

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

Moken or Salon people living in the far south of Myanmar

By NyaungU Phee

MYANMAR is strategically located with its strategic coastlines, rich natural resources and biodiversity, hills and valleys, mountain ranges and lowlands. Furthermore, Salon people also known as Moken are living in the Myeik Archipelago and Kawthoung islands in the southern part of Myanmar. Salon people are one of the smallest indigenous groups of Myanmar and recognized ethnic groups among the country's 135 distinct ethnic groups. Their population is estimated at about 2,000. They maintain nomadic sea culture and hunter-gatherer lifestyle, traditionally living on the wooden boat called Kabang.

Tourism based on Salon people to become a popular destination in the region

Salons or Moken people roam freely around the islands and they were noticed before 1962. In 1980, 56 households from Pearl Island where Salon people lived were removed and some were migrated to the islands in Thailand. Over 800 islands in the Myeik Archipelago, Taninthayi Region, 12 islands in Kawthoung and Myeik districts are home to Salons. They have their own lan-



Salon people also known as Moken are living in the Myeik Archipelago and Kawthoung islands in the southern part of Myanmar.

PHOTO : PYI SOE TUN

guage, culture and traditions. They roam in the sea in times of pleasant weather conditions. They hunt the wild and stay at the islands for a while in extreme weather conditions. With the climate change, degradation of marine resources and loss of access to land and territory, the islands where Salons inhabit has become smaller. As they belong

to the unique living styles, the population growth declined. This small group is required to protect from extinction. The traditions and rituals of Salon people pass from generation to generation, attracting tourists and local travellers. The tour destination based on Salon people combined with the ecotourism can enhance the livelihoods

of the Salons in a short time. Moreover, it can generate foreign currency from tourism. It is hoped to become a popular destination in the region.

Protecting indigenous communities

They lead a nomadic life and survive on what they can forage in the sea. According

to the 2019 census, only 1,700 survived. As they roam in the sea, they are prone to malaria and malnutrition. At present, the Salon population increased to 2,000. It is vital of importance to protect the indigenous people and endangered cultures from extinction as a national duty for the generations.

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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

Statement of Young Men’s Buddhist Association

THE determination in the public announcement of Mr Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of State of the United States of America made at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC on 21 March 2022 expressing Myanmar Tatmadaw has committed genocide and crimes against human beings in northern Rakhine State is a wrong allegation.

Myanmar as a party to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Statue of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) under the Charter of the United Nations is fully committed to respecting all the existing obligations and has never committed such genocidal actions. Therefore, the YMBA (Central) strongly condemns that one-sided accusation.

Notification

THE military parade of the 77th Anniversary Armed Forces Day will be held on 27 March 2022. On that day, the Yangon-Mandalay Highway, from the Bawgathiri traffic light of Pyinmana Township to the Thaikchaung junction traffic light of Zeyathiri Township will be temporarily closed from 00:05 am to 10:00 am. The public can use the Yangon-Mandalay highway separate road from the Thaikchaung junction traffic light of Nay Pyi Taw-Zeyathiri Township along the Neikban Road (circular road) to the Khwanyo Roundabout, to the Yazathingaha Road, the Kumudra Lotus Roundabout, the Yazahtani Road via the Pankhin traffic light-Bawgathiri traffic light of Pyinmana Township.

Nay Pyi Taw Traffic Rules Enforcement Supervisory Committee

77th Armed Forces Day Military Parade event to be broadcast live

THE celebration of the 77th Armed Forces Day Military Parade which will be held on 27 March at the Nay Pyi Taw Military Parade Ground will be broadcast live on MRTV HD, MRTV News Channel, MWD Channel, MWD Variety Channel, MITV, MOI Website, MOI Youtube and MRTV Website and aired live on Radio Myanmar, Thazin FM, Mandalay FM, Pyinsawady FM, Shwe FM, Padamyar FM and Cherry FM starting from 5 am on 27 March. —MNA

Beikthano Archaeological Museum remains open for visitors



Some archaeological artefacts are displayed at the Beikthano Archaeological Museum.

MUSEUMGOERS can explore the archaeological artefacts displayed at the Beikthano Archaeological Museum at the Beikthano Ancient Cultural Site, inscribed on the UNESCO’s World Heritage list, in Magway Region.

That museum is 12 miles away from Taungdwingyi city in Magway Region. It was constructed on 12 July 2004 and the construction was completed on 30 November 2007. The museum opening was on 1 September 2008.

The Beikthano Museum features the prehistorical artefacts of the Stone Age, Bronze Age and Iron Age. Additionally, the visitors can also observe skeleton pots, iron tools, Pyu Era coins, stone beads, bronze

cups, statues and bells discovered in the old city. The moat, fort and palace models, ancient city maps, evacuation maps and zone mappings are displayed at the museum as well.

The aim of the museum is to explore, maintain and promote Myanmar’s cultural heritage and strengthen the national spirit.

The museum is open between 9:30 am and 4:30 pm every day, except Mondays and the gazetted holidays, as per the rules and regulations of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture.

The local visitors can explore the archaeological treasure of the ancient city free of charge. — IPRD Taungdwingyi/GNLM

317 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 25 March, total figure rises to 610,493

MYANMAR’S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 610,493 after 317 new cases were reported on 25 March 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 567,322 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll stands at 19,428 without casualties. —MNA

The military members discharge defence duties for the sakes of people with our own wishes

THE defence services of the country mean to protect the public at the lowest level and 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)

Bokpyin-Ohntawkan Bridge on Bokpyin-Ohntawkan Road opened in Taninthayi Region

A 1,200 feet long Bokpyin-Ohntawkan Bridge in Bokpyin Township of Kawthoung District in Taninthayi Region constructed by Bridge Task Force 13 of the Ministry of Construction was opened marking the 77th Anniversary Armed Forces Day following the COVID-19 health rules yesterday.

The opening ceremony was attended by State Administration Council member Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun, Union Construction Minister U Shwe Lay, Taninthayi Region Chief Minister U Myat Ko, Commander of Coastal Region Command Maj-Gen Saw Than Hlaing and other officials of relevant ministries and departments.



The Bokpyin-Ohntawkan Bridge opening ceremony in progress.

First, SAC member Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun said the gov-

ernment prioritizes the basic infrastructure for the social, economic, education and health sectors for its people especially the transport sector -road, bridges and access to electricity. The ethnic nationals can easily communicate only with the proper transportation system.

He then pointed out to spend the public budget effectively on carrying out the development programmes of the country and to check whether the projects bring benefits to the regions and to cooperate with the government and region/state governments.

He highlighted the construction of bridges despite the geological features and natural obstacles, upgrade works on roads and transportation development programmes implemented in urban cities and remote areas including the border areas.

He stressed the need to conserve the bridge and expressed the appreciation of the government to the Taninthayi Region cabinet, military officers, staff of the Ministry of Construction and those who involve in bridge construction processes.

Then, Union Minister U

Shwe Lay stressed the construction procedures and the region chief minister remarked while a resident expressed words of thanks to the government for constructing the bridge.

Next, officials cut the ribbon and pressed the electric button to inaugurate the bridge.

The Bokpyin-Ohntawkan Bridge is located on the Bokpyin-Ohntawkan Road in Bokpyin Township of Kawthoung District in Taninthayi Region and is a 1,200-foot-long truss bridge. The foundation of the bridge is constructed with a bored pile foundation and the Super Structure is truss beam and deck. The bridge can accommodate 60-tonne trucks.

SAC member Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun and party then went to Kaleinaung town of Dawei District to inspect the Cocoa plantation. U Than Htike, Director of the Dawei District Agricultural Department reported on regional data and Cocoa plantation processes and an official of the Aungzabu Cacao Farm explained the foodstuffs made of Cocoa. After that, the Lt-Gen inspected the Cocoa plantation sites and left the necessary instructions. —MNA



MoPF Union Minister receives Eurasian Economic Commission delegation

UNION Minister for Planning and Finance U Win Shein met a delegation led by Head of the Secretariat of the Heavy Enterprise Cooperation of the Eurasian Economic Commission-EEC Mr Andrey Diansky yesterday at 10 am at the meeting hall of the Union Minister for Planning and Finance in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, they

openly discussed enhancing cooperation between Myanmar and EEC members, mutual cooperation in banking matters between banks of the two sides and the necessities to boost trade and investment.

Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance Daw Than Than Lin and heads of departments also attended the meeting. — MNA



Union Minister U Win Shein receives the Eurasian Economic Commission delegation.

Moken or Salon people living in the far south of Myanmar

FROM PAGE-1

One of the smallest indigenous races

Moken's origins are known to be from Malaysia's islands and moved to the Myeik Archipelago due to attacks. They built stilt houses in the Heinze, Boke, Maungmakan, Shinmon, Mali, Pyingyi, Kadan, Don, Wah, Lampi, Meesin and other islands to keep themselves safe in the adverse weather conditions. They usually roam between the islands, reefs and coasts by wooden boat. Salons are the invaluable cultural heritage of the nation. There was a ritual to get familiar with water that they submerged the newborn baby into the water afterbirth three times as of 1964. Some of the babies died after submerging, prompting this traditional belief. The Moken people can hold their breath underwater and free dive deeper than any other human being on earth. The kids are said to swim first before they start learning how to walk. They showed no sign of



Salon people go out to sea to catch squids. PHOTOS : PYI SOE TUN

greed or materialism. They are well known as sea gypsies due to their nomadic sea culture. They inhabit in the Myeik Archipelago as the indigenous race called Salon or Moken.

People endowed natural gifts
Salon people eat seafood.



A Salon female with a child prays for good fishing in front of spirits.

The cockles and mussels clinging to rocks are harvested and sold at the market during their stay at island. As they're famous cuisine at hotels, fishers other than Salons have increasingly harvested cockles. As a result of this, they have become rare.

The innards of cockles are taken out, boiled, and dried. They can be used in soup, fried and preserved recipes. They fetch up to K100,000 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes). Consequently, many fishers eye that business. As they usually cook healthy food with minimum oil, they are free from hypertension. The native plants including watercress can be found on islands. Salons can catch aquatic animals with sustainable and traditional fishing practices with minimal impact on the environment. They can collect beehives and edible bird nests in the caves without any equipment. They are a nomadic seafaring tribe with natural gifts that lack the accumulation of materials.

Sincere and peace-loving native, preserving culture required

They hunt and gather seafood such as cockles, mussels, scallops, squid, seashells and seaweed edible bird nests, honey

and herbal plants. They do coastal foraging for living and they're not interested in agriculture and livestock businesses. They separately dwell in the islands and near Myeik city. They were far from urban and modern living styles. They previously wear only one sarongs in the past generation. Nevertheless, some adapt to life on land, wear full clothing, use motorboats instead of traditional wooden boats and catch fish with harmful fishing practices. It harms the image of the tradition and customs of the Salon people. Although their changing lifestyle such as living in houses with corrugated iron sheets instead of stilt house is comfortable for them, it is crucial to maintain their tradition and customs which can influence the tourist attraction.

Strong spiritual beliefs from generation to generation

Salons hold spiritual beliefs. They have been worshipping the Nats (spirits) until now. The shaman is a very important person for them. They receive treatments from clinics and hospitals, by adapting to changing ages. Yet, they still practice what the shaman directs during illness, death, festival, wedding and any events. They yearly hold

Nat worshipping events, offering corn, rice, honey, alcohol, chicken, sea tortoise, goat and duck blood to Nats according to the shaman. They enjoy festivals and weddings with the campfire, folk dance and songs. A traditional boat called Kabang is made of wood. Drums are made of the skin of chameleon and iguana. They are used as musical instruments at the festival. Additionally, they mark ancestor worship every year. They treat the food to the ghosts at the cemetery after spiritual worshipping with the shaman. They all dance along with the shaman and the practitioners confessed their sufferings to the deceased ones and asked them to prevent misfortune and protect them. Burials take place after death rather than cremation according to their beliefs. They buried the belongings of the dead together with the deceased one's remains. They follow the shamans' guidance until now.

Salon people's culture and living styles captivate the tourists

The country's cultural heritage is one of the main elements of tourism. Myanmar has more than a hundred ethnic groups with diversity in culture. Its unique and appealing customs and traditional beliefs and cultural heritage draw the attention of the tourists. The culture-based tourism explores its own culture and learns how to preserve its heritage. Myanmar's ethnic people proudly stand with their respective own cultures. Tourists eye Myanmar for its untouched islands, fertile lands, long coastline, hill regions and natural resources. Myanmar is also a popular destination for tourists among regional countries. The living styles, their traditional beliefs and culture that are passed down from generation to generation are enchanting tourists. The blue sea and islands off the coast in southern Myanmar are home to Moken or Salon people.

Translated.

Union Minister for International Cooperation receives delegates from Eurasian Economic Commission, Russian Business Group

U Ko Ko Hlaing, Union Minister for International Cooperation received the delegates from the Eurasian Economic Commission and the Russian Business Group at 4:00 am on 25 March 2022 at the Ministry of International Cooperation in Nay Pyi Taw.

During the meeting, the Union Minister exchanged views on the promotion of cooperation with the Member States of the Eurasian Economic Union in various sectors such as finance, transport, energy, information and communication technology. Furthermore, they friendly discussed the potential for the enhancement of trade and investments through the signing of the Memorandum of Cooperation between Myanmar and Eurasian Economic Commission, Eurasian Economic Union.

Also present at the meeting were the permanent secretary and senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.—MNA



The MoIC Union Minister receives the EEC delegation and the Russian Business Group.

MoI Union Minister meets Eurasian Economic Commission delegation



UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn received the delegation of the Russian-Myanmar Friendship and Cooperation Association of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, they exchanged views on potential investment and trade cooperation between Myanmar and EEC member countries, in-

cluding information, technology, aviation and cybersecurity.

Also present at the meeting were Deputy Minister U Ye Tint, Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung and officials and 10 members of non-governmental organizations and business people led by Vice-President of the Russian-Myanmar Friendship and Cooperation Association Mr Vitaly Maliev.—MNA

The MoI Union Minister receives the EEC delegation.

MoC Union Minister receives delegation led by Mr Andrey Diansky

UNION Minister for Commerce Dr Pwint San met the delegation led by Head of the Secretariat of the Heavy Enterprise Cooperation of the Eurasian Economic Commission Mr Andrey Diansky for boosting economic cooperation between Myanmar and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) at the Ministry meeting yesterday.

During the meeting, they openly discussed exporting Myanmar agricultural products, fishery products, minerals and value-added products, enabling the use of regional currencies to make payments in bilateral trade, importing of oil, agricul-

tural machinery, fertilizers and electrical products. They further held talks on increasing bilateral trade, more cooperation between Myanmar and Russian entrepreneurs and sending of business delegations to boost trade between the two countries.

The MoC deputy minister, the permanent secretary, directors-general and officials were also present on the occasion. – MNA

The MoC Union Minister receives the delegation led by the Head of the Secretariat of the Heavy Enterprise Cooperation of the EEC.



MoTC Union Minister receives delegation led by Vice-President of Russia Association for Friendship & Cooperation with Myanmar

AMONG the delegates who have arrived in Myanmar to discuss potential investment and trade cooperation between Myanmar and the members of the Eurasia Economic Commission at the invitation of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, the 14-member Eurasian Economic Commission led by Vitaly Maliev, Vice-President of the Russia Association for Friendship and Cooperation with Myanmar was received at the Ministry of Transport and Communications in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the meeting, Union Minister for Transport and Communications Admiral Tin Aung San said Myanmar and



The MoTC holds talks with the delegation of the Russia Association for Friendship & Cooperation with Myanmar.

Russia have had diplomatic relations since 1948, and it is now 74 years. He expressed words for thanks for Russia's development assistance to Myanmar. The Myanmar-Russia

aviation agreement was signed in 1970 and provides aviation services between the two countries. The two countries are also coordinating to cooperate on information security in the telecommunication sector. He welcomed cooperation with Russian technology. The two sides exchanged views on possible cooperation in the field of air and railway transport, the information technology sector, electronic equipment supply and future work. Those present at the meeting included the deputy ministers of the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the permanent secretaries and officials. — MNA

MoHT Union Minister attends workshop on “Tourism and Institutions”, receives Eurasian Economic Commission delegation

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Htay Aung attended the workshop on “Tourism and Institutions” held at the Jade Hall of the Ministry yesterday morning. The directors-general and officials of the Ministry participated in the workshop, and officials from the Myanmar Tourism Federation and its affiliated organizations, teachers from universities/colleges and in-charges of the branches in regions/states and invitees joined the workshop online. The Union Minister said as the international flights will be resumed from 17 April, the Ministry is working together with international and local organizations to revive the tourism sector, adding that committees are being formed to systematically implement master plans for the tourism sector development such as The Myanmar Tourism Master Plan (2013-2020). He also

urged the tourism associations to work together as the private sector is very important for tourism development. The workshop discussed topics such as the Myanmar Tourism Law, rules and regulations, orders, the formation of the committees, safety issues and future tourism development issues. After the workshop, the Union Minister received a delegation from the Eurasian Economic Commission led by the deputy director of the International Relations Department of the Ministry of Transport of Russia and discussed airline operations between the two countries, signing of an MoU on Government-Private Tourism Cooperation and Bilateral Tourism Development, to bring Russian tourists to Myanmar. In the afternoon, the Union Minister received the Eurasian Economic Commission delegation led by the Vice-President



The MoHT “Tourism and Institutions” workshop in progress.

of the Russian Association for Friendship & Cooperation with Myanmar. During the meeting, the Union Minister assured that his ministry will coordinate with relevant departments to facilitate the visit of Russian tourists to Myanmar. He also asked for assistance in opening Russian language courses and hospitality training for human resource development which is important for Myanmar's tourism sector. The Russian delegation also affirmed that assistance will be provided to bring more Russian tourists to Myanmar, as well as for the human resource development, adding cooperation will be continued for the development of tourism. — MNA



CBM Governor receives EEC delegation

GOVERNOR U Than Nyein of the Central Bank of Myanmar and Deputy Governor Daw Than Than Swe received the economic delegation of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) at the Board of Directors meeting hall yesterday.

During the meeting, they openly discussed the banking and financial integration-related matters between the country and commission. — MNA

The Central Bank of Myanmar holds talks with the Eurasian Economic Commission delegation.

COVID-19 vaccine drive continues in various states, regions

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

COVID-19 vaccine is administered daily to target groups regardless of race or religion,

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

Yesterday, doctors and nurses from public hospitals, medical teams from the Tatmadaw, relevant healthcare workers



People aged over 65 years, volunteers, government servants and workers from factories get COVID vaccines shot in Einme Township in Ayeyawady Region.



Locals get vaccinated against COVID-19 in Tachilek Township in Shan State (East).

in collaboration with volunteers gave COVID-19 vaccines to 6,011 people from fourteen townships in Mon and Kayin States, 330 people from Tamway Township in Yangon Region, 14,653 people from 26 townships in Ayeyawady

Region, 10,495 people from ten townships in Rakhine Stet, and 190 people from Bago Township in Bago Region respectively.

Similarly, healthcare officials gave the vaccines to 272

people from Tachilek Township in Shan State(East) yesterday.

It is reported that officials from the respective military commands visited the site and coordinated the necessary work. — MNA

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, food items, vehicles seized



Officials seize a saloon without a licence.

MANAGED by the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee, action is being taken against illegal trades under the law.

On 22 March, a combined inspection team led by the Minbu Township Department of Forest conducted inspections according to a report and seized 16.4024 tonnes of illegal timbers (estimated value of K2,084,422) under the Forest Law.

In addition, on 23 March, a

combined inspection team led by the Department of Customs in Kengtung Township seized a 12-wheeler truck carrying illegal beer (estimated value of K63,600,000) during an inspection near the Kengphaung gate in Kengtung.

Yesterday, 8.8174 tonnes of illegal timbers (K1,598,322) were confiscated in the forest reserves in Bago District, Toungoo District and Pyay District under the Forest Law.

An inspection team led by the Myanmar Police Force conducted inspections in Sagaing Region and seized an unregistered car (estimated value of K2,500,000) under the Import/Export Law.

Therefore, a total of seven arrests (estimated value of K69,782,744) was made on 22, 23 and 25 March, according to the Anti-illegal Trade Steering Committee. — MNA

Stimulant tablets seized in Kayin, Shan States

A combined team comprising members of the Kayin State Police Force on 24 March searched a house owned by Min Latt aka Ahdauk in Htoneeai village, Htoneeai village-tract, Hpa-an Township, Kayin State and seized 1,057 stimulant tablets. Similarly, a combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Squad stopped and searched

a motorcycle driven by Khun Maung Sein near the Narbound village, Hteephaung village-tract, Taunggyi Township in Shan State (South) and confiscated 100,000 stimulant tablets from him.

The police have filed the charge against the suspects under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. — MNA



Khun Maung Sein is seen along with seized stimulant tablets and motorbike.

Sustain the best endurance for overcoming difficulties in electrification

AS ELECTRICITY is crucial in the development of the country, the government is making efforts for meeting the demand of State projects and public consumption as much as possible.

The government generates electricity based on various kinds of energy sources. At present, the generation of electricity declines for various reasons. Hence, various difficulties hamper the supply of electricity to the people. As such, officials and departmental personnel need to clarify difficulties in the electrification process and organize them to participate in the efforts of generating electricity.

The gas pipeline is under repair. On completion in coming May, 30 million cubic feet of natural gas per day from the Shwe

natural gas exploration project will be used to generate 150 megawatts. The Ministry of Electricity and Energy will strive for generating 195 more megawatts with the use of natural gas from the Shwe natural gas exploration project. Furthermore, inland natural gas is used in generating 30 megawatts for electrifying the people.

Moreover, the project for a natural gas and recycling power plant that can generate 135 megawatts is being implemented for the supply of electricity on schedules. A plan is underway to purchase some 120 megawatts from the Tarping-1 hydropower project to be fed into the national grid.

In addition, 22 towers are being repaired to supply some 220 megawatts from Biluchaung power stations to the national grid. Upon completion, the supply of electricity will meet the demand to some extent.

As a nature of Myanmar, generating electricity may slightly decline in summer due to the water level of water sources used in running turbines of hydropower plants.

As such, people including industries cannot consume electricity at full capacity. Hence, all people need to patiently overcome such a kind of difficulties without putting blame on others.

At a time when the towers broken up by unscrupulous persons have been repaired and natural gas and hydropower power plants can be operated to generate electricity, the entire people will have to consume the electrification. Such a definite day when the adequate supply of electricity will be supplied is sure to reach the goal.

Up to now, the relevant ministries are seeking various ways and means for generating more electricity for public consumption day and night. Their efforts will be shifted into good results in the future. All Myanmar people need to sustain the best endurance capacity for overcoming various difficulties in the electrification process.

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Study sheds light on benefits of exercise for people with depression, anxiety

IN A study conducted by the American College of Cardiology, it was found that regular physical activity has nearly doubled the cardiovascular benefits in individuals with depression or anxiety, compared with individuals without these diagnoses.

The study was published in the journal 'Cardiology'.

The research findings added to mounting evidence that exercise improves cardiovascular health by helping to activate parts of the brain that counteract stress. Overall, the study found that people who achieved the recommended amount of physical activity per week were 17 per cent less likely to suffer a major adverse cardiovascular event than those who exercised less.

Benefits were significantly greater

These benefits were significantly greater in those with anxiety or depression, who had a 22 per cent risk reduction versus a 10 per cent risk reduction in those without either condition.

"The effect of physical activity on the brain's stress response may be particularly relevant in those with stress-related psychiatric conditions," said Hadil Zureigat, MD, postdoctoral clinical research fellow at Massachusetts Gener-



People exercise in front of the city skyline in Melbourne on 29 August 2021, as authorities announced the extension of an ongoing coronavirus lockdown in Australia's second-biggest city. (WILLIAM WEST / AFP)

al Hospital and the study's lead author:

"This is not to suggest that exercise is only effective in those with depression or anxiety, but we found that these patients seem to derive a greater cardiovascular benefit from physical activity," he added.

Rates of both depression and anxiety have risen during the COVID-19 pandemic, and heart disease remains the leading cause of death in the US. The study findings underscored the important

role of exercise in maintaining heart health and reducing stress, according to the researchers.

For the study, researchers analyzed the health records of more than 50,000 patients in the Massachusetts General Brigham Biobank database. Just over 4,000 of the patients had suffered a major adverse cardiovascular event, which included experiencing a heart attack, having chest pain caused by a blocked artery or undergoing a procedure to open a blocked artery in the heart.

Major coronary events among patients

Researchers first assessed the rates of major coronary events among patients who reported in a questionnaire that they exercise at least 500 metabolic equivalents (MET) minutes per week — aligning with the ACC and American Heart Association primary prevention guideline recommendation of at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week — with those who exercise less.

MET-minutes are a unit of

exercise that represents the amount of energy expended during various activities. The analysis revealed that people who got at least 500 MET minutes or more per week were 17 per cent less likely to suffer an adverse cardiovascular event.

Then, they analyzed how this pattern played out among patients who had a diagnosis of depression or anxiety compared with those who did not have depression or anxiety.

This second analysis revealed that patients with depression derived more than double the benefit from exercise in terms of reduced cardiovascular risk compared with people who did not have depression. A similar benefit of exercise was found for patients with anxiety.

Brain imaging to determine how exercise improves cardiovascular health

The research expanded upon previous studies by the research team that used brain imaging to determine how exercise improves cardiovascular health by helping to keep the brain's stress response in check. Individuals with depression or anxiety have higher stress-related neural activity and a higher risk of cardiovascular disease.

"When one thinks about physical activity decreasing cardiovascular risk, one doesn't usually think of the brain," Zureigat said.

"Our research emphasizes the importance of the stress-related neural mechanisms by which physical activity acts to reduce cardiovascular risk," he added.

Even though the study used 500 MET minutes as a cutoff for the analysis, researchers noted that previous studies show people can reduce their heart disease risk even if they do not achieve the recommended amount of physical activity. Even a little bit of regular physical activity can make a difference in terms of cardiovascular risk.

"Any amount of exercise is helpful, particularly for those with depression or anxiety," Zureigat said.

"Not only will physical activity help them feel better, but they will also potentially reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease. It can be hard to make the transition, but once achieved, the physical activity allows those with these common chronic stress-related psychiatric conditions to hit two birds with one stone," he concluded.

SOURCE: ANI

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Two Australian-made COVID-19 vaccines entering clinical trials

TWO new Australian-made COVID-19 vaccines will enter trials with hopes that they may provide more targeted protection against the virus.

The two vaccine candidates, unveiled on Friday, were created by researchers at the Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity and the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences (MIPS), with 114 eligible Australians to be recruited to participate in the first-in-human trial.

Both vaccines are distinct from existing vaccines, because they focus the immune response on the tip of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein, called the receptor binding domain (RBD).

"The RBD enables the virus

to enter and infect cells in the body and elicits over 90 per cent of neutralizing antibodies (antibodies that can block the virus) following SARS-CoV-2 infection," the Peter Doherty Institute explained in a statement on Friday.

While both vaccines target the RBD of SARS-CoV-2, they use different technologies. The first, RBD protein vaccine, is a traditional recombinant protein vaccine, and works by creating an immune response to proteins in the virus. The other, RBD mRNA vaccine, used the genetic sequence of the tip of the spike, rather than the protein itself.

Vaccine developers said, in pre-clinical trials, both vaccines showed high levels of RBD-specific antibodies in mice, and they

can be rapidly modified to incorporate multiple RBD mutations.

RBD protein vaccine

"In common with the RBD protein vaccine, the RBD mRNA vaccine induced high levels of RBD-specific antibodies and protected against virus challenge in the mouse model," said Professor Colin Pouton of MIPS, who led the development of the RBD mRNA vaccine.

Dr Georgia Deliyannis, who performed most of the RBD protein vaccine experiments at the Peter Doherty Institute, also said immunity induced by the RBD protein vaccine protects against the virus in a mouse model of SARS-CoV-2 infection even 100 days following the

boost.

"As well as inducing strong neutralizing antibody immunity to the Beta variant in mice, it also retains its potential to neutralize the original ancestral strain, and preliminary in-lab studies have demonstrated neutralizing activity against other variants including Delta and Omicron," Deliyannis said.

The phase-1 clinical trial will assess the safety and efficacy of a single dose of both vaccines as a fourth dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. All participants are required to have had their third dose at least three months before the study commenced.

SOURCE: Xinhua



In biosafety level II laboratory setting, a medical scientist is working on RT-PCR method for the testing of the novel coronavirus at Department of Medical Sciences. PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ WHO/PLOY PHUTPHENG



Myanmar Daily Weather Report (Issued at 4:00 pm Friday 25 March 2022)

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

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 26 March, 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Kachin State, fairly widespread in Taninthayi Region, scattered in Upper Sagaing Region and isolated in Mandalay Region and Shan, Chin, Rakhine, Kayin, Mon States. Degree of certainty is (80%). Weather will be generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw, Bago Region and partly cloudy in the remaining Regions and States.

STATE OF THE SEA: Sea will be moderate in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (5-7) feet off and along Myanmar Coasts.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of continuation of scattered rain or thundershowers in Upper Sagaing, Taninthayi Regions and Kachin State.

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

FORECAST FOR YANGON AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26 March 2022: Partly cloudy.

FORECAST FOR NAY PYI TAW AND NEIGHBOURING AREA FOR 26 March 2022: Partly cloudy.

WEATHER OUTLOOK FOR WEEKEND: Weather will be generally fair in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon Region and partly cloudy in Mandalay Region.

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Farmers happy as cashew nuts get higher prices this year

THE cashew nut from Ayeyawady is one of the export products, and it has been entering the market as a seasonal crop since the end of February. The cashew nuts are abundantly yielded in March, it is learnt.

The cashews are highly traded before the monsoon. In May and June, there is heavy rain, and the rain permeates into the fruits and the fruits turn black. As a consequence, there was no trading in the market and the cashew nuts season ended, according to the market.

There are about 65,000 acres of cashew nuts in the Ayeyawady Region. The cashew nuts are grown mostly in Pathein, Myaungmya, Hinthada and Latbutta districts. And, the



The price of cashew nuts has reached its highest again during March. The price rise can be attributed to the market demand in the township.

cashew nuts are highly yielded in Chaungtha, Ngwehsaung regions besides the coastal villages in Pathein, Thaboung and Ngaputaw townships in the Pathein district.

There are five or six depots that are buying the cashew nuts

from the growers in Pathein town. The raw cashew nuts were mainly conveyed to the Yangon market. Then, the raw

products are manufactured as finished products in Yangon and exported to the international market.

Raw products are stored yearly and finished products are exported to China through Muse monthly. Last year, the cashew nut was sold for K 1,800-K 2,000 per viss. But this year, the nut fetched K 3,000-K 3,200 per viss. The farmers are delighted because they are getting better prices than the previous year.

The price of cashew nuts has reached its highest again during March. The price rise can be attributed to the market demand in the township, according to the cashew nut traders. — District IPRD/GNLM

Black gram price inches up K1.5 mln per tonne

THE price of black gram (called urad in India) rebounded to K1.5 million per tonne, according to the bean market.

The prices have fluctuated around K1.3 million per tonne since the end of last year. On 9 February 2022, it stood at only K1,192,000 per tonne.

The figures indicated a large gap of K300,000 per tonne over a month.

The price of black gram continues to rise due to the possible demand amid the requirements in India, said traders.

India's import of black gram from Myanmar will expire at the end of March 2022.

Therefore, Agri World (Mumbai) stated that it's prob-

able for India to extend the import period.

Furthermore, Agri World Mumbai analyzed that Myanmar's black gram production is likely to increase this year. The export volume is estimated at around 700,000 tonnes. If the extension of the time limit for bean import happens, the price will go up again.

Nevertheless, Myanmar heavily relies on India for black gram export. Traders and growers must consider that the price control in India has a huge impact on Myanmar's black gram prices and import market, according to the Ayeya Trade Centre of Myanmar Trade Promotion Organization.

Additionally, the prices can fluctuate depending on Kyat value against US Dollar in the local forex market, traders said.

Last September 2021, the prices hit an all-time high of K2 million per tonne when the US dollar exchange rate with Myanmar currency hit over K3,000 in the local forex market.

Myanmar yearly produces approximately 400,000 tonnes of black gram and about 50,000 tonnes of pigeon peas. Myanmar is the top producer of the black gram that is primarily demanded by India, while, pigeon peas, green grams and chickpeas are cultivated in Australia and African countries besides Myanmar. — NN/GNLM

Turmeric growers in Kyaukkyyi Tsp reap great profits



Myanmar sent the kitchen crops to India, Singapore, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Viet Nam and other neighbouring markets through border posts as well as maritime trade.

TURMERIC growers in Kyaukkyyi Township, Toungoo District, Bago Region make a handsome profit with a high yield and good price.

It takes six months to harvest turmeric from cultivation. It likes tropical conditions and requires a hot and moist climate. The turmeric is boiled, sundried and processed into powder, a grower said.

The prevailing price of fresh turmeric is K1,000 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) and sundried turmeric is worth around K5,500 per viss. The turmeric powder sells at K6,000 per viss in the wholesale market and K7,000 at the retail market.

The turmeric powder is distributed to Kyaukkyyi township, the nearest townships and the depots in Yangon and Toungoo cities.

Next, Myanmar delivered turmeric to Bangladesh, China, India and Thailand. Additionally, Myanmar has shipped them to Singapore and UAE markets.

The turmeric fetches about \$1,000-\$1,200 per tonne in the previous years.

Myanmar exported over US\$11.147 million worth of 18,614 metric tons of turmeric to its neighbouring countries in the financial year 2019-2020 and \$7.7 million valued 13,553.49 MT of turmeric in the FY2020-2021, according to statistics released by the Customs Department.

There are over 12,000 acres of turmeric plantations across the country, with an estimated production of 100,000 tonnes per year.

Of the kitchen crops, turmeric and ginger have penetrated the foreign market. The exports of kitchen crops such as turmeric, ginger, tamarind, onion and garlic have been growing. Myanmar sent the kitchen crops to India, Singapore, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Viet Nam and other neighbouring markets through border posts as well as maritime trade. — Ko Thagyi, KK/GNLM

Wheat on sale well in Mandalay market

WHEAT is highly demanded in Mandalay market these days and the price is pretty high as well, beans and pulses trades said.

The price of wheat remains strong on the high demand at present in the Mandalay market. It is mainly supplied by Monywa, Shwebo, Sagaing, Budalin, Myinmu and Myaung areas. The



wheat fetched only K90,000 per three-basket bag in January 2022, whereas it soared to K115,000 per bag in recent days, according to Mandalay Soe Win Myint depot.

"The consumers prefer high-quality wheat from the Myaung region. Global consumption of wheat is growing. It is the second-highest demanded

crop in Myanmar after the staple food rice. High price allows the growers to make profits. They are commercially doing well this year. Earlier, wheat was commonly imported. To minimize the capital outflow, I like to suggest the growers add more acres and improve production. The domestic consumption of wheat is also growing year over year. The wheat price is expected to remain upward trend," an owner of Soe Win Myint depot elaborated. The wheat can be cultivated once a year. It cannot be grown anywhere in Myanmar, especially in the lower Myanmar region. It is commonly found in southern and northern Shan State, Chin State and Kayah State. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)/GNLM

COVID-19: NEWS DIGEST

Moderna says infant Covid vaccine succeeded in trial

US biotech firm Moderna on Wednesday said it was pursuing regulatory approval for its Covid vaccine in children under six years old after the two-shot regimen was found to be safe and produced a strong immune response.

Specifically, two doses of 25 microgrammes given to babies, toddlers and preschoolers generated similar levels of antibodies to two doses of 100 microgrammes given to young people aged 18-25, indicating there would be similar levels of protection.

Children under six are the only age group that has yet to gain access to a Covid-19 vaccine in the United States.—AFP ■

Poland scraps face masks, isolation rules

FROM Monday 28 March, face masks will no longer be required by law in indoor settings, with the exception of healthcare facilities. The news was announced by the Polish health minister, Adam Niedzielski, on Thursday morning.

In addition, quarantine and self-isolation rules are to be dropped. They will be replaced by a recommendation for doctors to grant sick leave and encourage people to voluntarily stay at home if diagnosed with Covid.

In addition, state public health authorities will retain the powers to impose quarantine in specific cases, such as a concentrated outbreak of the disease.— AFP ■

Expanded IPL returns to India, but crowds remain under Covid curbs

THE Indian Premier League returns for its biggest season on Saturday, with a galaxy of top names and two new franchises expanding the world's richest cricket competition to 10 teams for its 15th edition.

But crowds in the cricket-mad nation will, initially at least, be limited to 25 per cent capacity with group games restricted to four venues -- one in Pune and three in Mumbai.

The venues for the three playoff matches and the 29 May final are yet to be announced.—AFP ■

Kenya says over 800,000 Covid jabs have expired

KENYA announced on Wednesday that nearly 840,000 Covid-19 vaccines received through donations had expired, blaming hesitancy and a short shelf life for jabs going unused.

The doses of AstraZeneca were donated to Kenya through the global Covax vaccine equity initiative, the health ministry said in a statement.

"Any expired dose represents a missed opportunity to save a life," the ministry said.—AFP ■

EU drug watchdog approves AstraZeneca Covid prevention jab

THE EU's drug watchdog on Thursday recommended for approval AstraZeneca's Covid-19 prevention cocktail, which can be used for patients with immune system problems or severe reactions to other coronavirus vaccines.

The European Medicines Agency's human medicines committee "has recommended granting a marketing authorisation for Evusheld, developed by AstraZeneca for the prevention of Covid-19 in adults and adolescents from 12 years of age", the Amsterdam-based EMA said in a statement.

Evusheld consists of two monoclonal antibodies tixagevimab and cilgavimab — proteins designed to attack the spike protein of the Sars-CoV-2 virus which causes Covid-19 — at two different sites, the EMA said.



AstraZeneca cemented its lead in bringing a preventative COVID-19 shot to market. PHOTO: AFP

It said data from a test on 5,000 people who were given two jabs, showed it reduced the risk of Covid-19 infection by 77 per cent and protection lasted for at least six months.

The study was done on adults who had never had Covid-19 and had never received a vaccine or other preventative treatment, the EMA said.

"The safety profile of Evusheld was favourable and side effects were generally mild, with a small number of people reporting reactions at the injection site or hypersensitivity," the medicines watchdog added.—AFP ■

WHO calls for caution as COVID-19 restrictions eased in Africa

A World Health Organization (WHO) regional office Thursday calls for caution and consideration of the risks involved, with multiple African countries lifting their COVID-19 health restrictions. With new COVID-19 cases significantly dropping, many African countries are increasingly curtailing COVID-19 surveillance and quarantine measures. While the need to reopen economies and resume social life is important, countries need to be cautious and take into consideration the possible risks, said Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa, at an online press conference. With the evo-



Holidaymakers relax on the South Beach during New Year festivities in Durban after the government lifted COVID-19 restrictions. PHOTO: RAJESH JANTILAL/AFP

lution of the pandemic, countries in the region have moved towards prioritized contact tracing, where only contacts at high risk of infection or falling severely ill are followed.—Xinhua ■



Public concern has spiralled in Shanghai this week as social media has filled with complaints about unclear government messaging. PHOTO: AFP

Shanghai's daily COVID caseload at nearly 1,000, amid rise in asymptomatic cases

NEW daily COVID-19 cases in the Chinese commercial hub of Shanghai remained close to 1,000 on Thursday (24 March) as authorities scrambled to identify and isolate asymptomatic infections, though a leading expert said the outbreak was being contained.

Queues were seen forming at grocers, as the city said more districts would be locked down for mass testing from Thursday to Friday (25 March), with residents told not to leave home unless strictly necessary. The testing campaign is part of Beijing's national "dynamic clearance" policy to stamp out flare-ups as quickly as possible.

However, local residents said they felt relaxed and did not feel a need to panic buy supplies.

"I don't see it to be necessary (to stockpile vegetables). I come here to shop every day. I also bought some for my neighbour. No need (to stockpile vegetables), really no need. Not so many people in my house. It's no use buying too much," said a 65-year-old man surnamed Zhang.—AFP ■

NEWS
IN BRIEF

Experts on at what point oil prices can trigger US recession

THE United States could see a recession if rapidly rising oil prices hit a crucial tipping point, economists have warned.

Oil prices are surging worldwide, and the conflict in Ukraine has exacerbated numerous factors that have already caused record price hikes, according to experts.

Bernard Baumohl, chief global economist at The Economic Outlook Group, told Xinhua that if US gasoline prices hit four US dollars and 75 cents per gallon on a national level, that's the point at which the United States would see a change in consumer behaviour — such as Americans significantly cutting their air and auto travel.

That could increase the odds of a recession, said Baumohl, who was ranked by The Wall Street Journal in 2019 as the most accurate economic forecaster in the previous year's economic survey. —Xinhua ■

EU negotiators agree landmark law to curb Big Tech

NEGOTIATORS from the European Parliament and EU member states agreed Thursday on a landmark law to curb the market dominance of US big tech giants such as Google, Meta, Amazon and Apple.

Meeting in Brussels the lawmakers nailed down a long list of do's and don'ts that will single out the world's most iconic web giants as internet "gatekeepers" subject to special rules.

The "Digital Markets Act" (DMA) has sped through the bloc's legislative procedures and is designed to protect consumers and give rivals a better chance to survive against the world's powerful tech juggernauts.

"The agreement ushers in a new era of tech regulation worldwide," said German MEP Andreas Schwab, who led the negotiations for the European Parliament. "The Digital Markets Act puts an end to the ever-increasing dominance of Big Tech companies," he added. — AFP ■

US, Japan reach beef export agreement



Customers sample US beef at Tokyo supermarket. PHOTO: BEEFMAGAZINE/AFP

THE Biden administration announced Thursday an agreement with Tokyo to increase the amount of beef the United States exports to Japan without automatically increasing customs duties.

"The United States and Japan have reached an agreement," US Trade Representative (USTR) Katherine Tai and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack

said in a statement.

The accord means it will now be possible for Japan to import more American beef — above the previously agreed threshold — before tariffs imposed on the product rise from 25.8 per cent to 38.5 per cent, a senior USTR official told reporters.

The United States will be able to export more beef to Japan and maintain moderate tariff

levels, a move categorized as a "win-win."

"The new... mechanism will allow US exporters to meet Japan's growing demand for high-quality beef and reduce the probability that Japan will impose higher tariffs in the future," the statement said.

The threshold had been hit in March 2021, prompting Japan to raise the import fee until the

end of its fiscal year, 30 April. This accelerated discussions between the companies, the USTR official said.

The agreement will go into effect when the full text has been finalized.

The United States is the world's number-one exporter of beef, with more than \$10 billion of sales in 2021, including \$2.4 billion to Japan, according to USTR figures.

Tokyo and Washington signed a still-valid trade agreement in October 2019.

Japan lowered tariffs on US agricultural goods, including beef, by \$7 billion, while the United States agreed to drop import fees on Japanese agricultural items, such as soy sauce and green tea, by \$40 million, and to lower tariffs on Japanese beef.

The agricultural sector was furious with former president Donald Trump — who was then seeking re-election — for the decision, as it had already been trampled in the trade war with China. —AFP ■

Inside VW's scramble to 'duplicate' Ukrainian factories

WITH the war in Ukraine halting deliveries of crucial car parts, Volkswagen and its suppliers are scrambling to find solutions abroad, while trying to reassure Ukrainians they aren't abandoning the country.

Like other carmakers, German giant VW has had to trim production ever since Russia's invasion last month forced many Ukrainian factories to close, holding up supplies of car components across Europe.

It is the latest upset to an industry already battered by two years of computer chip shortages



An employee at the Volkswagen plant in Zwickau completes a VW ID.4. Volkswagen produces the first purely electric SUV at the plant in Zwickau. PHOTO: VW/AFP

and other pandemic-related supply chain disruptions.

"We are keeping our suppliers in Ukraine," Murat Aksel, VW's board member for purchasing, told reporters at the group's Wolfsburg headquarters in northern Germany.

But "we are currently creating capacities outside Ukraine because no one knows if the war will spread west or how long it will last". As well as manufacturing a range of car parts, Ukraine is one of Europe's biggest suppliers of automotive wire harnesses. —AFP ■

Russia's gas payment in roubles demand a 'breach of contract': Germany



Photo taken on 26 February 2022 show a gas station stopping service in Poland's border with Ukraine. PHOTO: XINHUA/MENG DINGBO

RUSSIA'S demand for payments in roubles for gas deliveries to Europe constitutes a breach of contract, Germany warned Thursday.

"The announcement of paying in roubles is... a breach of the contract and we will now discuss with our European partners how we would react to that," said German Economy Minister Robert Habeck, whose country imported 55 per cent of its natural gas from Russia before Moscow invaded

Ukraine.

Calls have been growing for Western allies to further ramp up sanctions against Moscow over its assault on Ukraine through a complete embargo of energy imports from Russia.

But Germany has been reluctant. Chancellor Olaf Scholz told parliament earlier Wednesday that Europe's biggest economy was accelerating the end of its dependence on Russian oil, coal and gas. —AFP ■

Financial watchdog may punish SMBC Nikko for alleged market rigging

JAPAN’S financial watchdog may take punitive action against alleged market manipulation by major Japanese brokerage SMBC Nikko Securities Inc., Shunichi Suzuki, minister in charge of financial services, said Friday.

“As the Financial Services Agency, we will take strict measures if necessary, depending on developments in the investigation,” Suzuki, who is also finance minister, said. The brokerage’s deputy president, Toshihiro Sato, who supervises its equity department, was arrested on Thursday for allegedly placing large buy orders for an individual stock on 8 April 2021, to stabilize the price before selling it in violation of the financial instruments and exchange law, according to prosecutors.

Prosecutors the same day indicted five other executives of the company, believing they systematically conducted similar transactions between December 2019 and November 2020. They also charged the company itself. The arrests and indictments were “extremely regrettable,” Suzuki said.

“Securities houses and their executives are those who must dedicate themselves to securing fair transactions in the market,” he said. “This case of alleged organized unfair deals is far from this, and could shake the trust in the market.” —Kyodo ■

Eurozone growth slows as Ukraine war threatens recovery

BUSINESS activity in the eurozone slowed in March, according to a closely watched survey, as high prices and a gloomy outlook raised fears the Ukraine war could snuff out economic recovery.

Thursday’s data indicated that while Europe was still growing at a solid pace after the lows of the coronavirus pandemic, clouds loomed for the health of the economy moving forward.

The survey underscores the “immediate and material impact” of the war on the economy and “highlights the risk of the eurozone falling into decline in the second quarter”, said S&P’s chief business economist, Chris Williamson.

Had it not been for the easing of coronavirus measures, “business activity would have weakened far more sharply in March”, Williamson added.

The purchase managers’ index (PMI) from S&P (formerly IHS Markit), slipped 1.0 points to 54.5, a statement said. A figure above 50 indicates growth.—AFP ■



Business activity in the eurozone slowed in March, according to a closely watched survey. Photo shows a customer in a supermarket. PHOTO: ATTILA KISBENEDEK / AFP

Stellantis, LG partner to build EV batteries in Canada

US-EUROPEAN auto-maker Stellantis is partnering with LG Energy Solution to make batteries for electric vehicles at a massive new plant in Canada, the largest ever investment in the country’s auto sector, officials said Wednesday.

The joint venture commits Can\$5 billion (US\$4.1 billion) to build the facility in Windsor, Ontario that will supply batteries for a “significant portion” of Stellantis’ electric vehicle production in North America, according to a statement from the companies.

South Korea-based LGES announced separately that it would spend another US\$1.4 billion to build a factory in the US state of Arizona to make batteries for electric vehicle and tool makers in North America.

The decision was driven by growing demand in the region for recharge-



The all-electric Chrysler Airflow Concept vehicle at a Stellantis press event at CES 2022 in Las Vegas, Nevada, US. Stellantis is aiming to sell five million electric vehicles or “50% of battery electric vehicle sales by the end of the decade” in Canada and the US. PHOTO: ALEX WONG/ AFP

able batteries for vehicles and wireless power tools, LGES said.

Construction of the Arizona plant is expected to begin in the coming months, with a goal of mass producing batteries there by the second half of 2024.—AFP ■

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR SOLO VOY.NO. (955N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SINAR SOLO VOY.NO. (955N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-3-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SAMUDERA SHIPPING LINE

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V X-PRESS MEGHNA VOY.NO. (22005N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V X-PRESS MEGHNA VOY.NO. (22005N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-3-2022** 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 X-PRESS FEEDERS LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V CHANG MIN

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V CHANG MIN VOY.NO. (V.V2981)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **28-3-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT-5** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S CHUN AN INTERNATIONAL LOGISTICS CO LTD

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MCL 17

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MCL 17 VOY. NO. (003/22)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **26-3-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AIPT-2** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301928**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S BEN LINE AGENCIES (S'PORE) PTE LTD

NEWS IN BRIEF

Russia accuses Poland of 'dangerous escalation' in the region

Russia's foreign ministry on Thursday accused NATO member Poland, which neighbours Ukraine, of escalating the situation in eastern Europe after it expelled 45 Russian diplomats over alleged espionage.

"Warsaw has embarked on a dangerous escalation in the region, proceeding not from national interests, but within the framework of NATO guidelines, which are based on outright Russophobia elevated to the rank of official policy," the ministry said in a statement.

"We see this and will take it into account in our practical steps towards Poland," it added. —AFP ■

Australia warns against Solomons-China pact

A wide-ranging draft security pact between the Solomon Islands and China was leaked online Thursday, prompting Australia to voice concern about actions that would "destabilize" the South Pacific.

The proposals — which have not yet been adopted — would allow Chinese security and naval deployments to the crisis-hit Pacific island nation.

The United States and Australia have long been concerned about the potential for China to build a naval base in the South Pacific, allowing its navy to project power far beyond its borders.

The draft "framework agreement" has sent shock waves through Canberra, which has long been the dominant power in Melanesia and sees the region as its backyard. —AFP ■

UN wants worldwide weather warning systems within 5 years

THE United Nations said Wednesday it wanted the whole world covered by weather disaster early warning systems within five years to protect people from the worsening impacts of climate change. A third of the world's people, mainly in the least-developed countries and developing small island states, are without early warning coverage, the UN said, with 60 per cent of people in Africa wide open to weather catastrophes. The plan will cost \$1.5 billion — but the UN insisted it would be money well spent compared to the devastation wrought by meteorological disasters.

"The United Nations will spearhead new action to ensure every person on Earth is protected by early warning systems within five years," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced, launching the plan on World Meteorological Day.

Proper early warning systems — for floods, droughts, heatwaves or storms — allow people to know that hazardous weather is coming, and set out



The Centre for Severe Weather Research used two mobile radar doppler trucks along interstate 10 to closely study the eye of Hurricane Laura. **PHOTO: ACCUWEATHER / BILL WADELL/AFP/FILE**

plans for what governments and individuals should do to minimize the impacts. "Each increment of global heating will further increase the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events," said Guterres. "Early warning systems save lives. Let us ensure they are working for everyone."

Return on investment

The UN's World Meteorolog-

ical Organization will present an action plan at the next UN climate conference, to be held in Egypt in November.

WMO chief Petteri Taalas said the \$1.5 billion required to build weather, water and climate early warning services would provide one of the highest rates of return on investments in climate adaptation. —AFP ■

North Korea says Kim ordered test of 'new type' of ICBM

KIM Jong Un personally oversaw the test-firing of North Korea's largest-ever inter-continental ballistic missile, ensuring his country is ready for "long-standing confrontation" with the United States, state media reported Friday.

The Thursday launch was the first time Pyongyang has fired Kim's most powerful missiles at full range since 2017.

It appears to have travelled higher and further than any previous ICBM tested by the nuclear-armed country — including one designed to

strike anywhere on the US mainland.

The test-launch of the "new type inter-continental ballistic missile" was conducted under the "direct guidance" of leader Kim, KCNA reported.

State media photographs showed Kim, wearing his customary black leather jacket and dark sunglasses, striding across the tarmac in front of a huge missile, with other images of him cheering and celebrating the test-launch with uniformed military top brass. —AFP ■

IMF official says Russia-Ukraine conflict adds uncertainty to Asian economy

THE ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict has added uncertainty to the Asian economy, which already has to battle an Omicron-fuelled COVID-19 surge and brace for tighter financial conditions, an International Monetary Fund (IMF) official has said.

"We are now quantifying the impact through various channels ... but we don't have at this moment the exact number partly because there are still a lot of uncertainties," Changyong Rhee, director of the IMF's Asia and Pacific Department, told Xinhua in a virtual interview on Friday.

Rhee was just nominated as a candidate for South Korea's central bank governor and will relinquish his role at the IMF, according to an IMF statement published Wednesday.

Noting that the most important channel to impact the Asian economy is commodity prices, especially oil prices, Rhee said how long this conflict will last will have an impact on oil prices, and with the fluctuation of oil prices, the impact on the Asian



Indonesia, which exports a lot of commodities, will be less affected by the current crisis. Technicians work on an assembly line of BMW 7 series in Jakarta. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

economy can change "quite a lot".

Indonesia, which exports a lot of commodities, will be less affected by the current crisis, while South Korea, Japan and India, heavily reliant on oil import, will be negatively affected, Rhee said.

Rhee urged Asian governments to reduce fuel subsidies, which tend to benefit people with higher incomes as they consume more energy, and adopt target-

ed fiscal policies to support the poor households, who also need to cope with higher food prices amid the crisis.

Apart from the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Omicron's spread in the region and higher interest rates due to US monetary policy normalization are also headwinds for Asia's growth, Rhee said. "So all news doesn't seem to be good at this moment, and that will actually interact each other." —Xinhua ■



A picture taken on 24 March from North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency shows what state media reports is a new type of intercontinental ballistic missile, the Hwasongpho-17 of North Korea's strategic forces in an undisclosed location in North Korea. **PHOTO: AFP**

UN General Assembly adopts resolution on humanitarian situation in Ukraine



A little girl is seen as people are lining up to get into the buses for further transportation at the Medyka Polish-Ukrainian border crossing on 18 March. PHOTO: AFP

UN member states on Thursday adopted a resolution on the humanitarian situation in Ukraine. The resolution, drafted by Ukraine and allies, received 140 votes in favour and 5 votes against, while 38 countries abstained.

The text strongly encourages the continued negotiations between all parties, and again urges the immediate peaceful resolution of the conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine “through political dialogue, ne-

gotiations, mediation and other peaceful means in accordance with international law”. The vote came after the adoption of a similar non-binding resolution on 2 March that demanded Russia immediately cease its use of force — a vote that was approved by virtually the same margin. Ukraine put forward the new resolution, originally prepared by France and Mexico and addressing the “humanitarian consequences” of Moscow’s invasion of its neighbour, on Wednesday at an emergency session of the General Assembly. The approved resolution names Moscow and “demands an immediate cessation of the hostilities by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, in particular of any attacks against civilians and civilian objects.”—Xinhua /AFP ■

Russia says Pentagon directly involved in bioweapon development in Ukraine

THE US Department of Defence was directly involved in developing biological weapon components in Ukraine, the Russian Defence Ministry said Thursday. Documents received from Ukrainian employees working at the laboratories were studied by Russian experts and have shown that Ukrainian biological projects were directly developed and approved by the Pentagon, the ministry’s spokesman Igor Konashenkov said during a briefing. One of these projects aimed to carry out molecular analysis of particularly dangerous infections endemic in Ukraine and involved sampling pathogens from old animal burial sites to obtain new anthrax strains.



Heavy exchanges of shelling could be heard from the commuter town of Irpin on the northwestern outskirts Kyiv. PHOTO: AFP

Furthermore, a pharmaceutical company contracted by the Pentagon worked with the Ukrainian Defence Ministry to

test unregistered medical drugs on Ukrainian service members, according to Konashenkov.—Xinhua ■

China denounces US ‘prior knowledge’ claim of Russian military operation in Ukraine

A Chinese military spokesperson Thursday denounced the claim that China had prior knowledge of Russia’s military operation in Ukraine as disinformation. A Chinese military spokesperson Thursday denounced the claim that China had prior

knowledge of Russia’s military operation in Ukraine as disinformation. The spread of such disinformation by the United States is intended to shirk responsibility and smear China, said Wu Qian, spokesperson for China’s Minis-

try of National Defence. “We believe that to resolve the current crisis, we must uphold the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, and respect and protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries,” said Wu.—Xinhua ■

NEWS DIGEST

Following are the latest developments of the situation:

Life must go on in Lviv as Ukraine war enters second month

The wail of the air raid siren no longer has the effect it once did in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv. Volunteers stitching camouflage nets for the war effort dwindle every day. A bomb shelter nested in the earth near a children’s playground now seems unremarkable -- just another thread in the fabric of the city. As Ukraine marks one month to the day since the Russian invasion began, Lviv has settled into a new rhythm of living in a country under attack. Alcohol remains banned since an order shortly after the invasion, nightlife is reined by a martial law curfew and the streets still bristle with military checkpoints.

Ukraine civilian death count crosses 1,000, says UN

The civilian death count in Ukraine due to the month-long Russian invasion has crossed 1,000, according to the United Nations human rights office. Meanwhile, US President Joe Biden was in Brussels on Thursday for crunch summits with European, G7 and NATO allies. NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg today accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of making a “big mistake” by invading Ukraine, as leaders gathered to discuss overhauling the alliance’s eastern defences. European Union’s top diplomat Josep Borrell said as the Russian government has no interest in negotiating a ceasefire in Ukraine for now as its army has not reached its military goals.

Canada will boost oil exports to replace Russian energy

Canada announced Thursday it will boost oil exports by about five per cent to help address supply shortages faced by allies shunning Russian energy after Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine. “Our European friends and allies need Canada and others to step up. They’re telling us they need our help in getting off Russian oil and gas in the short term,” Resources Minister Jonathan Wilkinson said in a statement.

Ukraine sets up 7 humanitarian corridors

Ukraine set up seven humanitarian corridors on Thursday to evacuate civilians, the government-run Ukrinform news agency reported, citing Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk. At a media briefing, Vereshchuk said 45 buses are set to evacuate civilians from the besieged city of Mariupol in Donetsk, adding that the evacuation will continue in towns and villages in the southern Zaporizhzhia region and the central Kyiv region. On Wednesday, Ukraine established nine humanitarian corridors to evacuate civilians from the above-mentioned two regions.

Ukraine exchange prisoners

Russia and Ukraine have exchanged prisoners, Kyiv and Moscow confirmed Thursday, in what Ukraine said was the first swap of soldiers since Moscow ordered troops into Ukraine one month ago. “Following an order from President Volodymyr Zelensky, the first fully-fledged exchange of prisoners of war has taken place,” Ukrainian Vice-Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk wrote on Facebook. “In exchange for 10 captured occupiers we rescued 10 of our servicemen,” she said, referring to Russian and Ukrainian troops.

SOURCE: XINHUA/ANI/AFP

Myanmar women's football team stands third in ASEAN



Myanmar women's national football team is currently in third place in ASEAN. **PHOTO: MFF**

MYANMAR women's national football team is currently standing third in the ASEAN region with 45th in FIFA ranking and 1,524 points earned, according to yesterday's statement with the ASEAN Football Federation.

The Philippines climbed 10 places to 54th, their highest ever ranking while Thailand dropped five places to 43rd, their lowest ranking.

Myanmar has taken 45th po-

sition in the world ranking last year, and the team is maintaining its rank till now.

Viet Nam Women's Team is still leading the ASEAN Zone with the 32nd in FIFA ranking and 1,655 points garnered and Thailand is in second place with the 43rd of FIFA rank and 1,541 points collected. The Philippines team is in fourth place in ASEAN with the 54th FIFA rank plus 1,438 points earned.

Next, Laos is the fifth with 83rd of FIFA rank and team Indonesia is sixth with the 96th ranking of FIFA.

Singapore team is in the seventh with 135th of FIFA ranks.

The Myanmar women's national football team has been known or nicknamed the "Asian Lionesses" and the team is made up of many ASEAN star players. — GNLM

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.

Canada kept waiting for World Cup place after Costa Rica loss, US and Mexico draw

CANADA crashed to their first defeat of 2022 World Cup qualifying on Thursday (24 March) as a 1-0 loss to Costa Rica delayed their bid to reach the Finals for the first time in 36 years.

With Panama being surprisingly held to a 1-1 draw at home to bottom team Honduras, the Canadians needed only a draw in San Jose to secure their second-ever World Cup appearance following the 1986 Finals in Mexico.

But the Canadians struggled to recover after defender

Mark-Anthony Kaye was sent off on 34 minutes for picking up his second yellow card of the night.

Costa Rica made the advantage count, and deep into stoppage time at the end of the first half, Celso Borges headed home Gerson Torres's cross to score the game's only goal.

Canada battled bravely to get back on level terms after the break, with Tajon Buchanan looking threatening throughout only to be denied by Costa Rica's veteran goalkeeper Keylor Navas.—AFP ■



Canada's goalkeeper Dayne St. Clair (left) clearing the ball against Costa Rica's Anthony Contreras at the match on March 24, 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

Qatar hits back at 'ridiculous' World Cup attack by Van Gaal

QATAR'S top World Cup organizer has hit back at Louis van Gaal for criticizing the decision to hold the event in the Gulf state, saying the Netherlands coach has failed to understand the Arab world's passion for football. Van Gaal said this week that it was "ridiculous" for the World Cup to be held in Qatar and that FIFA had only been motivated by money.

In a rare outburst, Hassan al-Thawadi, chief executive of the World Cup Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, tore into van Gaal and insisted Qatar had no regrets over its efforts to stage the World Cup that kicks off on 21 November.

"For a person who has had



The Qatar World Cup's top organizer Hassan al-Thawadi accused Louis van Gaal of lacking respect for the Arab world. **PHOTO: SUPREME COMMITTEE FOR DELIVERY/AFP**

many many years (as a coach) and who understands the power of football, it is ridiculous that he could actually make such a bland statement," Thawadi said in comments from an interview

released by Bein Sports TV late Thursday. "I am sure that he hasn't spent a lot of time understanding what football means, not only to Qatar but to the Arab world."—AFP ■

Mancini eyes exit after Italy World Cup disaster

ROBERTO Mancini's future as Italy boss is uncertain after an unimaginable play-off defeat to North Macedonia denied the team he guided to Euro 2020 glory a place at the World Cup.

Mancini was immediately backed by both

captain Giorgio Chiellini and the president of the Italian Football Federation Gabriele Gravina in the immediate aftermath of possibly the most embarrassing defeat in the Azzurri's history.—AFP ■