Supported by foreign elements, the outlawed PDF also launched a terror campaign which caused the lives of many Government servants, security forces, and damage to public infrastructure.

The disturbances commenced after the 1 February 2021 Proclamation to declare a State of Emergency in Myanmar. Since the second half of 2021, the country has achieved national stability under the State Administration Council (SAC) which intends to call for a multi-party general election to be held by August 2023.

ASEAN Economic Ministers’ Meeting
Myanmar’s Minister of

Foreign Investments and Economic Relations will represent the country at the March 16-17 ASEAN Economic Ministers’ Retreat. “The Ministry will update other ASEAN members on the economic impact on Myanmar caused by two recent crisis situations – the COVID-19 pandemic and civil disobedience,” said MIFER Minister Aung Naing Oo.

The Ministry will also update the significant efforts Myanmar is taking to develop the small and medium enterprises especially in the agriculture and manufacturing sectors through provision of credit and measures to facilitate the business environment despite the two major challenges.

“While the pressure on the financial system has been eased and the kyat has been stabilized due to policies implemented by the SAC, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has caused domestic energy prices to spike.

Due to the level of development of the country and recent crisis situations, Myanmar has probably faced more challenges than most other ASEAN members in the past year or so,” they said.

Minister Mr Aung Naing Oo also said:

“Myanmar has made every effort to fulfill its obligations under the four pillars of the ASEAN Economic Community.

Myanmar is one of the earliest signatory states to deposit its instrument of ratification of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

in accordance with the RCEP Agreement. However, Myanmar’s instrument of ratification has been politicized by some RCEP participating countries. Likewise, Myanmar’s ratification letter for Protocol to Implement the Tenth Package of Commitments under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services has also faced the same problem.

ASEAN’s approaches to creating a much stronger Southeast Asia, narrowing the development gap within ASEAN, and strengthening economic resilience cannot be fulfilled if Myanmar is excluded. This is not consistent with the ASEAN Charter. Myanmar believes that such actions can affect ASEAN’s centrality.

For all member countries to benefit from economic integration, an all-inclusive manner is needed in ASEAN. No country should lag in regional economic integration. Sadly, some of ASEAN’s directions and actions appear mismatched on the ground.

Whatever the challenges, Myanmar will actively continue to fulfill the commitments and obligations as an ASEAN member and as a responsible global citizen.”

Issued by Ministry of Information and Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Union Government of Myanmar

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Further State Responsibilities to be discharged

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

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

All undertakings in new financial year must be put ...

FROM PAGE-1

In the coming year, the Senior General pledged to emphasize manufacturing and services contributing to the economic development and ensure sufficiency of basic needs for the people.

Relevant ministries and region and state governments need to encourage the timely completion of the projects which are earmarked with the fund in the coming financial year. Moreover, the Senior General noted that it is necessary to implement the project with the Union and region and state funds with responsibilities and accountabilities.

As part of implementing the short-term COVID-19 vaccine production plan in the coming financial year, the government has been allowed to produce Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccine through ready to the full bulk system from China in order to cut spending of foreign exchange.

Only when domestic production is insufficiency, it is necessary to consider the import of goods. Moreover, products must be qualified for competing in the market by cutting unnec-

essary costs. Efforts must be made for balancing the demand and supply in the market.

Relevant ministries need to coordinate the resumption of the suspended factories for successful manufacturing. State-owned enterprises must take responsibility for manufacturing quality products to meet the domestic demand with high service.

Encouragement must be given to those wishing to actually put investments in Myanmar with a smooth process. Relevant departments need to address the security and difficulties of investors in a short time. Action must be taken against those who hinder the new investors.

Not only the economy but human resources is playing a key role in the development of a country. Parents, teachers and students are to join hands in implementing the KG+9 scheme for compulsory education in cooperation with social organizations. Hence, emphasis must be placed on the enhancement of teachers' capacity.

Priority must be given to the implementation of the

... as the national planning law for 2022-2023FY will be enacted, preparations must be undertaken before the enactment of the law. The stability of the macroeconomy is crucial, and the stability of prices for foodstuffs and personal goods must be supervised. The allotted expenditure for the projects must be systematically spent, and efforts must be made fully levying the reserved taxes.

projects leading to the State's economic development and the tasks benefiting the people. The projects must be implemented on priority.

Vice-Chairman of the National Planning Commission Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win said that based on data from relevant union ministries and regions and states, the Ministry of Planning and Finance set an aim to have 4.3 per cent of economic development rate for the five-year national plan. MACRO economy of Myanmar in the 2022-2023 financial year set aims to have K123,933,741.9 of GDP at 3.7 per cent of growth rate depending on 55.8 million population, in addition to growing rate 2.3 per cent of the agricultural sector, 4.0 per cent for the industrial sector and 4.1 per cent of the service sector. According to the year-wise prices, it is necessary to earmark 22.9 per cent to 22.7 per cent in the agriculture sector, 37.1 per cent

to 37.4 per cent in the industrial sector and 40.0 per cent to 39.9 per cent in the service sector of GDP.

In implementing the national plans, it is necessary to consider not only social-economic status but foreign impacts, economic and political stability of partner countries as well as further inflow of FDI, trade production, and strengthening and safety of laws, rules and disciplines.

Secretary of the commission Union Minister for Planning and Finance U Win Shein reported on the drafting of the five-year proposal framework and the 2022-2023FY national plan. Union ministers and the Auditor-General of the Union presented sector-wise plans of relevant ministries and organizations.

In his response to the reports, the Senior General said that arrangements must be made for the supply of inputs on time. The funds must be spent

in line with the procedures. It is necessary to cut the import of foodstuffs and personal goods for reducing the foreign exchange requirement in order to raise the monetary value of the country.

In his address, the Senior General said that as the national planning law for 2022-2023FY will be enacted, preparations must be undertaken before the enactment of the law. The stability of the macroeconomy is crucial, and the stability of prices for foodstuffs and personal goods must be supervised. The allotted expenditure for the projects must be systematically spent, and efforts must be made fully levying the reserved taxes. If so, the ratio of budget deficiency to the GDP will be minimized. The projects must use the locally-used Kyat and the actual expenditure from the allotted budget must be paid. The 2022-2023FY national plan must be implemented in the prescribed ways. — MNA

Priority must be given to the implementation of the projects leading to the State's economic development and the tasks benefiting the people. The projects must be implemented on priority.

Fisheries Dept marks golden jubilee in Nay Pyi Taw on 15 March



The MoALI Union Minister makes the speech to mark the golden jubilee of the Fisheries Department yesterday.

THE Department of Fisheries commemorated the 50th anniversary (golden jubilee) at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation on the morning of 15 March 2022.

Present at the meeting were MoALI Union Minister U Tin Htut Oo, Deputy Minister Dr Aung Gyi, permanent secretary, officials concerned and rectors of the universities. Those officials from the region

and state departments also virtually attended the event.

The Union minister made a remark to maintain the transboundary species (Hilsa), effectively conduct the conservation of marine resources, promote the market, set the close season for fishing to conserve the sustainable aquaculture and carry out fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance.

Under the State Adminis-

tration Council, a new department of livestock research was established to support the fish and meat sector. The Fisheries Department and Taninthayi Region Fisheries Federation signed an agreement to establish a research fund in order to improve the research activities and implement the science-based fisheries management, showing the first public-private partnership between the government and

private entrepreneurs, he continued.

Myanmar is implementing a Blue Economy initiative that facilitates an ocean-based economy, promotes the sustainable use of resources and does not have the environmental impact while preserving the ecosystem. All the stakeholders must cooperate to develop coherence in businesses without coastal resources degradation and to enrich the coastal resources. Coastal resources management for extraction must be implemented to effectuate the economic growth of the State, he added.

Afterwards, Director-General U Wai Lin Maung of the Fisheries Department made a greeting remark and revealed the video documentary of the department's performance.

Later, the Union minister, the deputy minister and officials presented the state-level agribusiness awards to four talented staff, performance awards and sports awards to the related winners.

The department was established on 15 March 1972 and it has reached the golden jubilee. Myanmar has 8.2 million hectares of inland water (freshwater rivers, creeks, ponds and lakes) and 2,832 kilometres long coastline, with abundant freshwater and saltwater fish resources. Beyond the self-sufficiency, the department is endeavouring to increase the exports and production year over year.

Myanmar's fisheries export stood at US\$853 million in the 2019-2020 financial year and \$786 million in the 2020-2021 FY. It has been carrying out the fish adding activities to the rivers, ponds and lakes to increase the fish resource every year. During the 2020-2021 mini-budget, 110 million two-inch fish larvae have been added into rivers and lakes. Moreover, it is providing technical assistance to the breeders to adopt the net-cage fish culture on surface water in the rivers, dams and lakes. — MNA

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Ministry of Health Order No 56/2022

14th Waxing of Taboung 1383 ME
15 March 2022

THE Ministry of Health has issued this order by exercising its authority under Sub-section (b) of Section 21 of the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases Law.

1. The Ministry of Health issued an order (479/2021) on 29-10-2021 not to gather 100 people instead of 50 people to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 disease, and an order (538/2021) on 30-12-2021 to allow gathering of up to 200 people for religious ceremonies and social occasions.
2. At present, as the COVID-19 diagnosis confirmed rate, infection rate and mortality rate have dropped significantly, up to 400 people have been allowed to assemble from 16-3-2022, exclusive of the exceptional cases.
3. Failure to comply with the orders and directives issued by the Department of Public Health and the Ministry of Health will result in legal action under the existing laws.

Dr Thet Khaing Win
Union Minister

People invited to celebrate 77th anniversary of Armed Forces Day

PEOPLE wishing to honour the Tatmadaw parades which will march on the 77th Armed Forces Day along the way from the training ground to the military parade ground can pre-register by telephone.

People can claim their citizenship security cards by registering in person with their ID card (original) and two colour licence sized photos on 24 and 25 March.

Please be informed that people can contact the following address.

Security Sub-committee
Nay Pyi Taw Command
Nay Pyi Taw
Phone- 032-30009

683 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 15 March, total figure rises to 606,910

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **606,910** after **683** new cases were reported on 15 March 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **559,673** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll reached **19,414** after **3** died. —MNA

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish **"Letter to the Editor"** that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation visits Special Forces Command of Cambodia

THE Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation led by General Maung Maung Aye, Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air), accompanied by Myanmar Ambassador to Cambodia U Thit Lin Ohn and Myanmar Military Attaché (Army, Navy and Air) Brig-Gen Thura Hla Min, visited the Special Forces Command of the Cambodia yesterday morning.

Firstly, the Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation led by the Chief of the General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) arrived at the Command and was welcomed by Deputy Commander of the Special Forces Brig-Gen Muon Samet and officials. Then, Chief of the

General Staff (Army, Navy and Air) General Maung Maung Aye received the salute of the Guard of Honour.

After that, the Deputy Commander of the Special Forces explained the history of the Special Forces, records of the participation in military units and disaster relief operations by movie clips at the meeting room.

Then, the Myanmar Tatmadaw delegation watched the demonstration workout of the Special Forces Command, including martial arts training, crossing of the Confidence Field Obstacles and crossing of the Individual Obstacles and rescuing hostages. — MNA



Tatmadaw delegation attends 12th AMOM in Cambodia



THE 12th ASEAN Military Operation Meeting (12th AMOM) was organized in Phnom Penh of Cambodia yesterday.

The myanmar Tatmadaw delegation led by Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun attended the event together with other Armed Forces of Cambodia led by Maj-Gen Pen Sokrethvithyea, while Brunei led by Brig-Gen Haji Abdul Razak bin Haji Abdul Kadir; Indonesia by Maj-Gen Syaffrudin, Laos by Brig-Gen Sonethong Keolokham, Malaysia by Maj-Gen Hashim bin Aman Shah, the Philippines by Maj-Gen Alex S Rillera Pa, Singapore by Brig-Gen Ho Kum Luem, Thailand by Lt-Gen Chitchanok Nujjaya and Viet Nam by Maj-

Gen Nguyen Duc Can.

First, Maj-Gen Pen Sokrethvithyea of the host country, Cambodia, delivered the opening speech for the 12th AMOM.

Then, the leaders discussed the theme of Solidarity for Harmonized Security and the ASEAN Militaries' two-year Work Plan (2022-2024) including other matters. Afterwards, the chairman of the 12th AMOM concluded the meeting and transferred the chairmanship of the 13th AMOM to Indonesia.

Then, the representative of the Indonesian armed forces made an address on the chairmanship of the 13th AMOM. — MNA

Statement to appreciate teachers' efforts

TEACHERS are honoured as part of the Five Infinite Venerables, and the manner of paying respect to the teachers can be only seen in Myanmar as a tradition. The teachers teach their pupils based on their goodwill like their own children and dutifully serve a teacher's duties. They must train their pupils and students in the best discipline. They see that they grasp their lessons well. They instruct them in the arts and sciences, they provide for their safety in every quarter, and they introduce them to their friends and associates.

As the COVID-19 infection rate is controlled to a certain extent, the basic education high, middle and primary schools under the Department of Basic Education have reopened across nation for the 2021-2022 academic year starting 1 June.

Those who want to seek good sake of one party, political extremist NLD members and supporters, NUG, CRPH and PDF committed arson attacks at the schools using mines, homemade bombs and grenades to fail the teaching processes, and threatened the teachers in addition to the incitements, social punishment and threats against education staff to join CDM while the officials made preparations for the reopening of schools and during the current teaching period. Their doings left some casualties, and the State Administration Council has expressed its deepest condolences and sympathy to the victims' families.

The SAC also appreciates the concerted efforts of teachers, who understand two virtues, Hiri — shame at doing evil —and Otappa—fear of the results of doing evil —for teaching the new generations of the country amid such difficulties and challenges.

The security forces will take extraordinary measures to ensure the safety of teachers who are making efforts in the academic sector for the next generations in order to promote the education qualification. The people should keep security awareness and cooperate with the security members in community peace and peaceful learning of children.

Information Team
State Administration Council

Tatmadaw delegation attends 19th ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting-AMIM-19



The 19th ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting AMIM-19 in progress in Cambodia.

THE Myanmar delegation with Chief of Military Security Affairs of the Myanmar Armed Forces Lt-Gen Ye Win Oo attended the 19th ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting – AMIM-19 held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, yesterday morning.

The meeting was also attended by the delegations from the respective ASEAN member countries and addressed by the Chairman of the AMIM-19 Director-General of Research and Intelligence of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces Lt-Gen Hum Manith.

Afterwards, each country discussed their opinions on the topic “Solidarity for Harmo-

nized Security”. Afterwards, discussions on the exchange of visits between ASEAN intelligence officers, the establishment of the ASEAN Military Intelligence Community and on the Joint Statement were held.

After delivering the concluding remark, the Chairman of the AMIM-19 handed over the alternate chairmanship to the leader of the Indonesian Armed Forces delegation, who will chair the 20th ASEAN Military Intelligence Meeting.

The meeting was successfully concluded by the leader of the Indonesian Armed Forces delegation. — MNA

MoI Deputy Minister inspects IPRD works in Bago Region, Nay Pyi Taw Council Area

DEPUTY Minister for Information U Ye Tint inspected the Bago District IPRD office and library and met the region director, assistant director, township staff officers of Waw, Thanetpin and Kawa and staff of the MRTV retransmission station in Bago on 14 March.

He also checked the IPRD office and library of Nyaunglebin Township and met the township officers of Shwegyin, DaikU and Kyaukdaga.

At noon, the deputy minister arrived at the Toungoo District IPRD Office and library and met the departmental officials and township officials of Pyu, Ottwin, Yedashe and Htantabin.

On the morning of 15 March, he inspected the Toungoo MRTV retransmission station and met staff of the Yedashe

IPRD office.

He then inspected the Lewe IPRD office and library and departmental officials of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and Dekkhina District.

During the visits, the Deputy minister appreciated the efforts of departments concerned for releasing information and conducting educative programmes in COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities and for the state stability and development programmes in addition to the performance of the government after the State Administration Council took State responsibilities.

He also said that the set up of IPRD was upgraded and it is more responsible to carry out the office responsibilities of the region, state, district and



The MoI deputy minister meets the IPRD staff in Lewe Township.

township.

The staff should be proud of being the government employees and serve the duties showing loyalty. It also needs

to cooperate with the relevant departments to produce the youths with proper characteristics and capacity to become good persons that the country

relies on. He finally talked about the awareness of fire dangers and maintenance on office materials, books, journals and retransmission stations. — MNA

Announcement on sending cost for workers to Thailand under MoU system during COVID-19

1. In legally sending Myanmar workers to Thailand under an MoU system during the COVID-19 period, two COVID-19 tests, COVID-19 immunization costs for those who have not been vaccinated and quarantine costs in Thailand must be borne by the employer.
2. Regarding the costs incurred by workers, workers covered by the Thai Social Security Law will have to pay 5,390 baht, including four-month health insurance. Workers who are not covered by the Thai Social Security Law (those working in sectors such as domestic assistants, seasonal crops, agriculture

- and livestock, fisheries, loading/unloading, salting) will have to pay 7,600 baht, including two years of health insurance. To avoid deducting the employer's costs from workers, this will be included in the employment contract with an annexe.
3. The Overseas Employment Supervision Committee has instructed foreign employment agencies (Thai) licensing agencies not to charge more than K300,000 in service fees charged to workers.
4. If you have to pay more than the service fee set by Thailand and Myanmar, you can call the following numbers: -

(A) Myanmar

- (1) Migrant Workers Division - 067-3430442, 067-3430185
- (2) Complaint Mechanism - 067-3430184, 067-3430284, 01-650089, 01-650187

(b) Labour attachés in Thailand

- (1) U Aung Ko Zaw (Bangkok) - 0948845484
- (2) U Ye Lin Htet (Ranong) - 0652206951
- (3) U Lin Myat (Bangkok) - 0652206952
- (4) U Pyae Phyoo Aung (Mae Sot) - 0652206953
- (5) U Aung Aung (Chiang Mai) - 0990592352

Department of Labour

CBM sells US\$79 million for palm oil sector

THE Central Bank of Myanmar sold US\$79 million to the palm oil importers so that the palm oil can be distributed at the fairer price, according to the Consumer Affairs Department under the Ministry of Commerce.

Starting from 15 September 2021, the CBM has sold the foreign currencies multiple times to the palm oil importing companies at the minimum exchange rate of K1,753 and the maximum rate of K1,820 per dollar as of 4 February.

Over 6,000 tonnes of palm oil which is equivalent to \$79 million are being sold at the subsidized price. Of 6,000 tonnes, 195.41 tonnes of palm oil are left for sales, said an official of the Consumer Affairs Department.

Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers Association set the palm oil reference rate and the sales volume depending on the CBM's

exchange rate and the imported oil prices of the companies.

Consequently, the relevant oil importing companies distribute the palm oil at the reference rate set by the association and have to submit a sales report to the steering committee on the importation and distribution of the edible oil, according to the Consumer Affairs Department.

The consumers can complain about overcharging for edible oil which is sold at subsidized rate under the public distribution system, the Ministry of Commerce stated.

If any overcharging is found, the consumers can complain about it through the contact numbers (0943666668) of the Yangon Region Consumer Affairs Department and (09262079105 and 09965136377) of the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers Association.

Tracking the rise in import-



The Office of the Central Bank of Myanmar.

ed oil prices, the retail price of palm oil is shooting up around K7,000 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) at present.

Meanwhile, the Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers Association

is selling those palm oil with the mobile market trucks at the subsidized rate of K6,000 per viss.

The domestic consumption of edible oil is estimated at one million tonnes a year. The local

cooking oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. To meet the self-sufficiency in the domestic market, about 700,000 tonnes of cooking oil are yearly imported. — NN/GNLM

Manageable-scale guava growers earn annual profit in Pakokku



The growers from Kyattangon village, Pakokku township, Magway region are earning annual profit by growing guava on a manageable scale, it is learnt.

THE growers from Kyattangon village, Pakokku township, Magway region are earning annual profit by growing guava on a manageable scale, it is learnt.

The guava has been cultivated for two and a half acres since 1997. About 20 new plants have been replanted and those plants need to be fertilized, watered and packed with newspaper or plastic bags. The fruits are harvested twice a year in winter and summer. The fruit is cultivated under the farming system so, the fruit is big and sweet. that is the reason why the retail and wholesale people come and buy the guava on the farmland.

“The guavas are sold for K1,000 a viss and local farmers are making good profits of K7 million a year. The farm owners hired about 10 labourers for two and a half acres of guava farmland. The annual cultivation costs over K2.5 million in total. The growers also earn an annual profit of over one million by growing others such as pomelo, cobras saffron and jasmine,” said U Arnt Htay, a guava grower.

The farmers from Kyattangon village, Pakokku township, Magway region are growing more and more marketable food crops and flowers including guavas.— Salai Ko Kee/GNLM

Chickpea prices rise to double this year

THE prices of chickpea soared nearly double on the back of strong domestic consumption, Mandalay traders stated.

The prevailing prices of chickpea touched a high of K132,000 per three-basket bag whereas it fetched around K80,000 per bag, according to the Soe Win Myint depot.

The majority of Myanmar people prefer chickpea for its nutrients and rich taste. Chickpea curry is one of the dishes in

the food donation as well. The high demand for chickpea in the domestic market prompts all the mills in Mandalay to run, creating job opportunities for the residents.

Additionally, those merchants are filling the inventory although they need to put large capital in it. The buyers from India are also purchasing them. The yield is pretty high this year due to good weather and the peas are free from pests, he

elaborated.

Myanmar exported chickpeas to India, Pakistan, the UAE, Turkey and other foreign markets last year. The chickpeas are cultivated in Yangon, Mandalay, Bago, Sagaing and Ayeyawady regions and Nay Pyi Taw. There are 890,000 acres of chickpeas across the country.

The peas are cultivated in October and November and they can be harvested in the January-April period. — KK/GNLM

Over 87,000 acres of summer paddy to cultivate in Shwebo

MORE than 87,000 acres of summer paddy will be cultivated in Shwebo District, Sagaing region with the use of irrigated water from Thaphanseik Dam, said U Tin Maung Swe, head of the Shwebo District Agriculture Department.

“More than 87,000 acres have been planned to cultivate with the use of dam water. We have already seeded nearly 4,000 acres of paddy. So far, we have grown over 10,000 acres of paddy. We have directly cultivated over 99,000 acres. We have sown over 10,000 acres of different paddy species. Most of the paddy species are Shwe Thwe Yin and IR 747,” said U Tin Maung Swe.

Sagaing region is targeted to grow over 250,000 acres of

summer paddy and about 75,000 acres of other crops in Shwebo district. Since the receipt of the irrigated water supply from the Thaphanseik Dam on 7 February, local farmers have been collecting the seeds, while the Agriculture Department distributes the seeds.

“Currently, local farmers are conducting their agricultural working process. All of them are planning to grow summer paddy. Currently, the farmers are more likely to plant the seeds directly because of transportation problems. But some sow the seeds to get seedlings. There are a lot of seeds being planted yearly. But this year, the sown acreage of sowing the seeds and planting the seeds are the same,” said U

Tin Maung Swe.

The cultivators are sowing the seeds in the third week of March. About 75,000 acres of other crops have been targeted to grow. So far, over 23,000 acres of other crops were cultivated while over 20,000 acres of summer sesame and green gram were cultivated.

“Currently, the government is providing fertilizers to local farmers, while the Agriculture Department is providing agricultural technical assistance. They are also distributing pamphlets for giving awareness through the Facebook page, Messengers and Viber Now, farmers are cultivating the summer paddy abundantly,” said U Tin Maung Swe. — Lu Lay/GNLM

Mark fullmoon day of Taboung as a great day in Buddhism

THE Taboung is the 12th month of its kind in Myanmar. Myanmar people enjoy the festivities in the month of Taboung, especially on the fullmoon day of Taboung when they hold the religious ceremonies and donations as part of doing meritorious deeds.

The significant events happened in the month of Taboung when the weather is fine. In the past, the Lord Buddha Gautama resided at Veluwunna Monastery in Rajgir located in the Bihar State of India. At that time, King Suddhodana ordered an MP to invite the Lord Buddha, son of the king to his city.

The MP accompanied by 1,000 followers went to the Lord Buddha and supplicated the invitation of the king for returning to Kapilavathu, now called Taulihawa located in Nepal. Taulihawa is a municipal city of Nepal, close to the Uttar Pradesh State of India.

In Myanmar, the governments have been conferring religious titles on members of the Sangha and nuns at home and abroad in successive eras for the propagation of Buddhism in Myanmar as well as across the world.

pasada as persuading the royal families into admiring to the Lord Buddha on MP Kaludayi.

In Myanmar, the governments have been conferring religious titles on members of the Sangha and nuns at home and abroad in successive eras for the propagation of Buddhism in Myanmar as well as across the world.

Indeed, the month of Taboung has been bearing amazingly historical events to the society of Buddhists. Among the days of Taboung, the full moon day is the most significant in coinciding with important events of Buddhism in the past, the present and the future forever.

■ ■ ■

Private jets soar past global pandemic, oil price woes

AIRLINES may find themselves swept up in unprecedented turbulence — with air travel shunned over climate concerns, plagued by pandemic shutdowns and soaring oil prices — but for private jet operators, business is booming.

The appeal of private jets has taken off since the start of the pandemic, amid fear of catching Covid-19 and as widespread cancellations and stringent measures have turned flying commercial into a logistics headache.

“The impact of Covid really forced people to look elsewhere for their travel needs,” said Philippe Scalabrini, who heads the southern European division of the international private aviation company VistaJet.

“Anyone who can afford it wants an entire plane at their disposal,” he told AFP, adding that “private aviation, as whole, has had an incredible surge of demand over the past two years.”

Numbers from air traffic regulator Eurocontrol appear to confirm that.

It found that private air travel nearly doubled its global market share between 2019 and 2021, when it stood at 12 per cent.



Clients enjoy plush cream-coloured leather chairs and a large double bed. PHOTO: AFP

Luxury

Standing inside the newest addition to the VistaJet fleet, the Global 7500 built by Canadian business jet maker Bombardier, Scalabrini showed off what air travel can look like in that exclusive market.

Aboard the luxury plane, costing a whopping \$72 million (65 million euros), clients can enjoy plush cream-coloured leather chairs, a large double bed, and wine tasting.

To limit jet lag, the cabin pressure can be better regulated than on commercial flights, allowing clients to sleep as soundly “as at their cabin in Saint-Moritz”, the chic Alpine ski resort, Scalabrini

said.

And their pets can travel in luxury as well, with toys and treats on demand.

With annual contracts starting at 500,000 euros (\$550,000), VistaJet’s target audience includes wealthy individuals and business leaders, with growing numbers from the tech sector.

“Obviously we see the evolution of clients following the macro-trends we see in the world,” Scalabrini said.

‘The Covid effect’

More than anything, the pandemic has driven the latest upsurge in demand.

Scalabrini said “the Covid effect” last year helped VistaJet swell the number of flying hours sold by 90 per cent.

And the company, founded in 2004 by Swiss billionaire Thomas Flohr, announced last month the purchase of Air Hamburg, in a move it said would help grow its flying hours by another 30 per cent.

That announcement, however, landed just three days before Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine and Western countries unleashed a slew of harsh sanctions, sparking panic on markets and sending oil prices soaring.

Scalabrini said it was “a bit early” to determine how the crisis would affect his company.

“At the moment we cannot fly to Russia, we cannot fly to Ukraine unfortunately, so obviously there is an impact, but it’s a

minimal impact,” he said, pointing out that Russian clients made up less than five per cent of VistaJet’s turnover.

“We’ve got clients all over the world.”

Image issue

While private jet companies may weather the crises currently gutting commercial aviation, they face the same outrage over air travel’s outsized contribution to climate change.

A private jet flight pollutes 10 times more than a commercial flight, according to the Transport and Environment NGO.

Environmental questions will in the long term be one of the biggest challenges facing business air travel, Philippe Berland, an air transport specialist with the Sia Partners consulting firm, told AFP.

In the short term, however, he said the immediate question would be how the sector manages to absorb soaring oil prices, and also whether private jet companies can hold onto the clients they gained during the pandemic as commercial flights return to normal.

SOURCE: AFP

Digital screen time of children increased during COVID-19: Study

THE digital screen time of children increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic, the findings of a new study have revealed.

The study was published in the ‘Journal of School Health’ and led by Anglia Ruskin University (ARU).

Vision experts at ARU have expressed concerns that this could affect children’s eyesight and general health, with several conditions linked to an increase in screen time. The COVID-19 pandemic caused an unprecedented move to remote learning, with many countries closing their schools.

Students were left to rely on digital devices to continue with their education. The review paper examined research studies carried out worldwide during the pandemic, and the findings show a consistent picture of increased digital screen time for children and adolescents.

Screen time among toddlers and pre-school children

In Canada, 89 per cent of parents admitted their children were exceeding the two-hour daily guidelines set by the country’s health authorities. In Germany, screen time had increased by approximately an hour a day. In Chile, a study found screen time among toddlers and pre-school children had almost doubled to more than three hours per day, while in Tunisia researchers reported an increase of 111 per cent in total screen time for children aged 5-12.

Among the risks to eye health associated with the use of digital devices are eye strain, unstable binocular vision (using both eyes adequately to create a single visual image), uncorrected refractive error and dry eyes.

The review also reported that children and adolescents often use several devices at once, for example, to browse social media on their phone while watching

content on another device. Switching between devices increases the strain on the eye by 22 per cent, as this entails switching distances between different devices, forcing the eyes to adjust.

Increased screen time can also lead to neck and shoulder strain, increases the amount of time spent sedentary, and is also associated with overeating, potentially resulting in health issues such as obesity.

Lead author Professor Shahina Pardhan, Director of the Vision and Eye Research Unit at ARU, said: “It is really important to be aware of the potential risks to children’s short and long-term eye and general health. It is essential that devices are used appropriately and that activities away from digital devices are encouraged, such as playing outdoors.

Time spent on digital devices

She continued, “Schools can make sure time spent on digital devices is maximised for learning

and less digital time is encouraged for other activities. Governments should work with schools to help shape home-based learning guidelines that encourage creative learning away from devices, including promoting other types of activities and frequent screen breaks.”

Co-author Dr Robin Driscoll said: “We have been very fortunate that children have been able to use technology to fill in for the absence of in person teaching during the pandemic. However, we must be aware of the risks to their physical health as a result of this increased screen time.

He added, “Through increasing awareness of the risks associated with high levels of digital screen use and sharing strategies to reduce the negative effects, teachers and parents should be encouraged to enhance the health and wellbeing of children and adolescents in the pandemic and beyond.”

SOURCE: ANI



REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE: School children had almost doubled to more than three hours per day, while in Tunisia researchers reported an increase of 111 per cent in total screen time for children aged 5-12. PHOTO: ANI



Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 7:00 pm Tuesday 15 March 2022)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL NOON OF THE 16 March 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be scattered in Kachin State, isolated in upper Sagaing, and Taninthayi regions and Shan, Kayah, 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 scattered rain or thundershowers in Taninthayi Region and isolated in Kayin and Mon states.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 16 March 2022: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 16 March 2022: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR MANDALAY AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 16 March 2022: Partly cloudy.

Bay of Bengal Condition

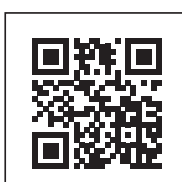
Issued at (14:00) hours MST on 15-3-2022

ACCORDING to the observations at (12:30) hrs M.S.T today, a low pressure area may form over southwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining Equatorial Indian Ocean during next (24) hrs.

Trademark Caution

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Myanmar establishes 985,962 acres of forest reserves, protected public forests in one year

MYANMAR has targeted to establish 30 per cent of the country's total area with forest reserve and 10 per cent of natural environmental protected areas as a pledge of Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions according to the 30-year Forest Master Plan and Paris Climate Change Conference held in 2015.

The country set 404,158 acres of forest reserves and 581,804 acres of protected public forests between 1-2-2021 and 1-2-2022, and it has 25.79 per cent of the country's total area with 43,111,705 acres of forest reserves while the protected land area is established up to 6.43 per cent of the country's total area with 10,750,625 acres so far.

For such doings, it can reduce the climate changes, protect the biodiversity and endangered wildlife animals, plants and their habitats, make better ecosystem and enhance environmental services, conserve the waterway outlets and watershed areas, prevent the natural disasters, preserve the natural resources and ensure sustainable development of forest resources. — Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation



CRIME NEWS

Illegal teak, cosmetics, foodstuffs and vehicles seized

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

On 10 March, a combined inspection team under the management of the Rakhine State Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force conducted a combined inspection in An Township, and 55.2146 tonnes of illegal timbers (estimated at K3,865,022) were seized and action is taken under the forest law.

Similarly, on 11 March, a combined inspection team led by the Myanmar Police Force conducted an investigation under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force.

Illegal consumer goods without any official documents on one truck near the Attaran Bridge, cosmetics and foodstuffs (estimated at K14,125,000) and one Mitsubishi Canter vehicle carrying these items (estimated at K15,000,000) were seized and action is taken under the Customs Law.

On 13 March, a combined team led by the Region Forest Department, under the management of the Yangon Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force, conducted inspections in Taikgyi Township, northern Yangon District.

A total of 3.640 tonnes



Seized timbers.

of illegal doors made of teak (estimated at K1,092,000) and one Canter six-wheeler truck (estimated at K35,000,000) and approximately K36,092,000 were confiscated and action is taken under the Forest Law.

In addition, under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force, the Bago Township Customs Department led a surprise inspection between Nyaungkhashay-DaikU Road in Bago Region on 14 March.

One vehicle driving from Myawady to Toungoo was found to be carrying illegal food items (estimated at K2,380,000) and one vehicle carrying such items (estimated at K12,000,000), (approximately K14,380,000 in total) were seized under the Customs Law.

A combined inspection team led by the Region Forest Department reportedly seized 1.5232 tonnes of illegal timber (estimated at K256,664) in the forest reserve in Bago District under the Forest Law yesterday.

Therefore, a total of eight arrests (estimated at K83,718,686), were made on three consecutive days, according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee. — MNA

Police seize drugs in some townships



Sai Myat Min (aka) Tut Pi and Ma Amie Tun (aka) Ma Nge are seen along with seized stimulant tablets.

THE Anti-Narcotic Task Force examined the motorcycle driven by Sai Myat Min (aka) Tut Pi and Ma Amie Tun (aka) Ma Nge near the No (2) Friendship Bridge in No (4) Ward of Myawady Township on 14 March and found 1,950 stimulant tablets from them.

On 13 March, the anti-narcotic agents arrested Daw Tun Shin in Myeik (South) village of Myeik Township and seized 1,980 stimulant pills. Then, the police arrested Ma Thuzar Maw (aka) Pi Si Kway at her house located in Alpine village in Myeik Taungkyway Village-tract on the same evening.

On the morning of 14 March, the police raided the house of Li Kway Chi in Naungbyat village of Innmaing Hokyan Village-tract of Kutkai Township and confiscated 1,400 stimulant pills. The suspects were charged under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — MNA

Man sentenced to 10 years in prison for forced prostitution

THE Yangon West District Court has sentenced a man to 10 years in prison with labour under Section 24 of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law on 10 March, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

Pyae Sone (a) Kyaw Moe Aung, a resident of Mayangon Township in Yangon Region, was found guilty of gaining profits by forcing a 22-year-old woman into prostitution, who lived in Ye Township, Mon State.

A case was filed against him under Section 24 of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law in the Bayintnaung area police station and Yangon West District Court sentenced the defendant. — MNA

One-third COVID-19 deaths among US children occur during Omicron surge: The Guardian

AS many as one third of all deaths from COVID-19 among US children have occurred during the Omicron surge of the pandemic, The Guardian has reported.

“Children seem to be facing increasing risks from COVID-19 even as mask mandates drop across the country, and vaccination rates among children stall out at alarmingly low rates,” said the British newspaper on Friday. Citing data from the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the report said since the beginning of 2022, 550 children have died from

COVID-19 in the United States, compared with 1,017 children in the preceding 22 months. The figures cover the group aged 0-17; their fatality rate remains the lowest compared to other cohorts. First identified in November, the Omicron variant became the dominant one in the United States within weeks, it added. Although Omicron is less severe than Delta, it is three to five times more deadly in the overall population than pre-Delta variants were, said The Guardian, citing a recent CDC research in January.—Xinhua ■

Aussie researchers develop mathematical model to predict COVID-19 vaccine efficacy

RESEARCHERS at the University of Queensland (UQ) have developed a way to predict the efficacy of future vaccines using a new mathematical model.

Published in the Nature Computational Science journal and released on Tuesday, the research was the result of an international collaboration between the Queensland Brain Institute and the Indian Institute of Science. The model was created from the analysis of over 80 different antibodies generated by vaccines against the surface spike protein of SARS-CoV-2, Pranesh Pad-

manabhan from the Queensland Brain Institute told Xinhua. “We developed a model to describe the diversity of vaccine-induced antibody responses within and across individuals,” he said. This model was then applied to eight approved COVID-19 vaccines and was able to accurately predict the level of protection they would grant when tested in clinical trials. This would mean the efficacy of vaccines could be assessed in the early stages of vaccine development, giving vaccine developers a much earlier insight into how a vaccine is performing.—Xinhua ■

Use of digital platforms increases in Fiji since COVID-19 pandemic: minister

A senior Fijian government official has said the COVID-19 pandemic increased the use of digital platforms in the island nation, which is a key facilitator of Digital Financial Services in the Pacific. Speaking at the World Consumer Rights Day celebration in Suva, capital of Fiji on Tuesday, Fiji’s Minister for Trade and Commerce Faiyaz Koya said that throughout the pandemic, more people have adapted to getting their business online.

He said remittances through mobile money platforms recorded a threefold increase in 2020 to approximately 82.1 million Fijian dollars (38.4 million US dollars) compared to 2019. “Throughout the pandemic, more people have adapted to getting their business online or handling day-to-day activities. This includes mobile payments by the Fijian government and Fiji National Provident Fund, for disbursement of financial assistance,” he said.—Xinhua ■

Nearly 30 million under lockdown in China as virus surges



Workers are seen wearing protective clothes next to some lockdown areas after the detection of new cases of covid-19 in Shanghai on 14 March 2022. PHOTO: AFP

NEARLY 30 million people were under lockdown across China on Tuesday, as surging virus cases prompted the return of mass tests and hazmat-suited health officials to city streets on a scale not seen since the start of the pandemic.

China reported 5,280 new Covid-19 cases on Tuesday, more than double the previous day’s tally, as the highly transmissible Omicron variant spreads across a country that has tethered tightly to a “zero-Covid” strategy.

That approach, which pivots on hard localized lockdowns and has left China virtually cut off

from the outside world for two years, appears to be on the line as Omicron finds its way into communities.

At least 13 cities nationwide were fully locked down on Tuesday, and several other cities had partial lockdowns.

‘I panicked’

The northeastern province of Jilin was the worst-hit — with over 3,000 new cases on Tuesday, according to the National Health Commission.

Residents of several cities there including the provincial capital of Changchun — home to

nine million people — are under stay-at-home orders.

Shenzhen — the southern tech hub of 17.5 million people — is three days into a lockdown with many factories closed and supermarket shelves emptying, while China’s largest city Shanghai is under a lattice of restrictions that fall short of a citywide shutdown.

Scenes of closed neighbourhoods, panic buying and police cordons cast back to the early phase of the pandemic, which first emerged in China in late 2019 but has eased in much of the rest of the world.—AFP ■

Japan eyes lifting COVID quasi-emergency next week as infections fall

JAPAN is considering lifting the COVID-19 quasi-state of emergency for 18 prefectures upon its expiration next week as the number of infections in those areas has been decreasing, a government source said Monday.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida’s government plans to make a final decision Wednesday on the possible lifting ahead of the emergency’s expiration on 21 March, the source said.

Officials hope the downward trend of daily coronavirus infection tallies will be enough for Tokyo, Osaka and 16 other prefectures to meet the government’s criteria for lifting the emergency.

However, the government will keep a close eye on the number of infections in such areas as



People walk in Tokyo’s Ginza area on a warm day on 14 March 2022, wearing face masks amid the coronavirus pandemic. PHOTO: KYODO

some authorities might ask for an extension.

On Monday, a total of 32,471 new infections were reported in Japan, a drop of around 4,600 from a week earlier.

Of those, the Tokyo metropolitan government confirmed 4,836, falling below 5,000 for the first time since 17 January.

The Kishida government eased the criteria last week, citing an increase in the number of vaccinated people, the low risk posed by the Omicron variant of causing severe illness and the need for fully resuming economic activities to boost the economy.

The new criteria will allow the government to lift the emergency if the burden on health care seems poised to decrease despite new infections remaining at high levels.—Kyodo ■

Indonesia's GoTo aims to raise \$1.26 billion in local IPO



People walk past a big screen showing stocks trading at the Indonesia Stock Exchange in Jakarta on 22 September 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

INDONESIA'S largest tech firm said Tuesday it planned to raise up to \$1.26 billion through an initial public offering this month, despite tumultuous world market conditions.

The GoTo Group set a price range of 316 to 346 rupiah per share for the local IPO, and aims to sell up to 52 billion new Series A shares through the listing, or about 4.35 per cent of total shares.

This price range implies an estimated market capitalization between \$26.2 billion and \$28.8 billion, the group said in its press release.

GoTo, the largest digital ecosystem in Indonesia, was formed by the merger of ride-hailing company Gojek and e-commerce platform Tokopedia in May 2021.

"Our listing will be a great moment for those involved in the success of our ecosystem

and for everyone that believes in the Indonesian dream," GoTo Group CEO Andre Soelistyo said.

The Jakarta-based company said it expected to raise at least \$1.1 billion from the listing plus an additional \$160 million if it decides to exercise the green-shoe option.

An initial offer will be carried out between 15 and 21 March 2022, with a public offering period targeted for 29-31 March, the company said in a statement.

The listing on the main board of the Indonesia Stock Exchange or IDX is planned for 4 April, according to a prospectus published on Tuesday seen by AFP. The company, whose main competitors in the region are SEA and Grab, has said previously that it was also planning a US listing.

GoTo said in November last year it had raised some \$1.3 billion ahead of a planned IPO, from various investors including Google, Singapore's Temasek and China's Tencent.—AFP ■

More firms rely on services to support remote workers' mental health

AS prolonged teleworking due to the coronavirus pandemic leaves remote workers feeling isolated, an increasing number of Japanese companies are using online services such as personal consultation software to look after their employees' mental wellbeing.

Network technology company NTT Communications Corp., which currently has about 80 per cent of its employees working remotely, has adopted specialized software to arrange online consultations between the workers and their superiors.

Using software provided by Kakeai Inc, a female worker in her 20s at NTT Communications, for instance, has a 30-minute discussion online with her boss every other week.

"It helps in dealing with day-to-day minor work problems," she said.

Users of the software register topics they want to discuss

with their superiors in advance, book an appointment and send in memos or other files if they wish.

As for those providing consultation, the software provides suggestions on likely advice to be sought and lets them input into memos and documents shared on the screen.

Kakeai has around 100 clients including Itochu Corp., Asahi Group Holdings Ltd., NTT Docomo Inc. and Astellas Pharma Inc.

"It can bridge communications gaps better than general-purpose online meeting systems," said Hidetaka Honda, president of Kakeai.

A service provided by La-fool Inc. uses smartphones to measure employees' stress levels by having them answer questionnaires periodically on a website set up for the purpose and gives access to video content offering advice from health care professionals.—Kyodo ■

S Korea logs trade surplus for 3rd month in February

SOUTH Korea logged a trade surplus in February due to a faster increase in export, customs office data showed Tuesday.

Trade surplus stood at 0.8 billion US dollars in February, after posting trade deficits of 4.73 billion dollars in January and 430 million dollars in December last year, according to Korea Customs Service.

Export jumped 20.6 per cent from a year earlier to 53.9 billion dollars in February, after growing 15.5 per cent in the previous month. Import advanced 25.2 per cent to 53.1 billion dollars last month. The outbound shipment topped 50 billion dollars for the 12th consecutive month amid the global demand recovery for locally-made products. Semicon-

ductor export surged 23.4 per cent over the year to 10.56 billion dollars in February, and the shipment for oil products spiked 65.6 per cent to 4.02 billion dollars.

Export for steel products, home appliances, and ships increased in double figures, but those for display panels and mobile devices posted a double-digit reduction.—Xinhua ■

UK unemployment falls to pre-pandemic level

BRITAIN'S unemployment rate has fallen below four per cent to reach its pre-pandemic level, official data showed Tuesday.

The UK unemployment rate dropped to 3.9 per cent in the three months to the end of January from 4.1 per cent in the final quarter of last year, "returning to pre-coronavirus pandemic levels", the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said.

Welcoming the news, finance minister Rishi Sunak added he was confident the labour market was in a "good position to deal with the current global

challenges".

There are worries that Russia's invasion of Ukraine, soaring global inflation and renewed Covid lockdowns in China will hamper the world's economic recovery.

The ONS added that the number of UK workers on payrolls jumped 275,000 to a record-high 29.7 million in February.

However wages are being eroded with Britain experiencing the highest rate of annual inflation in almost 30 years.

"Because bonuses have con-

tinued at high levels for some workers, total earnings growth just kept ahead of rising prices over the past year, though regular pay has dropped again in real terms," said ONS chief economist Grant Fitzner.

The cost of living is set to soar further from April owing to a tax hike on UK workers and businesses plus increases in energy bills.

And the Bank of England is expected to raise interest rates for a third meeting in a row on Thursday to help bring down inflation.—AFP ■

Australia to lift entry ban on cruise ships after 2 years



A tug boat gives a water salute as cruise liner Ruby Princess prepares to leave Port Kembla, some 80 kilometres south of Sydney on 23 April 2020. The Ruby Princess berthed after weeks stranded at sea to allow doctors to assess sick crew members and take the most serious cases ashore for medical treatment. **PHOTO: AFP**

AUSTRALIA said Tuesday it will lift the entry ban on international cruise ships next month, effectively ending all major travel restrictions imposed in response to the coronavirus pandemic after two years.

The cruise ship entry ban took effect in March 2020 following an incident where around 2,700 passengers, some symptomatic with COVID-19 infections, were allowed to disembark a cruise ship in Sydney, sparking one of Australia's largest outbreaks of the virus in the early days of the pandemic.

The decision not to extend the ban once it lapses on 17 April was based on medical advice, according to health minister Greg Hunt, who said in a statement that the lifting is "consistent with the reopening of Australia's international border" and shows that its response to the pandemic has succeeded.

Under the new policy, passengers will need to be double vaccinated, and entry will depend on the readiness of each state and territory to accept cruise ships at ports within their jurisdiction.—Kyodo ■

Brazil assures US it will increase oil production

THE Brazilian government on Monday assured the United States it will increase its oil production, a decision that could help ease concerns over global crude supply after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Bento Albuquerque, Brazil’s minister of Mines and Energy, said he had spoken with his US counterpart, Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm, and confirmed that Brazil

would seek to increase its oil output.

“She asked me if Brazil could be part of this effort (to produce more oil), and I told her ‘Of course it can’. We are already increasing production, while most OECD countries have reduced it. We have increased our production in the last three years,” Albuquerque said in a note sent by the ministry to AFP.

During the conversa-

tion, Granholm explained that other countries were making similar decisions to avoid greater volatility in the global oil market.

The Ministry of Mines and Energy did not provide any further details about how much it intends to increase production or on what timeline.

Brazil is among the 10 largest oil producers in the world, producing approximately three million barrels per day.—AFP ■

Asian markets struggle as Hong Kong dives again, oil retreats



A man adjusts his face shield in front of Exchange Square displaying the Hang Seng Index (top L) in the financial district of Hong Kong on 15 March 2022. PHOTO: AFP

ASIAN markets struggled again Tuesday, with Hong Kong tech firms leading another sharp equity sell-off in the city following the Covid-19 shutdown of tech hub Shenzhen and worries over Russia’s military outreach to China.

Concerns about China’s economic outlook saw oil prices suffer fresh selling pressure, with WTI falling back below \$100 a week after it hit a 14-year high on the back of Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine.

Hopes for progress in talks to bring an end to the war in eastern Europe were also putting pressure on the black gold.

Global markets have been in a spiral since Russian troops marched into the neighbouring country, leading international powers to impose crippling sanctions on the country and numerous companies to pull out.

The measures have fanned concerns about the supply of commodities from the region, particularly oil, sending prices through the roof and ramping up fears that already high inflation would run

out of control and shoot a hole through a fragile economic recovery.

Among the hardest-hit markets has been Hong Kong, which was already under pressure from China’s regulatory crackdown on technology firms as part of the government’s move to tighten its grip on the economy.—AFP ■

TRADEMARK CAUTION

NOTICE is hereby given that our client, **GREENHUB SERVICED OFFICES YANGON LIMITED**, a company incorporated in Myanmar with registration no. 105469306 and having its registered office at No. 85 Boyar Nyunt Street, Dagon Township, Yangon Region, Myanmar, is the owner and proprietor of the following trademark:



Reg. No. 15979/2016 (21.12.2016)

in respect of “Advertising; business management; business administration; office functions” as far as included in International Class 35; “Real estate affairs” as far as included in International Class 36; “Transport; travel arrangement; rental of car parking” as far as included in International Class 39; and “Rental of temporary accommodation” as far as included in International Class 43.

Fraudulent or unauthorised use or actual or colourable imitation of the above trademark shall be dealt with according to law.

Daw War War Lwin, H.G.P.
for **GREENHUB SERVICED OFFICES YANGON LIMITED**
c/o WongPartnership Myanmar Limited
#09-03, Junction City Tower,
Bogyoke Aung San Road,
Pabedan Township, Yangon, Myanmar
Dated: **16 March 2022**



TRADEMARK CAUTION

NOTICE is hereby given that our client, **HLA CONTAINER SERVICES (MYANMAR) LIMITED**, a company incorporated in Myanmar with registration no. 104226574 and having its registered office at No. 85, Boyar Nyunt Street, Dagon Township, Yangon Region, Myanmar, is the owner and proprietor of the following trademark:



Reg. No. 12057/2018 (31.10.2018)

in respect of “Services relating to fabrication of containers; reconditioning of containers; reconstruction of containers for the purposes of converting containers for ancillary usage; reparation of containers; maintenance of containers; trailer reparation works; maintenance of trailers” as far as included in International Class 37; and “Advisory services relating to the storage of goods; arrangement for the storage of goods; barge transport; cargo handling; collection of goods for transportation; consultancy services relating to storage; container handling; container storage; container transport services; delivery of goods; depository storage; freight forwarding; handling of goods; hire of storage sites; hire of warehouse storage space; loading and unloading of goods and freight; logistics services (transport, packaging, and storage of goods); packaging services; packaging of goods; refilling of containers; rental of storage space; rental of warehouses; storage; storage of goods; storage services; transportation of goods; unloading cargo; warehouse storage services; warehousing; advisory and consultancy services relating to the aforesaid services; Shipping agency services” as far as included in International Class 39.

Fraudulent or unauthorised use or actual or colourable imitation of the above trademark shall be dealt with according to law.

Daw War War Lwin, H.G.P.
for **HLA CONTAINER SERVICES (MYANMAR) LIMITED**
c/o WongPartnership Myanmar Limited
#09-03, Junction City Tower,
Bogyoke Aung San Road,
Pabedan Township, Yangon, Myanmar
Dated: **16 March 2022**

CHANGING THE NAME OF INSECTICIDE TRADING

The foreign manufacture Makro Chemical will import and distribute the following insecticides registered in Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board changing trading name –

No	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	Active Ingredient Name	Registration Type	Registration Number
1	Shwe Lu Zoe	Harmony-Shal	Emamectin Benzoate 10% + Lufenuron 40% WDG	Provisional	P2021-4106

It is therefore announced to come and reject within two weeks to joint Secretary, Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein in wishing to make any objection in respect of the said changing trading name of insecticide.

Address: **Golden Key Co., Ltd.**, No. 258/262, STRAND ROAD, 11th FLOOR, CLASSIC STRAND CONDO, PABEDAN TOWNSHIP, YANGON, MYANMAR. PH: 01 371629

CHANGING THE NAME OF INSECTICIDE TRADING

The foreign manufacture MAC Chem (Asia) Co., Ltd. will import and distribute the following insecticides registered in Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board changing trading name –

No	Old Trade Name	New Trade Name	Active Ingredient Name	Registration Type	Registration Number
1	Mega Venus	Shwe Pwint Htwe	Emamectin Benzoate 4% + Indoxacarb 16% SC	Provisional	P2019 - 3058

It is therefore announced to come and reject within two weeks to joint Secretary, Myanmar Pesticide Registration Board, Plant Protection Division, West Gyogone, Insein in wishing to make any objection in respect of the said changing trading name of insecticide.

Address: **Mega Grow International Co., Ltd.**, No. 216/222, 9 - FLOOR, B8-C8, Bo Myat Tun Housing, Mahabadoola Rosd, Pazudaung Township, Yangon Region. PH: 01 292772

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (050N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO WISDOM VOY.NO. (050N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **16-3-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

Russia says received US guarantees on Iran nuclear deal

RUSSIA'S Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Tuesday that Moscow had received guarantees from Washington on its ability to trade with Tehran as part of ongoing talks to salvage the Iran nuclear deal.

"We received written guarantees. They are included in the text of the agreement itself on the resumption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear programme," Lavrov told reporters during a press conference with his Iranian counterpart in Moscow.

More than 10 months of talks in Vienna have brought major powers close to renewing the landmark 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on regulating Iran's nuclear programme.

The negotiations halted af-



Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov (R) and Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian hold a joint press conference following their talks in Moscow on 15 March 2022. PHOTO: AFP

ter Moscow earlier this month demanded guarantees that Western sanctions imposed following its military incursion into Ukraine would not damage its trade with Iran.

Lavrov told reporters in Moscow on Tuesday that guarantees it had received from Washington would protect Russian involvement in Iran's sole Bushehr nuclear energy plant.

Lavrov said Moscow and Tehran share the position that Western sanctions are imposed with the aim of overriding international law and accused Washington and its partners of directing the penalties "primarily against ordinary citizens".

The 2015 deal gave Iran sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear programme.—AFP ■

Chinese, Indonesian FMs hold phone talks

CHINESE State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Monday held a phone conversation with Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi.

China and Indonesia are both major developing countries and emerging economies, Wang said, adding that the two sides should deepen strategic mutual trust and practical cooperation under the guidance of the two heads of state and play an active role in maintaining international and regional peace and stability. Marsudi said that Indonesia attaches great importance to developing relations

with China and is willing to work with China to push bilateral relations to a new level.

The two sides exchanged views on the Ukraine issue.

Marsudi said that Indonesia insists on respecting other countries' sovereignty and territorial integrity, calls for an early end to the military conflict and encourages relevant parties to hold dialogue to de-escalate the situation and prevent a humanitarian crisis, adding that Indonesia is ready to step up communication and coordination with China in this regard.

As the president of the Group of 20 (G20), Marsudi said Indonesia believes that the G20 was established to promote international cooperation and should pay more attention to macroeconomic and development issues. Expounding on China's consistent position on the Ukrainian issue, Wang said China will, in its own way, continue to play a constructive role in easing tensions, promoting peace talks and preventing humanitarian crises in accordance with the "four musts" put forth by Chinese President Xi Jinping.—Xinhua ■

Iran foils 'sabotage' at nuclear enrichment plant: state media

IRANIAN authorities have arrested members of a network linked to Israel who tried to sabotage a key nuclear enrichment plant, state media reported Monday.

The suspects "planned on sabotaging the Fordo facility and were arrested by the intelligence services of the Revolutionary Guards", IRNA news agency said. Fordo is an underground uranium enrichment facility located outside the central city of Qom, around 180 kilometres (110 miles) south of Tehran.

IRNA did not specify the identity of the suspects or say how many were arrested.

But the agency said that

Israeli intelligence agents tried "to approach" an employee at Fordo after "recruiting" one of his neighbours, in order to gain information about a centrifuge used at the facility.

Iran has repeatedly accused US or Israeli agents of spying on and attempting to sabotage its nuclear programme, including by killing scientists.

In August 2012, saboteurs blew up power lines supplying Fordo. Two years later, Iran said it had arrested several "spies" in Bushehr province, where the country's sole nuclear plant is based. In 2020, Tehran accused Israel of being responsible for the killing of top Iranian nuclear

scientist Mohsen Fakhrazadeh in an attack near Tehran.

The following year it claimed Israel was behind a "small explosion" that hit its Natanz uranium enrichment plant. Monday's allegations came on the eve of a visit to Moscow by Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian for nuclear talks.

Negotiations in Vienna to revive Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers had lately made progress, but they were halted after Russia earlier this month demanded guarantees that Western sanctions imposed following its invasion of Ukraine would not damage its trade with Iran.—AFP ■

Australia plans to host US, UK nuclear subs



This handout photo taken and released on 22 November 2021 by the Australian Defence Force shows British High Commissioner Victoria Treadell (L), Australia's Minister for Defence Peter Dutton (C) and US Chargé d'Affaires Michael Goldman (R) after signing the Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information Agreement during a ceremony at Parliament House in Canberra. PHOTO: KYM SMITH / AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE / AFP

AUSTRALIAN Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced Tuesday his government is readying the country's ports to host nuclear-powered submarines from Britain and the United States.

Morrison said his defence department would determine what was needed "to support the more frequent presence" of nuclear-powered submarines from the two ally nations.

The move could provide the two nuclear powers with better access to the Indian Ocean and the South Pacific, challenging China's growing maritime power.

Morrison said the decision was part of the AUKUS partnership — referring to the defence

agreement inked last year between the US, UK and Australia.

Under AUKUS, Australia will become the first non-nuclear country to have nuclear-powered submarines.

Morrison said US and British nuclear-powered submarines would initially be hosted at Australia's remote west coast — on the Indian Ocean — but added that he "would ultimately like to see them on the east coast as well".

Ahead of a looming federal election, Morrison has flagged a number of expansions of Australia's defence capability, including boosting the country's defence forces by a third to 80,000 personnel by 2040.—AFP ■

Turkish president says Ankara to maintain ties with both Kyiv, Moscow

TURKISH President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday said his country has to maintain close ties with both Kyiv and Moscow. He made the remarks while responding to a question as to whether Turkey will comply with international sanctions against Russia at a joint press conference here with visiting German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. Turkey has to maintain friendship with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Russian President Vladimir Putin, Erdogan said, adding “as for the sanctions issue, we did what was necessary so far within the framework of UN rules”. “Despite Russia, we made for Ukraine what the NATO countries could not do,” Erdogan said. For his part, Scholz said Turkey and Germany have common concerns regarding the Ukraine



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (L) welcomes visiting German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in Ankara, Turkey, 14 March 2022. Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday said his country has to maintain close ties with both Kyiv and Moscow. PHOTO: XINHUA

crisis and agree on the necessity for a ceasefire. Stressing further efforts to develop economic relations, and in particular advance energy cooperation, with Turkey, Scholz said that Germany aims to free itself from the dependency on Russian energy and gradually create the necessary sovereignty for its own decisions, thus cooperation with Turkey is possible. Scholz arrived in Turkey on Monday for his first official visit since he took office. — Xinhua ■

Residential areas hit in Kyiv, at least two dead



A fireman embraces a woman outside a damaged apartment building in Kyiv on 15 March 2022, after strikes on residential areas killed at least two people, Ukraine emergency services said as Russian troops intensified their attacks on the Ukrainian capital. PHOTO: AFP

STRIKES on residential areas in Kyiv killed at least two people early on Tuesday, emergency services said, as Russian troops intensified their attacks on the Ukrainian capital. Two bodies were pulled from the rubble after a strike on a 16-storey building in the Sviatoshynsky district, the emergency service said in a Facebook post, adding that 27 people had been rescued from the site. Another residential building in the Podilsk area also came under attack, it said. “A fire started on the first five floors of a ten-storey residential building on Mostytska street as a result of ammunition fire,” it said. AFP journalists said they heard at least three powerful explosions in the centre of Kyiv early on Tuesday morning. In Podilsk, smoke was still billowing from the blackened impact site in the middle of the building, said an AFP journalist at the scene. Shattered glass and debris were spread around the explosion site while residents were throwing charred wreckage out of their windows. Windows were blown out by the impact from surrounding blocks. Separately, the emergency service said a private home was hit in the Osokorky district in southeastern Kyiv. Images shared by the emergency service showed the blackened wall of a two-storey building with smoke seeping from the shattered windows. Fighting has intensified in recent days around Kyiv, which is almost completely surrounded by Russian forces that invaded Ukraine on 24 February. More than half of Kyiv’s three million inhabitants have fled the city since the start of the Russian offensive. Fierce fighting has been going on for several days between Russian and Ukrainian forces on the northwest outskirts of Kyiv. — AFP ■

NEWS DIGEST

Russia-Ukraine News Rolling updates

The following is the latest list of selected news summaries.

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky has submitted a bill to the parliament, proposing the extension of the current martial law in Ukraine, the Ukrainian government-run Ukrinform news agency reported Tuesday. If the lawmakers pass the bill, the martial law in Ukraine will be extended for another 30 days starting from 26 March. Ukraine imposed the martial law after Russia started a special military operation on 24 February. The Russia-Ukraine conflict continues on Tuesday as relevant parties are working to broker a peaceful solution. Negotiations between the two sides are being held daily, Russian presidential aide Vladimir Medinsky, also the head of the Russian delegation, said on Monday.

UKRAINIAN and Russian delegations resumed peace talks on Tuesday, local media outlet Ukrayinska Pravda reported, citing David Arakhamia, a member of the Ukrainian delegation. “The talks are already underway,” Arakhamia said without giving further details. Ukrainian and Russian delegations started the fourth round of their talks via video link on Monday. Ukrainian Presidential Advisor Mykhailo Podolyak, also a member of the delegation, said the two sides took a technical pause in the negotiations until Tuesday for “additional work in the working subgroups and clarification of individual definitions.”

MORE than three million people have now fled Ukraine since Russia invaded on 24 February, the United Nations said Tuesday. “We have now reached the three-million mark in terms of movement of people out of Ukraine,” Paul Dillon, spokesman for the UN’s International Organization for Migration, told reporters in Geneva. More than 1.4 million of these are children, according to the UN children’s agency UNICEF, while 157,000 are third-country nationals, IOM said. The UN refugee agency, UNHCR, had yet to update its figures, and had put the figure until Tuesday at 2.95 million.

RUSSIAN bombardment caused massive damage at the airport in the eastern Ukrainian city of Dnipro, regional authorities said Tuesday. “During the night the enemy attacked the Dnipro airport. Two strikes. The runway was destroyed. The terminal is damaged. Massive destruction,” Dnipro Region Governor Valentin Reznichenko said on Telegram. AFP journalists who arrived in the area said a plume of black smoke could be seen rising from Dnipro airport.

THREE journalists have been killed and more than 30 others wounded in Ukraine since Russia invaded its pro-Western neighbour on 24 February, the Ukrainian parliament’s human rights chief said Tuesday. “At least 35 journalists have become victims” of Russian forces, including three who died, Lyudmyla Denisova wrote on Telegram. US reporter Brent Renaud was shot dead on Sunday in a frontline suburb of Kyiv. Ukrainian journalist Evgeny Sakun died in a strike on a Kyiv television tower and Viktor Dudar, another Ukrainian, died in fighting close to the southern port city of Mykolaiv, she said.

Source: Xinhua/AFP

Myanmar to play against Mongolia today in Thailand Futsal Invitation Cup

MYANMAR national futsal team will take on Mongolia team in their group opener of the Thailand Futsal Invitation Cup named NSDF Futsal Invitation Championship 2022 on 16 March (today).

The tournament kicked off on 15 March with Thailand and Iran making big wins in their group openers.

On the first day of the group, Iran defeated Mongolia

by eight goals to nil while Thailand beat Maldives 8-3.

The competition is divided into two groups with Thailand, Oman, and Maldives are participating in Group A while Iran, Myanmar and Mongolia are placed in Group B.

Team Myanmar can advance to the semi-finals if they beat Mongolia today and will face Iran in the group stage match next.

According to the format of the tournament, the top two teams from each group will advance to the semi-finals, while the bottom two teams will run for fifth place.

The Myanmar national Futsal team is competing in this invitational cup in preparation for the ASEAN Futsal Championship to be held in April, according to the Futsal officials. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Medvedev, Tsitsipas out as upsets dominate Indian Wells

Daniil Medvedev, of Russia, congratulates Gael Monfils, of France, at the net following their Round 3 match at the Indian Wells tennis tournament in Indian Wells, California, on 14 March 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**



DANIIL Medvedev was sent crashing out of the ATP/WTA Indian Wells Masters in a stunning defeat to Gael Monfils on Monday that ended the Russian's three-week reign as world number one.

On a day of upsets in the California desert, Medvedev was the highest profile casualty to be sent packing, outfoxed 4-6, 6-3, 6-1 by veteran Frenchman Monfils. The shocks continued in the evening session as Greek fifth

seed Stefanos Tsitsipas tumbled out to 21-year-old American Jensen Brooksby. Brooksby, ranked 43rd in the world, advanced to the last 16 with a 1-6, 6-3, 6-2 win.

Earlier, the 35-year-old Monfils scored his first victory over a world number one since 2009 with a superb display to dispose of US Open champion Medvedev.

The defeat means Novak Djokovic will on Monday return to the top of the world rankings,

three weeks after Medvedev became number one. Monfils sealed victory in 2hr 6min after converting his sixth match point.

"I'm in my zone and I'm a tough opponent for anyone," Monfils said. "It's been a long time since I've beaten a world number one, so I'm pretty happy." Reigning US Open champion Medvedev had looked to be in control after taking the first set immediately after breaking Monfils for a 5-4 lead.—AFP ■

Wasteful Man City's title bid hit by Palace stalemate

PEP Guardiola refused to panic after Manchester City wasted a host of chances in a damaging 0-0 draw at Crystal Palace on Monday that severely dented their bid to retain the Premier League title.

Guardiola's side had 18 shots and 74 per cent of the possession, but left Selhurst Park ruining a se-

ries of misses on a significant night in the title race.

Bernardo Silva and Aymeric Laporte were guilty of the most glaring miscues, with Palace keeper Vicente Guaita keeping the leaders at bay with several saves. With second placed Liverpool having won at Brighton on Saturday, City are now just four

points clear of Jurgen Klopp's team. Liverpool can close to within one point of City if they win their game in hand at fourth placed Arsenal on Wednesday.

But Guardiola showed no signs of losing his cool as he insisted he was happy with City's performance and their position in the title battle.—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.

Morata repaying Juve's faith as Villarreal showdown looms

ALVARO Morata feels at home again at Juventus as the Italians try to convert their ominous domestic form into European success in Wednesday's Champions League decider with Villarreal.

The Spain striker's double in Saturday's 3-1 win at Sampdoria underlined a recent rise in form since being told he was not surplus to requirements in Turin, and he has been a key part in Juve's grinding unbeaten run.

After looking set to leave for Barcelona in January Morata — who is on loan from Atletico Madrid — is again key to coach Massimiliano Allegri's plans.

His burgeoning partnership with new signing Dusan Vlahovic is one of the reasons Juve are pushing to keep him in Turin.

Morata's option for a permanent move at the end of the

season is fixed at 35 million euros, but Juve are reportedly trying to renegotiate to secure Morata's services for 10 million less.

"In January I spoke to Allegri, and before that talk I didn't feel particularly important," Morata said after his brace.

"But when your boss tells you what he thinks of you, gives you encouragement and tells you that he rates you, that gives you strength."

Juve head into Wednesday's clash at the Allianz Stadium on the crest of a wave as their long run without defeat in the league has taken them to the edge of Italy's title race.

A dreadful start to the season left returning coach Massimiliano Allegri with a huge task to make something of the campaign, but since late November Juve have only lost once in all competitions.—AFP ■