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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.

Republic of the Union of Myanmar Announcement of Central Committee on Prevention, Control and Treatment of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

14th Waning of Tagu 1384 ME
29 April 2022

IT is still necessary to continuously contain Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) infections. Therefore, it is hereby announced that public requests, orders, notifications and directives (except for easing the restrictions) released by Union-level organizations and Union ministries up to 30 April 2022 have been extended until 31 May 2022 for the prevention, control and treatment of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Myanmar's athletes must strive to hoist the State flag of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for their victories to bring honour to the State: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing speaks on the occasion of handing the triumphant flag over to Myanmar's sports teams competing in the 31st SEA Games in Viet Nam, in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

ALL athletes should notice that members of the Myanmar sports contingent shall shoulder the national duty to secure victories in all events so as to uplift the prestige of the State through the triumph of sports, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing in handing over the flag to ensure victory to the Myanmar sports teams which will take part in the XXXI SEA Games in Viet Nam, at Wunna Theikdi Gymnasium B in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

In his speech, the Senior General said if Myanmar sports teams secure a larger number of medals in the games, they could change the victorious history of the Myanmar sports contingent.

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Preserving Myanmar culture, values of national costume appreciated

MYANMAR has its own cultural identity. Myanmar's people have preserved their cultural well-being with the rapidly changing world and cultural diffusion.

Most Myanmar festivals held over twelve months are highly correlated with culture. The majority of Myanmar's population are believed in Buddhism, which is predominantly Theravada tradition. According to Buddhist teaching, human beings must acknowledge right and wrong. Buddhism teaches moral ethics and heavily reflects the living styles and culture of Myanmar people.

Myanmar's traditional outfits and dressing styles are beautiful, auspicious, admirable, simple and elegant. They can give peace of mind to the eyes of the beholder. Myanmar's major ethnic groups Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Bamar, Rakhine and Shan have their own cultural identities. Their traditional costumes will give you an awe-inspiring impression of their cultural values.

Of them, Myanmar girls proudly wear traditional attire (Yinphone and Htamain) during the

festivals, donations, philanthropic and religious events.

Buddhism beliefs are heavily related to Myanmar girls' dressing styles and culture. Myanmar girls wearing Yinphone blouses and Htamain (sarong) to preserve the tradition and cultural heritage are young women's perceptions and traditional ideals in the country. Foreigners can recognize a Myanmar girl by looking at her attire.

The majority of Myanmar girls look shy and dignified. They are good-natured, quiet and peaceful.

Artists are suggested to portray the beauty of Myanmar women and their dressing styles without losing their cultural grip from the rural area to urban cities. Traditional attire looks more satisfying with simple and elegant features. The outfits are not too sophisticated and revealing, yet the chic outfit ideas are seen. It's written to promote own identity and preserve the cultural heritage and value of Myanmar women's traditional costumes.

– Zeyar Htet (Minbu)/GNLM



Tatmadaw will strive to achieve Independence longevity and State prosperity

THE Independence Day restored by the unity and effort of all ethnic people will be the 75th Anniversary on 4th January 2023. For the cessation of internal armed conflicts in the period of Diamond Jubilee Independence Day in advance, Tatmadaw will strive to achieve Independence longevity and State prosperity. Tatmadaw made a unilateral ceasefire for over 4 years from 21st December 2018 to the end of 2022.

I would like to impart that Tatmadaw will conform as much as possible under the statement of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) for eternal peace by offering open-ended peace talks.

(Excerpt from New Year Message of greetings delivered by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on the New Year occasion in 1384 Myanmar Era Myanmar New Year Day on 17-4-2022)

Myanmar's athletes must strive to hoist the State flag of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for their victories to bring honour to the State: Senior General

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He urged them to make utmost efforts in the sports as all citizens wish to see Myanmar's State flag hoisting due to winning in the events.

All athletes should notice that members of the Myanmar sports contingent shall shoulder the national duty to secure victories in all events so as to uplift the prestige of the State through the triumph of sports.

The government provides monthly cash assistance to victorious athletes who have turned 60. The Excellent Performance in Social Field (First Class) was conferred on 12 gold medalist athletes in the Asian Games and 24 in the SEA Games on the occasion of the 77th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day, which falls on 27 March 2022. Hence, those who secure the State's medals will get similar rights.

Plans are underway to present cash rewards—K30 million for the individual gold medal, K20 million for the silver medal and K10 million for the bronze medal, K10 million for each athlete from the gold medalist team, K7 mil-



The Senior General looks into the sports equipment.

lion for the silver medalist team and K3.5 million for the bronze medalist team, K10 million for gold medalist coach, K5 million for silver medalist coach and K3 million for bronze medalist coach, K10 million for the gold medalist management team, K5 million for the silver medal and K3 million for the bronze medal respectively.

Athletes need to accept the concept that the Myanmar sports contingent represents the prestige of the State flag and the national duty and that they need to

strive to hoist the Myanmar flag to win all sports events.

Athletes need to win the medals in the sports events with diligence, perseverance and strong spirit. Myanmar's athletes must strive to hoist the State flag of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for their victories to bring honour to the State.

The Senior General handed over the flag to ensure victory to Union Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs U Min Thein Zan, who reported on preparations of the sports contingent for the

XXXI SEA Games.

The Senior General also presented cash assistance to selected athletes and coaches bound for the XXXI SEA Games.

The Senior General cordially greeted selected athletes, managers and coaches and viewed the display of sports equipment to be used by the athletes.

The Myanmar sports contingent comprising 293 athletes will participate in 20 sports events at the XXXI SEA Games in Vietnam from 12 to 23 May 2022. — MNA

Ethnic and Public Affairs Management and Services Committee holds 5/2022 meeting

STATE Administration Council member Union Minister for Defence General Mya Tun Oo, in his capacity as Chairman of Ethnic and Public Affairs Management and Services Committee, presided over the 5/2022 meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

During the meeting, Committee Secretary Deputy Minister U Zaw Aye Maung reported on the decisions made at the 4/2022 meeting and ongoing work plans.

Deputy Ministers U Ye Tint and U Myo Hlaing, the permanent secretaries, directors-general and officials, explained the matters submitted by the Union ministries to the



The MoD Union Minister chairs the Ethnic and Public Affairs Management and Services Committee meeting 5/2022 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

committee according to the relevant sectors.

The committee chairman approved matters to be submitted to the Union Government and the issues to be decided

by the committee.

Then, permanent secretaries of the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Cooperatives and Rural Development explained the completion based on the decisions of the 4/2022 meeting for submission of committee members.

After that, Union Ministers U Ko Ko and Dr Thet Thet Khine, Deputy Minister Dr Aung Gyi, the director-general of the Ministry of Border Affairs and officials discussed ethnic affairs, public management and services.

The committee chairman concluded the meeting after making a concluding remark. — MNA

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

THE Ministry of Commerce oversees the importation of necessary medical supplies and anti- COVID-19 devices critical to the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities through trading posts and international airports and seaports.

Packs of 7.20 tonnes of masks were imported via the Chinshwehaw border trade post by a vehicle yesterday.

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

It is reported that the Ministry of Commerce is coordinating with relevant departments to prevent COVID-19, and contact persons for enquiries can be reached through the Ministry’s Website – www.commerce.gov.mm. — MNA



The imported anti-Covid items through Chin Shwe Haw.

Interfaith Friendship and Solidarity Committee (Central) organizes “Iftar” of Muslims



The break-fast dinner (Iftar) event in progress.

THE Muslim community’s break-fast dinner (Iftar), organized by the Interfaith Friendship and Solidarity Committee, was held yesterday evening at Wyndham Grand Hotel in Yangon.

Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, Commander of the Yangon Command Maj-Gen Nyunt Win Swe and the region government ministers, Singapo-

rean Ambassador to Myanmar Ms Chan Yuen Ying Vanessa Elisabeth, officials from foreign embassies to Myanmar, department officials, the chairman of the Young Men’s Buddhist Association (YMBA), officials from the Myanmar Press Council, invitees among others attended the dinner. Chairman U Sein Than of the Interfaith Friendship and Solidar-

ity Committee (Central) delivered an opening remark at the dinner, and Committee Vice-Chairman U Aung Zaw Win (Islam) addressed the gathering.

Afterwards, Honorary Patron of the Interfaith Friendship and Solidarity Committee U Htay Aung expressed words of thanks. The guests were treated to dinner after the Iftar prayer. — MNA

Release of information on health programmes for travellers from foreign countries

1. The incidence of COVID-19 has decreased in Myanmar and other countries globally. Therefore, arrangements have been made for foreigners and Myanmar nationals who enter Myanmar via commercial flights according to the COVID-19 rules. It was found that the percentage of COVID-19 cases was very low for the inbound travellers since the resumption of commercial flights, which started at 00:00 hour on 17 April 2022, until 28 April 2022.
2. According to the findings, those travelling to Myanmar on regular international commercial flights will no longer need to stay at the designated hotel for 24 hours for a test with the RT-PCR method starting from 00:00 hour on 1 May 2022. Instead, the RDT test, immediately available in a short period and at a low cost, will be conducted at Yangon International Airport.
3. In addition, quarantine periods for Myanmar nationals who return via relief flight or through border checkpoints will be changed from five days to three days (if fully vaccinated) and from seven days to five days (if not fully vaccinated).
4. Therefore, the guidelines for quarantine and laboratory tests issued by the Ministry of Health for travellers entering the country through relief flights, commercial flights, and border checkpoints are available on the Ministry of Health's website www.moh.gov.mm.

Ministry of Health
29-4-2022

MoHT Union Minister joins virtual meeting to draft annual plans for holding monthly festivals, exhibitions/competitions and ceremonies in regions/states

UNION Minister for Hotels and Tourism Dr Htay Aung attended the virtual meeting to draft annual plans for holding monthly festivals, exhibitions/competitions and ceremonies in regions/states yesterday.

The Union minister said preparations should be made for festivals around the Myanmar year in regions and states to lure tourists during the meeting. Other relevant tours should be created on the basis of widely expressing traditional festivals of ethnic people according to their traditions and cultures.

In drafting the annual programmes, food fairs, funfairs and sports events should be included while preserving Myanmar's

customs, traditions, cultures and heritage, which are nearly extinct.

It is necessary to create exciting activities, safe food and a safe travel environment. It should be emphasized to make preparations for providing proper services to tourists.

The Union minister called for cooperation works in drafting annual plans for holding monthly festivals, exhibitions/competitions and ceremonies in regions/states under the supervision of the relevant governments, regional orders and instructions.

Then, the attendees coordinated the discussion, and the Union minister concluded the meeting. —MNA



COVID-19 vaccine drive continues in various states, regions



A local in Mon State gets jabbed against COVID-19.

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 in collaboration with volunteers gave COVID-19 vaccines to 8,545 people from sixteen townships in Shan State(North), 14,051 people from thirteen townships in Mon and Kayin States, 475 people from Tamway Township in Yangon Region, 18,271 people from twenty-six townships in Ayeyawady Region, 10,853 people from thirteen townships in Rakhine State, 55,420 people from seven districts in Mandalay Region and 70 people from Bago Township in Bago Region, respectively.

Similarly, healthcare officials gave the vaccines to 253 students from seven townships in Shan State (North) yesterday.

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

21 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 29 April, total figure rises to 612,864

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **612,864** after **21** new cases were reported on 29 April 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **591,794** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll stands at **19,434** without more casualties. —MNA

Wanat Elephant Camp reopened for tourists, domestic travellers

WANAT Elephant Camp on the way to the Yeywa Dam between Mandalay and PyinOoLwin has resumed its tourism service for tourists and domestic visitors starting from 27 April 2022. The camp attracts the visitors with the natural scenic beauty of the mountains and the superb facilities, said U Toe Aung, assistant manager of Wanat and Deedoke elephant camps under Myanma Timber Enterprise.

The COVID-19 consequences shut down the camps temporarily. As the COVID cases have dropped and the camp has been prepped for the visitors to enjoy the natural scenery with the best facility and services, officials concerned called for ease of tourism restrictions at the camp, and the regional government



Resumption of its tourism service for tourists and domestic visitors at the Wanat Elephant Camp.

gave the green light to them. The elephant ride is available between 7-11 am and 4-6 pm, according to the COVID-19 rules and regulations. “We request the permit from the regional government to reopen the camp. The COVID preventive measures are

also prepared for the visitors. The visitors can do photographing and bathe at the elephant bathing place from 6-7 am. There is a total of eight elephants at the camp, with three males and five females. The visitors can also feed the elephants. I like to cordially invite the visitors for elephant ride and relaxation at the camp”, U Toe Aung elaborated.

Despite the closure of the camp, elephant lovers donated the feedthrough digital payment. It costs K50,000 for the elephants’ feast. The visitors can observe the natural scenery by elephant ride. The entrance fee is set at K1,000 per local visitor. A short trip is estimated at K3,000, while the elephant ride for long-distance costs K5,000. — Maung Aye Chan/GNLM

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, gold-panning equipment, boats, consumer goods, foodstuffs and vehicles seized

SUPERVISED by the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee, action is being taken against illicit trade under the law. On 27 April, combined inspection teams led by the Myanmar Police Force under the supervision of the Magway Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force conducted inspections. They seized 11 illegal rock-pump trucks used in gold mines (estimated value of K265,000,000) in Magway Township. The action was taken under the inland waterway transport law.

On the same day, four iron

body boats (estimated value of K140,000,000) and a cargo boat (estimated value of K1,500,000) were seized, and action was taken under the Conservation of Water Resources and Rivers Law. Similarly, on 28 April, officials on duty at the Myanmar Industrial Port Container Checkpoint seized K5,700,000 worth of clothes, which were imported over the declared amount in the import declaration, and at the Asia World Port Container Checkpoint confiscated K5,700,000 worth of the porcelains, which were

contrary to the import declaration. Then, at the MIPL Port, K58,711,000 worth of 27 vehicles, which were not taken out for over a year after the opening of the import declaration, were confiscated. Officials took action against them under the Customs Law. Similarly, the Ma-yanchaung checkpoint of Mon State also captured K6,000,000 worth of illegal imported Lipovitan-D bottles from a truck heading to Mandalay from Myawady and charged under the Customs Law.

On 29 April, the inspection team led by the Bago Region Forest Department seized K2,240,454 worth of 15.5146 tonnes of illegal timbers in the Bago and Toungoo and Thayawady districts and took action under the Forest Law.

Afterwards, the Police Force conducted the inspections and seized two unregistered motorbikes, totally worth K200,000, in ChaungU and Monywa Townships. The action was taken under the Export and Import Law.

Therefore, 52 arrests (estimated value of K835,851,454) were made from 27 to 29 April, according to the committee. — MNA



Confiscated illegal items.

Drugs seized in Mohnyin, Pyigyidagun, Yankin and Pinlaung townships



Three arrestees are pictured along with seized Ammonium Nitrate and a vehicle.

A combined inspection team consisting of members of the Kachin State Police Force searched a Hino vehicle driven by Aung Kyaw Latt (aka) Ko Latt with Lin Maung (aka) Lin Maung Maung and Soe Oo (aka) Kyettaw near Ingyingon village in Mohnyin Township at 9:30 am on 28 April and seized 6,000 kilogrammes of ammonium nitrate.

Similarly, at 5:00 pm on the same day, the combined inspection team searched a house of U Tuu (aka) Win Soe in Pyigyidagun Township and found 12,090 ecstasy tablets.

At 11:00 am on the same day, the combined inspection team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force

examined a suspected Thet Oo Khaing (aka) Pwaruk and Hla Myo Oo (aka) Agyikaung near a restaurant in No. (2) ward in Yankin Township and seized 1,200 ecstasy tablets.

Afterwards, at 3:00 pm on the same day, the combined inspection team consisting of the Anti-Drug Police Force members examined a motorbike driven by Khun Aung Thein on the Naung-tayar-Aungban Road near Naungtaw village in Pinlaung Township and seized 80,000 ecstasy tablets.

They are prosecuted under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, the Myanmar Police Force stated.— MNA

LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar ships nearly 500 tonnes of Arabica coffee beans to 8 countries this year

ABOUT 500 tonnes of speciality quality Arabica coffee produced in PyinOoLwin, Mandalay Region, is conveyed to the eight foreign countries this year, said an official of Coffee Research, Information, Extension and Training Centre in PyinOoLwin, Mandalay Region.

The impacts of coronavirus hurt the coffee industry as the lockdown, and physical distancing caused a reduction in consumption. Consequently, coffee exports drastically fell in 2021. This year, the market raised its head again.

Myanmar's coffee export has dropped by half last year on the weak demand triggered by the coronavirus. At present, the market has returned to normality.

"Coffee exports are quite early this year. Normally, the transaction happens in June



There are 40,000 acres of highland coffee (Arabica) plantations and about 10,000 acres under lowland coffee (Robusta) in Myanmar, totalling 50,000 acres. Shan State is the leading producer of coffee beans.

after taking samples. Traders have been buying coffee beans since December 2021. This year, both the yield and exports increased," he added.

Myanmar primarily produces Arabica coffee. Myanmar's speciality coffee beans are highly demanded due to their high quality and organic produc-

tion. Speciality coffee fetches a good price as well. According to Myanmar Coffee Association, Myanmar ships coffee beans to an external market without af-

fecting domestic consumption.

Myanmar's coffee has already earned a good reputation. It has penetrated markets in Hong Kong, China, the Republic of Korea and Singapore, England, Germany, Australia, Canada and the US.

Myanmar's coffee has grabbed a market share in the US with the support of USAID and WinRock International NGO.

There are 40,000 acres of highland coffee (Arabica) plantations and about 10,000 acres under lowland coffee (Robusta) in Myanmar, totalling 50,000 acres. Shan State is the leading producer of coffee beans.

Coffee beans are harvested between December and February. They are distributed and exported throughout the year after harvest time. — GNLM

Myanmar delivers over 46,000 tonnes of rubber to external market in March 2022

MYANMAR shipped 46,390 tonnes of rubber to foreign trade partners in March 2022 through maritime and border trade channels, generating a revenue of US\$71.046 million, according to the news posted by the Ministry of Commerce on its website.

Myanmar exported approximately 43,950 tonnes of rubber with an estimated value of \$66.956 million to foreign countries via maritime trade in March 2022.

The export volumes stood at 25,320 tonnes to China, 15,660 tonnes to Malaysia, over 1,780 tonnes to India, 200 tonnes to China Taipei (Taiwan), 300 to

Viet Nam, 19 tonnes to Bangladesh, 280 tonnes to Japan, 340 tonnes to the Republic of Korea and 40 tonnes to Indonesia respectively.

Meanwhile, 1,440 tonnes were conveyed to China via cross-border posts, while 1,000 tonnes were sent to Thailand. The overall rubber export via border posts was estimated at \$4.09 million in March 2022.

In early February 2022, the sun-dried rubber sheet fetched up to K1,230 per pound on account of the buyers involved in the Maesot-Myawady trade channel. The price was bullish in early March as well, touching

a high of K1,320-1,400 per pound.

The market of rubbers produced in Mon and Kayin states was earlier bustling on the back of solid demand by Thailand. It came to a temporary halt during the Thingyan holidays.

The market is quite sluggish in the post-Thingyan period. The price slips to around K1,100 per pound at the end of April. Rubber is commonly produced in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago, and Yangon regions. About 300,000 tonnes of rubber are produced annually across the country. Seventy per cent of rubber made in Myanmar goes to China. — GNLM



About 300,000 tonnes of rubber are produced annually across the country. Seventy per cent of rubber made in Myanmar goes to China.

Rice export drops amid hike in Chinese short-haul trucking service

EXPORTS of rice and broken rice drastically fell, tracking the exorbitant increase in Chinese short-haul trucking service, said U Min Thein, vice-chair of the Muse Rice Wholesale Centre.

China banned Myanmar trucks and drivers from entering its side by reason of the COVID-19 protocols, and only Chinese short-haul drivers are allowed to transport the goods.

As a result, the cost of Chinese short-haul trucking tremendously rose to K10 million per truck, whereas the trucking was worth only K700,000-800,000 when Myanmar truckers were allowed to enter China, U Min Thein continued.

U Min Thein stressed that the volume of rice and broken rice export plunges from 60,000 to 4,000 bags per day.

"At present, the rice export volume does not reach even 10,000 bags. The traders do not make a profit since the trucking rate tremendously soared. It prompts some suppliers to halt the exports.

Transaction of only 3,000-4,000 bags is daily made, U Min Thein was quoted as saying.

Additionally, regardless of the Chinese short-haul trucking charges, the price of rice remains unchanged at 150 Yuan per 108-pound bag. As the prevailing price does not rise, traders are not doing well.

China shut down all the checkpoints linking to the Muse border amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the checkpoints, Kyinsankyawt has resumed trading activity from 26 November on a trial run. Myanmar daily delivers rubber, various beans and pulses, dried plum, watermelon, muskmelon and other food commodities to China through Kyinsankyawt post with about 30 trucks.

Myanmar has opened five border trade zones with China – Muse, Lweje, Kampaiti, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung. The majority of the trade is carried out through the Muse land border, the Ministry of Commerce's data indicated. — NN/GNLM

Turn out qualified, talented trainees from sports institutes

THE government is emphasizing the measure to enhance the health, fitness and education quality of the entire nation as regards the last point of the social affairs objectives.

Priority is being given to achieving success in the sports sector, not only in internal but in the international arenas. In fact, most sports events depend on the turning out the qualified youths. It is because only then will fresh and young athletes with talent secure victory in the sports competitions.

As such, it is necessary to nurture the youths under limited age for respective sports carefully. Moreover, systematic sports training must be given to them under the modern techniques. Qualified trainers can produce talented players for generations.

It can be said that winning the sports events is designed to defend the State. As such, young and talented youths need to emphasize sports training for their health and fitness. If so, their new generations will build a healthy country.

It can be said that winning the sports events is designed to defend the State. As such, young and talented youths need to emphasize sports training for their health and fitness. If so, their new generations will build a healthy country.

At present, SPEIs recruit newcomers for the 2022-23 academic year. The candidates have to pass the examination of the 7th standard. The candidates must not exceed 15 years old. Male candidates must be five feet and four inches high at minimum, and female candidates, five feet and two inches tall. They have to join the psychological, English and Mathematics tests. Despite weakness in education, restrictions will be eased for the highly talented candidates.

Arrangements are being made to give lectures on basic training of gymnastic events to the trainees at all institutes in the 2022-23 academic year. If so, youths will have the chance to taste the sports arena and know the advantages of the healthy and fit situation for the daily lifestyle.



Expenses for “Golden Week” in Japan won’t return to before COVID-19

By Suzuka YOSHIDA

“GOLDEN Week” is coming to Japan.

From the end of April to the beginning of May, it is a series of official holidays decided by the Japanese government. The economic effect of Golden Week is also an indicator of this year’s economy.

It can be said traditionally that once hired by a company in Japan, it is almost impossible to take weekly holidays until retirement. Except for special leave such as childbirth and childcare and the year-end and New Year holidays, companies mostly allow employees to take only four days off on Saturdays and Sundays with one or two days off as an annual paid holiday. The season of going abroad is therefore so crowded that it can be difficult to make reservations due to the flood of travellers at once on planes, trains and hotels.

Meanwhile, the only time employees can take a continuous vacation of nearly ten days is Golden Week, which starts on 29 April, the birthday of Emperor SHOWA (Emperor Hirohito), and continues until Children’s Day on 5 May. This year, 29 April to 1 May and 3 to 5 May are three consecutive holidays. If 2 May and 6 May are closed, there will be ten consecutive holidays.

People involved in the travel industry, such as hotels, railroads, and planes all over Japan and around the world, are busy attracting Japanese people because they tend to be willing to spend more money during this period.

JTB, Japan’s top travel industry company, conducts a preliminary questionnaire on the Golden Week plan every year. According to the results, the number of people who answered “go” (the sum of “go” and “maybe go”) was 22.1 per cent for men under 29 years old and 16.1 per cent for women under 29 years old, while 7.9 per cent for men over 60 years old and women over 60 years old.



Image of young people travelling abroad on the departure floor

Golden Week is a valuable opportunity for the twenties who are interested in travelling, but with a small salary, travel destinations and travel periods are limited. The young people face low salaries and short vacations provided by companies, resulting in low loyalty to the company in their chest now.

from the previous year. By gender, younger men and women tend to be more willing to travel. “Go (total of “go” and “maybe go”)” was 22.1 per cent for men under 29 years old and 16.1 per cent for women under 29 years old, while 7.9 per cent for men over 60 years old and women over 60 years old.

It was 5.5 per cent.

The most common reason for not going on a trip was “because the new Coronavirus infection has not yet converged/there is concern about its spread (39.4 per cent)”, but the result was a large decrease of ▲ 24.5 points from the previous year. This was

followed by “Golden Week is crowded (31.9 per cent)”, “Golden Week is expensive to travel (21.4 per cent)”, and “I want to relax at home (21.0 per cent)” is increasing. Travel agents are expecting this year’s result because Golden Week will be without spread prevention measures for the first time in

three years, but it seems that it will not be the same as before.

Sixteen million people are expected to travel domestically, up 66.6 per cent of 2019 before COVID-19. Compared to last year, it is expected to increase significantly to 168.4 per cent. The average domestic travel cost is 34,500 yen (276 US dollars), which is 106.8 per cent compared to last year and 96.1 per cent compared to 2019.

However, the most common travel cost per person was “\$80 to less than \$160” at 23.8 per cent, “\$160 to less than \$240 (17.8 per cent)” and “less than \$80 (14.1 per cent)”, less than \$240 (55.7 per cent). The West, such as Europe, the United States, Australia, etc., will drop at least \$800 or more per person internally for a stay of two or three weeks. Given how low travel expenses Japanese travellers are trying to make, it turns out that Japan’s economic situation is even more difficult to get out of deflation.

Even now, the Japanese government has immigration restrictions except on business persons, international students, and technical intern trainees. The strict rules are imposed on Japanese returning from overseas travel as well. It’s a pity that inbound demand cannot be expected, but people understand that if tourists come from foreign countries such as China, where the infection is maximized, Japan will take steps to prevent the spread again.

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<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/000871755.pdf>

Travel days during Golden Week

	%	Year-on-year
1night 2days	36.1	▲3.1
2nights 3days	32.6	+4.0
3nights 4days	17.1	+0.8
4nights 5days	5.6	▲0.9
5nights 6days	3.7	▲0.1
6nights 7days	1.7	+0.0
7nights 8days	1.4	+0.1
8nights and more	1.8	▲0.9

Expenses per person for Golden Week

%	Year-on-year	
Less than \$80	14.1	▲7.3
\$80-less than \$160	23.8	+0.0
\$160-less than \$240	17.8	▲2.3
\$240-less than \$320	9.1	▲0.1
\$320-less than \$400	13.5	+2.2
\$400-less than \$560	7.7	+2.1
\$560-less than \$800	8.2	+2.9
\$800-less than \$1,200	3.7	+1.9
\$1,500-less than \$1,600	1.1	+0.2
\$1,600-less than \$2,400	0.4	+0.3
\$2,400-less than \$3,200	0.1	+0.0
\$3,200 and more	0.5	+0.1

Calculated at 125 yen per dollar



EU says moving out of ‘emergency mode’ on COVID pandemic

EUROPEAN COMMISSION president Ursula von der Leyen said Wednesday the 27-nation bloc needed to keep focused on vaccination, testing and surveillance as it transitions out of the “acute” phase of the COVID pandemic.

“We are entering a new phase of the pandemic, as we move from emergency mode to a more sustainable management of COVID .

Yet, we must remain vigilant,” European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen said in a statement.

“We know the way forward. We need to further step-up vaccination and boosting, and targeted testing — and we need to continue to coordinate our responses closely in the EU.”

Current low levels of infections

Brussels said the bloc’s na-

tions should use current low levels of infections “to strengthen their surveillance, health care systems, and overall pandemic preparedness” ahead of a possible fresh wave in the autumn.

The recommendations called for stepping up booster jabs and continuing to sequence sufficient samples to detect any new variants.

It said surveillance no longer needed to focus on mass

reporting of all COVID cases “but rather on obtaining reliable and representative estimates.”

“New variants are not a question of if but rather a question of when. Improvization and fragmentation are not an option,” said Commission vice president Margaritis Schinas.

“Vigilance and preparedness remain as essential as ever and we must continue our work without respite.”

Widespread vaccinations across the bloc and the less deadly omicron variant have seen the levels of people being hospitalized or dying from the virus drop dramatically.

That fall has seen COVID-related restrictions eased or entirely dropped around the 27 nations.

The pandemic has seen the EU ramp up its vaccine production capacity to 3-4 billion

jabs a year.

As part of its push unveiled on Wednesday, the commission said it wanted to help maintain the bloc’s role as a major vaccine powerhouse over the longer term to help face future health crises.

SOURCE: AFP



The Global New Light of Myanmar

www.gnlnm.com.mm

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SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

Canada to prosecute crimes on the Moon

CANADIAN lawmakers on Thursday passed an amendment to the nation's Criminal Code to allow for the prosecution of crimes committed on the Moon.

The change to the law — which MPs voted 181 to 144 in favour — was described in a 443-page budget implementation bill presented to Parliament this week. Ottawa has already extended its jurisdiction over criminal acts committed by Canadian astronauts during space travel to the International Space Station.

They are treated the same as crimes committed in Canada.

The update comes as the number of space flights are increasing, and ahead of the first crewed mission to the Moon in more than 50 years set to launch in May 2024, with a Canadian astronaut expected to be on board the Artemis II lunar flyby.

Under the subheading Lunar Gateway, the Criminal Code amendment reads: "A Canadian crew member who, during a space flight, commits an act or omission outside Canada that if committed in Canada would constitute an indictable offence is deemed to have committed that act or omission in Canada."

This would include crimes

en route to or on the Lunar Gateway station currently in the works to orbit the Moon, and also "on the surface of the Moon," the document states. Foreign astronauts who "threaten the life or security of a Canadian crew member" on a Canadian-supported space mission could also be prosecuted, according to the ways and means motion.

The Canadian Space Agency is participating in the NASA-led Lunar Gateway project, along with the European Space Agency and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency. —AFP



8 April 2019: Expedition 59 Flight Engineer David Saint-Jacques of the Canadian Space Agency participates in a six-and-a-half hour spacewalk with NASA astronaut Anne McClain (out of frame). **PHOTO: NASA/FILE**

10 football pitches of pristine rainforest lost per minute in 2021

HUGE swathes of tropical rainforest were burned or hacked down for cattle and crops last year, led by destruction in Brazil, researchers said Thursday, warning that climate change itself is making it harder to reverse the losses.

Some 11.1 million hectares (27.5 million acres) of tree cover was lost across the tropics in 2021, with 3.75 million hectares of that in old-growth primary forests, according to annual research by Global Forest Watch, the World Resources Institute

and the University of Maryland. "That's 10 football pitches per minute. And that goes on for a year," said Rod Taylor, who leads WRI's Forests Programme.

Researchers calculated that the loss of tropical primary forest in 2021 resulted in the release of 2.5 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, equivalent to the annual fossil fuel emissions of India. Over 40 per cent of the total tropical primary forest lost in 2021 was in Brazil, where some 1.5 million hectares was cut down or went

up in smoke.

That was followed by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which saw nearly 500,000 hectares disappear, while Bolivia's forest destruction reached its highest level since records began in 2001 at nearly 300,000 hectares.

While the latest report showed a slight overall reduction in the rate of primary tropical forest loss in 2021, down 11 per cent on a year earlier, researchers said rates remain unsustainably high. —AFP



In this file photo taken on 14 March 2019, Arara indigenous walk down a boat on the riverbank of Iriri river as they arrive to the Laranjal tribal camp, in Arara indigenous land, Para state, in the northern Brazilian Amazon rainforest. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

US CDC investigating adenovirus as possible cause for hepatitis cases in kids

MORE than a dozen cases of unusual, severe hepatitis in children have been identified in the United States, and researchers of the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are investigating adenovirus as a possible cause.

At least three cases have been identified in the state of Illinois in addition to the 11 cases reported earlier in the states of Alabama and North Carolina.

The cases are unusual because the viruses that typically cause hepatitis, aka inflammation of the liver, have been ruled out, according to the CDC.

The first US cases were identified in October 2021 at a

children's hospital in Alabama that admitted five children with significant liver injury, including some with acute liver failure, without known cause, who tested positive for adenovirus, according to the CDC.

The new cases identified in Illinois were also "potentially linked to a strain of adenovirus," according to the state's public health department. The CDC is currently investigating adenovirus as a possible cause for these severe hepatitis cases, but saying researchers are still learning more, including ruling out other possible causes and identifying other possible contributing factors.—Xinhua

Over 21 pct of reptile species at risk of extinction

AT least one in five reptile species are threatened with extinction, including more than half of turtles and crocodiles, according to the first major global assessment of the world's so-called cold-blooded creatures.

Catastrophic declines in biodiversity across the world are increasingly seen as a threat to life on Earth — and as important as the interrelated menace of climate change. Threats to other creatures have been well documented. More than 40 per

cent of amphibians, 25 per cent of mammals and 13 per cent of birds could face extinction.

But until now, researchers did not have a comprehensive picture of the proportion of reptiles at risk. In a new global assessment, published in the journal Nature, researchers assessed 10,196 reptile species and evaluated them using criteria from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of threatened species.—AFP

Despite rise in Covid cases, Delhi Health Minister claims decrease in infection severity

IN the wake of increasing COVID-19 cases in the country, the Delhi Health Minister Dr Satyendra Jain, on Wednesday, assured that the severity of COVID-19 cases has remarkably reduced and the government is prepared with enough number hospital beds.

“There are around 5,000 active COVID cases in Delhi, but hospital admissions are very few, as the entire population of Delhi is vaccinated and the severity of the infection is also

going down as most of the people were already infected with it” Jain told ANI after his visit to the kins of two deceased corona warriors.

“We have 10,000 beds in Delhi, of which only 100 of them are occupied. If needed, we will increase the number of beds,” he added.

Talking about the severity amongst children in Delhi, he said, “on the grounds of regularly conducted sero-surveys, we found that the possibility of

infection in children is similar to that of adults, but considering its severity, the need for hospital admission is very less.”

He also said that the preparation for administering the Booster Dose to Delhiites is being underway.

According to the Delhi government’s health bulletin on Monday, the national capital logged 1,204 new COVID-19 cases taking the total number of active cases in the national capital to 4,508. — ANI



The daily Covid-19 cases in Delhi have been on the rise over the last few days and the positivity rate has jumped from 0.5 per cent to 2.7 per cent in a week. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

Omicron, Delta similarly severe to hospitalized patients: study

A recent study by Johns Hopkins University warned that Omicron should not be underestimated as hospitalized patients with the Omicron variant required similar levels of respiratory support and intensive care to those carrying Delta.

For hospitalized patients with Omicron, 67.6 per cent required supplemental oxygen and 17.6 per cent were taken to intensive care units, while the figures for patients hospitalized with Delta were 73 per cent and 25.4 per cent respectively, according to a report citing the study and published Monday on EurekAlert, a news release platform under the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The study, which collected specimens from more than 2,000 patients, also found that patients with Omicron were less likely to require hospitalization than patients with Delta.—Xinhua

Covid vaccine maker AstraZeneca sees profit slump

BRITISH Covid vaccine maker AstraZeneca on Friday announced a 75-per cent slide in first-quarter net profit on higher costs linked to its takeover of US biotech firm Alexion.

Profit after tax slumped to \$386 million (366 million euros), AstraZeneca said in a statement.

Revenue however surged 56 per cent to \$11.39 billion, helped by sales of Alexion medicines plus AstraZeneca’s Covid-19 vaccine and other drugs.—AFP

COVID-19 pandemic not over yet: WHO

EVEN though the number of globally reported COVID-19 cases and deaths continues to decline, largely due to a drop in testing rates, the pandemic is not over, the World Health Organization (WHO) has warned.

Last week, just over 15,000 coronavirus-related deaths were reported to the WHO, the lowest weekly total since March 2020, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a

press briefing.

However, the encouraging trend should be interpreted with caution, as many countries have scaled back on testing, and as a result “the WHO is receiving less and less information about transmission and sequencing,” he said.

“This makes us increasingly blind to patterns of transmission and evolution. But this virus won’t go away just because

countries stop looking for it. It’s still spreading, it’s still changing and it’s still killing,” Tedros said.

“When it comes to a deadly virus, ignorance is not bliss. The WHO continues to call on all countries to maintain surveillance,” he said.

Responding to the European Union’s (EU) recent decision to enter a new post-emergency phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mike Ryan, executive director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme, cautioned that this is not the time to lose focus on the virus nor on its potential to continue to evolve.

“The fact is that we’re not out of this yet,” he said. Maria van Kerkhove, technical lead for the WHO’s Health Emergencies Programme, said that despite the recent positive trends, she had “little confidence in the number of cases being reported around the world” due to the massive changes in testing strategies and the huge reductions in the number of tests being performed around the world.—Xinhua



Performers participate in a street parade celebrating the Songkran Festival in Ayutthaya, Thailand, 13 April 2022. **PHOTO: XINHUA/WANG TENG**

Guangzhou rolls out mass-tests, cancels flights after suspected Covid case

THE Chinese megacity of Guangzhou on Thursday cancelled hundreds of flights and began testing 5.6 million people over one suspected Covid case, part of an escalating battle across the country to extinguish the virus.

China is facing its worst outbreak since the peak of the

first wave in early 2020, with eastern Shanghai recording dozens of daily deaths and the capital Beijing sealing off whole neighbourhoods where handfuls of cases have been detected.

Under its zero-Covid policy, China has used lockdowns, mass testing and travel restric-

tions to stamp out infections.

The strategy is under strain, with the highly transmissible Omicron variant punching through health controls.

Rolling virus restrictions—including a weeks-long lockdown of virtually all of Shanghai’s 25 million residents—have damaged the economy,

causing backlogs at the world’s busiest container port, a key node in the global supply chain.

On Thursday Guangzhou, a major trade and manufacturing hub in southern China, announced mass testing for almost a third of its near 19 million residents after an “abnormal” test result was detected at

its airport, where most flights have been cancelled.

Meanwhile, the tech hub of Hangzhou near Shanghai late on Wednesday ordered 9.4 million downtown residents out of its 12.2 million population to get tested every 48 hours if they want to access public spaces and transportation. — AFP

ECONOMY WORLD

China's economy remains resilient despite downward pressure: Singapore scholar

CHINA'S economy remains resilient and possesses healthy developmental fundamentals despite the current downward pressure, said Yu Hong, a senior research fellow at the East Asian Institute of the National University of Singapore.

In the short term, the recent outbreak of the Omicron variant of the COVID-19 in some Chinese cities has, to some extent, dampened the domestic consumption. Meanwhile, the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict and the consequent adjustments in the global geopolitical and economic patterns have also posed great challenges to China's economic growth, Yu told Xinhua in a recent interview.

In the long run, however, the factors supporting China's economic growth haven't altered, he added.

Yu explained that China en-

joys vast territory and abundant resources, with different regions being in different stages of development. "There is still spacious room for economic development, given the development gaps among various parts of China."

China has a complete manufacturing system, superior infrastructure and a gradually-improving business environment, making it still a strong magnet for foreign investment, he added.

According to statistics released by China's General Administration of Customs, the value of China's imports and exports in the first quarter this year registered a quarter-on-quarter climb of 10.7 per cent, maintaining a positive growth for the seventh consecutive quarter.

Yu expressed the belief that the steady growth of imports and exports highlights the vitality of China's foreign trade and the



China has a complete manufacturing system, superior infrastructure and a gradually-improving business environment. **PHOTO: XINHUA/FILE**

huge capacity of China's manufacturing industry, which will help stabilize China's economic performance.

He noted China has recently introduced a series of measures to help enterprises tide over the hard times, such as granting fa-

vorable financial service towards the real economy, so as to maintain employment and people's livelihood.—Xinhua

French growth crashes to zero in first quarter



Customers arrive at a Marks & Spencer store in the So Ouest shopping centre in Levallois-Perret, outside Paris. **PHOTO: THOMAS SAMSON/AFP/FILE**

THE French economy flatlined in the first quarter as households reduced their consumption due to rising inflation and the war in Ukraine, the national statistics

agency said Friday.

The zero-growth result was weaker than the INSEE agency's pre-war forecast of a 0.3 per cent expansion, underlying the eco-

nomic difficulties faced across Europe.

The French annual inflation rate also accelerated to 4.8 per cent in April, up from 4.5 per cent the month before, INSEE said in a separate statement. "Gross domestic product is at a standstill ... it bears the mark of the two combined external shocks (Covid and the Omicron variant in January, then the war in Ukraine that strengthened inflation)," INSEE economist Julien Pouget wrote on Twitter. The figure puts an end to France's strong economic rebound from the Covid-19 pandemic and poses a challenge to President Emmanuel Macron, who was re-elected last weekend.—AFP

Ukraine war to hit MENA's poor nations, boost oil-producers: IMF

THE war in Ukraine has "significantly" impacted the Middle East and North Africa, with the crisis dealing a heavy blow to low-income countries while benefiting oil-producing states, the IMF said Wednesday.

The International Monetary Fund's 2022 growth forecast for

the region, which includes Arab countries and Iran, was forecast at 5.0 per cent, up from the 4.1 per cent prediction for this year made in October. But the predicted growth masks the disparities between the region's 22 countries, which range from major oil exporters to nations wracked

by war and others that depend heavily on wheat imports as well as hydrocarbon imports.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine and economic sanctions on Moscow have affected the region "through a multitude of direct and indirect channels", according to the IMF report. —AFP

NEWS IN Brief

1,400 Ukrainian refugees already have work contract

PORTUGAL'S labour minister announced on Wednesday that work contracts have been concluded with 1,400 Ukrainian refugees who came to Portugal fleeing the war, with about 29,000 job offers spread across the country.

"We have 1,400 work contracts signed with these Ukrainian citizens," Minister Ana Mendes Godinho announced at a hearing before the parliamentary Budget and Finance committee on the budget for 2022 in the areas she oversees.

Mendes Godinho added that there are "29,000 job offers spread across the country for Ukrainian citizens", who fled the country after Russia invaded on 24 February. During the hearing, which is taking place in parliament, the minister also stressed the importance of all foreign citizens in the national labour market, who contribute to the stability of social security: "At the moment, 10% of the people who are contributing to social security are foreigners and they are part of this collective effort", with their social security contributions. — AFP

Chinese firms enjoy over 1 trln yuan of tax policy support

CHINA'S tax authorities provided businesses nationwide with various types of tax and fee policy support equivalent to over 1 trillion yuan (about 152.4 billion US dollars) from 1 Jan to 20 April, official data shows.

Apart from VAT credit rebates and tax and fee cuts, this policy toolbox also includes tax and fee deferrals for small and medium-sized manufacturing firms, according to the State Taxation Administration.—Xinhua

Ford confirms
2022 profit outlook
despite lingering
semiconductor crunch

FORD confirmed its 2022 profit outlook Wednesday despite lower quarterly auto sales as strong vehicle pricing offsets the hit from higher operating costs and the ongoing semiconductor chip shortage.

Echoing statements from General Motors, Ford executives described “pent-up” consumer demand for autos in a market characterized by limited vehicle supply despite rising inflation. The result has been elevated auto pricing that has so far enabled Detroit carmakers to offset soaring costs from steel, nickel and freight.

In the first quarter of 2022, Ford averaged \$57,514 for the F-150 truck, up 16 per cent from 2020, according to data from Edmunds.com.

Ford maintained its

forecast of between \$11.5 billion and \$12.5 billion in adjusted earnings before interest and taxes, citing the effect of “continued strong pricing.”

The company reported a loss of \$3.1 billion following a \$5.4 billion hit from the value of its investment in Rivian, which makes electric trucks. Adjusted earnings before interest and taxes were \$2.3 billion. Revenues fell five per cent to \$34.5 billion.

Ford said semiconductor supplies remained limited in January and February, but manufacturing rates “significantly improved” in March.

Chief Financial Officer John Lawler said Ford has been “aggressive” thus far in lifting prices, with pricing “just about offsetting cost increases.”—AFP



Visitors at a Ford stand in IAA Mobility in Munich, Germany, 6 September 2021. PHOTO: CFP/XINHUA/FILE

Unilever revenue up as consumers
pay more

UNILEVER on Thursday announced a jump in revenue after the British consumer goods giant passed on higher costs to customers.

The maker of a vast amount of products including Magnum ice cream, Cif surface cleaner and Dove soap said revenue increased nearly 12 per cent to 13.8 billion euros (\$14.5 billion) in the first quarter from a year earlier.

Unilever said in a trading statement that its higher prices had turned off some customers, with volume of sales down one percent.

“This period of unprecedented inflation requires us to take further pricing action with some impact on volume as a result,” said the group that recently failed to buy the consumer health care unit of drugmaker GlaxoSmith-Kline (GSK) for £50 billion.

Inflation, which was accelerating sharply as economies reopened from Covid lockdowns, has worsened following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Consumers are “willing to pay more for the things we missed in lockdown, like going out for ice cream, but beyond that Unile-



Magnum, a well-known ice cream brand owned by consumer products company Unilever, offers a different list of ingredients for China and Europe. PHOTO: IC/XINHUA

ver’s seen consumers pull back as their wallets are squeezed”, said Hargreaves Lansdown equity analyst Laura Hoy.

Unilever said that it still expected costs to increase by about 2.1 billion euros in the first half.—AFP

Door-to-door pet service thriving
in China

BEFORE Zhong Ze’an, a 32-year-old migrant worker in Beijing, left for his hometown to celebrate the Spring Festival, he needed to help his pet settle down.

The distance to his hometown in east China’s Jiangxi Province is about 1,400 km, too far for Zhong to bring his cat with him. Asking someone to take care of it was his only choice.

Rather than sending

the little creature to the pet shop which charged dozens of yuan each day, Zhong found a cheaper option, a door-to-door pet service. The service provider would come to his home once every few days, feeding his pet and cleaning up after it. Each service costs 70 yuan (about 10.7 US dollars), said Zhong.

Besides saving money, his cat has also benefited from the service. Staying

at home in familiar surroundings minimizes the stress for the feline.

Since 2018, Zhong has used this service three times, and he had no worries about letting strangers into his room. “The business is built on trust, and people who love pets are decent,” said Zhong, who leaves his keys to a stranger every time.

Data from a 2021 white paper on China’s pet indus-

try shows the number of pet cats and dogs in urban areas in China exceeded 100 million in 2021, and the industry’s market reached 249 billion yuan in size. As the market has expanded, providing door-to-door pet services has evolved into a profession for many.

Chen Xi, a financial freelancer and a pet keeper in Beijing, spotted the niche when she found herself in need.—Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V PANJA BHUM VOY.NO. (192W)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V PANJA BHUM VOY.NO. (192W)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **30-4-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT** 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 REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MCL 20 V.05/2022

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MCL 20 VOY. NO. (05/2022)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **1-5-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MKH** 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

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V GLOBAL HARVEST V.2202

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V GLOBAL HARVEST VOY.NO. (V.2202)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **30-4-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MITT-4** 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 UNI SPRING LOGISTICS HOLDINGS PTE LTD

Marcos Jr rejects debate challenge ahead of Philippine presidential poll



Presidential candidate Ferdinand Marcos Jr. greets supporters during the proclamation rally in Laoag, Ilocos Norte province, north of Manila on 25 March 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

PRESIDENTIAL hopeful Ferdinand Marcos Jr has been hounded in previous election debates over questions related to his father's rule of the country. Philippines presidential election frontrunner Ferdinand

Marcos Junior rejected on Friday a challenge to debate rival Leni Robredo one-on-one, as the country heads into the final week of campaigning for the 9 May polls. Marcos Jr, son and namesake of the country's former dic-

tator, has snubbed invitations to participate in debates with rivals, rarely gives media interviews and often ignores journalists' questions at rallies. He has sought to avoid a repeat of the 2016 vice-presidential race, when he was hounded over questions related to his father's violent and corrupt rule. The younger Marcos narrowly lost that contest to Robredo and spent five years trying to have the result overturned. In this campaign, Marcos Jr was the only candidate out of 10 hoping to succeed President Rodrigo Duterte to skip the two televised debates held by the government's Commission on Elections. He also refused to attend a debate hosted by CNN Philippines.—AFP

Israelis stand silently to remember the Holocaust

ISRAEL came to a standstill on Thursday, halting the morning bustle for two minutes as sirens blared to honour millions murdered during the Holocaust. In an annual ritual at 10:00 am (0700 GMT), pedestrians froze in place. Drivers stopped and stood in silence beside their vehicles, honouring the six million Jews killed by the Nazis during World War Two. At Jerusalem's Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said on Wednesday that the Holocaust is the "ultimate, absolute expression of thousands of years of anti-Semitism". Bennett also rejected any attempt to draw parallels between the Nazi genocide and current conflicts.

"I take the trouble to say this because as the years go by, there is more and more discourse in the world that compares other difficult events to

the Holocaust. But no. Even the most difficult wars today are not the Holocaust and are not comparable to the Holocaust," he said.—AFP



Israeli drivers, including these in Tel Aviv, stopped and stood in silence beside their vehicles to remember victims of the Holocaust. **PHOTO: AFP**

NEWS IN BRIEF

2016 EgyptAir disaster started by cigarette in cockpit: report



EgyptAir flight MS804 suddenly disappeared from radar screens on 19 May 2016 on its way to Cairo from Paris. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

AN EgyptAir crash in 2016 that killed 66 people in the Mediterranean was likely caused by a fire that started in the cockpit, according to the conclusions of French experts contained in documents revealed on Wednesday.

According to a 134-page document seen by Italian daily *Il Corriere della Sera* and sent to the Paris court of appeal in March, a fire on board was likely to have been caused by the conjunction of two factors.

These were a leak from the co-pilot's oxygen mask and the combustion of a cigarette smoked by the pilot or co-pilot.

EgyptAir flight MS804 suddenly disappeared from radar screens on 19 May 2016 on its way to Cairo from Paris, killing everyone on board.—AFP

12 women killed by landslide in Indonesia gold mine

TWELVE women working in an illegal gold mine in Indonesia's North Sumatra province were killed when a cliff collapsed and triggered a landslide that buried them, police said.

Unlicensed mines are common across mineral-rich Indonesia, with abandoned sites attracting locals who scrounge for leftover gold ore without using proper safety equipment.

A collapsed cliff in North Sumatra's Mandailing Natal district struck Thursday afternoon, killing 12 women — aged 30 to 55 years old — who were digging for gold in an abandoned illegal mine.

"The cliff around the mine collapsed and buried the 12 women, killing them all," local police chief Marlon Rajagukguk told AFP late Thursday, adding that the victims were not professional miners.

Two other women who worked alongside them managed to survive the disaster and ran back to the village to report the incident to the authorities. It took hours for rescuers to evacuate the victims' bodies as they were in a two-metre deep hole, which was filled with mud.—AFP

Islamic State claims deadly bomb blasts on minibuses in Afghan city

THE latest bombings in Afghanistan, aboard two minibuses in Mazar-i-Sharif, come one week after an explosion left 12 dead at a Shiite mosque, shown here, in the same city on 21 April 2022.

The Islamic State group claimed two bomb blasts aboard minibuses that killed at least nine people Thursday in Afghanistan's Mazar-i-Sharif, a week after a deadly explosion at a Shiite mosque in the north-

ern city. The number of violent public attacks across Afghanistan has fallen since the Taliban returned to power last August, but the Sunni Islamic State group has continued to target Shiites,

whom they view as heretics. A string of deadly bombings targeting minority communities has convulsed the country in the past two weeks during the fasting month of Ramadan. Thursday's blasts occurred

within minutes of each other in different districts of Mazar-i-Sharif as commuters were heading home to break their dawn-to-dusk fast, Balkh provincial police spokesman Asif Waziri told AFP.—AFP

Kishida departs for Indonesia at start of S.E. Asia, Europe tour

JAPANESE Prime Minister Fumio Kishida departed on an eight-day tour of five nations in Southeast Asia and Europe on Friday to boost relations amid China's growing assertiveness and the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

"I'd like to make a trip for peace," Kishida told reporters in Tokyo before his arrival in Indonesia, which will be followed by visits to Vietnam, Thailand, Italy and Britain.

In Southeast Asia, he aims to strengthen cooperation with members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations toward realizing a "free and open Indo-Pacific."

With Japan and other Group of Seven nations taking a tough line on imposing sanctions on Russia following its attack on Ukraine, Kishida also plans to ask ASEAN members, most of



Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida waves before boarding a plane to depart for Indonesia on 29 April 2022, at Tokyo's Haneda airport. PHOTO: KYODO

which have so far stood aloof from such action against Moscow, to collaborate.

The premier is expected to hold talks with Indonesian President Joko Widodo on Friday

afternoon, during which he will seek to advance the Indo-Pacific vision that Japan has been promoting amid China's continued maritime expansion in the region.

Japan views Indonesia, this year's host of the Group of 20 major economies' summit to be held in November and a key economy in Southeast Asia, as a strategic partner sharing universal values such as democracy and the rule of law.

In the remainder of his Southeast Asian trip, Kishida will hold talks with Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh and President Nguyen Xuan Phuc and meet with Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha. Japan and Thailand, marking the 135th anniversary of diplomatic ties this year, are seeking to sign an agreement on the transfer of defence equipment and technology to strengthen cooperation in the security field. Thailand is this year's host of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum summit.—Kyodo

Pakistan PM Sharif heads to Saudi for first foreign visit

PAKISTAN'S new Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif begins his maiden foreign trip Thursday to Saudi Arabia, seeking financial support from a country where he spent years in exile.

The kingdom has long been an intelligence partner for Pakistan as well as a regular source of relief for its struggling economy.

"Today I am embarking on a visit to Saudi Arabia to renew & reaffirm our bonds of brotherhood & friendship," Sharif said on Twitter Thursday, adding that the country "has a special place in all our hearts". Sharif was sworn in earlier this month after parliament ousted his predecessor Imran Khan in a no-confidence vote.—AFP

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Here are the latest developments in the war in Ukraine:

Kyiv hit as UN chief visits

RUSSIAN missiles slam into buildings in a residential area of Kyiv as UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres visits the Ukrainian capital.

Guterres and his team are unhurt, but casualties are reported and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky says it is part of Russian leaders' attempts to humiliate the United Nations.

10 suspects in Bucha inquiry

UKRAINIAN prosecutors say they have identified 10 Russian soldiers suspected of committing war crimes in the Kyiv suburb of Bucha.

The troops from the 64th motorised infantry brigade are suspected of premeditated murder, cruel treatment and other violations during their occupation of Bucha in March.

Security Council 'failed'

GUTERRES says during his visit to Kyiv the Security Council failed to go far enough in its efforts to "prevent and end" Russia's war in Ukraine.

"Let me be very clear: the Security Council failed to do everything in its power to prevent and end this war," he tells a news conference with Zelensky.

OSCE ends mission

THE world's largest security body, the OSCE, formally announces the end of its eight-year mission in Ukraine.

The body was the only international organization monitoring the conflict in eastern Ukraine, but was forced out after Russia vetoed an extension of its mission last month.

SOURCE: AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR: ROLLING UPDATES

Ukrainian president, UN chief discuss evacuation from Mariupol

UKRAINIAN President Volodymyr Zelensky and United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Thursday discussed the evacuation of people from the besieged city of Mariupol, the presidential press service reported.

Ukraine is ready for urgent talks to evacuate people from Mariupol and hopes that the participation of the UN secretary-general in this mission would help the evacuation efforts, Zelensky told reporters after the meeting.

"We see that despite the words of the Russian President (Vladimir Putin) about the alleged cessation of hostilities in Mariupol, the territory of the Azovstal plant is under barbaric bombing by the Russian army," Zelensky said.

He also called on the UN chief to make efforts to stop the "deportation" of Ukrainian citizens to Russia and return home Ukrainians from Russia.



Ukrainian servicemen ride on an armoured personnel carrier (APC) as they make their way along a highway on the outskirts of Kryvyi Rih. PHOTO: AFP

For his part, Guterres said that he is doing his best to save people in Mariupol.

"We will continue to call for a complete ceasefire, as well as for immediate practical measures to save lives and minimize human suffering," the UN chief said.

He stressed the need for effective humanitarian corridors

from Mariupol and local cessation of hostilities.

Guterres arrived in Ukraine on Wednesday to talk with Zelensky, after visiting Moscow on Tuesday. Mariupol, a key Azov Sea port city in eastern Ukraine, saw one of the worst violence in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.—Xinhua

Kishida departs for Indonesia at start of S.E. Asia, Europe tour

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SPORT

Myanmar women's team beat Thai club Nonthaburi 5-3 in friendly

MYANMAR women's futsal team, taking training in Thailand in preparation for the SEA Games, played a friendly match on 29 April.

The team won the tune-up match against the Thai women's futsal club Nonthaburi 5-3.

The Myanmar women's futsal team is taking training in Thailand after the Thai Invitational Futsal Championship held in Thailand from 20 to 26 April. According to the Myanmar Football Federation, the women's squad will continue training in Thailand until the first week of May. — Ko Nyi Lay / GNLM



Myanmar women futsal player (green) runs across the ball during the friendly match against Thai women's futsal club Nonthaburi in Thailand on 29 April 2022. PHOTO: MFF

Men's and women's Australian Open golf to be held together

THE men's and women's Australian Open events will take place at the same time, at the same venues as part of efforts to widen golf's appeal, organizers said on Friday. The tournaments will be held in the Sandbelt area of Melbourne on 1-4 December and there will be an equal split between men and

women for the prize money, Golf Australia said. Victoria Golf Club will be the main host across all four days, with Kingston Heath Golf Club set to also host play on the first two days. The men's edition will be sanctioned for the first time by the DP World Tour, formerly the European Tour.—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.

Man City, Liverpool turn attention back to Premier League shootout

MANCHESTER City and Liverpool must quickly turn their focus from Champions League glory to the battle for the Premier League title, with no room for error in tricky away trips on Saturday.

City, who hold a one-point advantage at the top of the table with five games remaining, travel to Leeds, who are also in need of the points to guarantee survival.

Liverpool can go top for a few hours at least if they win at Newcastle, but the Magpies have won their last six home games to storm into the top half of the table since beginning to splash the cash of the Saudi sovereign wealth fund in January.

The Premier League's top two remain on course to end their season with another showdown in the Champions League final after seeing off Spanish opposition in contrasting fashion in midweek.

City should have put Real Madrid out of sight in a thrilling 4-3 win over the 13-time European champions, while Goliath got the better of David as Liverpool beat Villarreal 2-0.

Champions League considerations could play a major role in the team selection of both title contenders.

Jurgen Klopp gave Liverpool fans even more cause for celebration by extending his contract at Anfield for a further two years to 2026 on Thursday.

However, the German is far from happy at the scheduling of a lunchtime kick-off just three days after a Champions League semi-final.

"It's brutal but it's fine. It's the best situation you can have," said Klopp.—AFP

Myanmar women's football team loses in 1st friendly match in South Korea

THE Myanmar women's national football team, training in South Korea in preparation for the 31st SEA Games, lost 3-0 on 29 April in a friendly match against the

South Korea U-20 youth team.

The Myanmar women's team started with a complete set of strong players in the first half and was able to play well with

the South Korea U-20 team, but in the second half, many players changed, and the South Korea team scored a series of goals.

Key players: goalkeeper May Zin Nwe, Khin Than Wai, Chit Chit, Aye Aye Moe, Phyu Phyu Win, Khin Mo Mo Tun, Naw Htet Htet Wai, Khin Malar Tun, San Thaw Thaw, Myat Moe Khin and July Kyaw played for the first half and showed their brilliant skills and the first half ended with 0-0.

As a test match, seven players were allowed to be substituted, and young players were allowed to play in the second half.

South Korea U-20 scored the winning goal in the second half.

The Myanmar women's team will play three friendly matches on the tour of South Korea, and the second match will be against the South Korean women's club Seoul City on 1 May. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM



Myanmar women team player (white) tries to cut the ball against the South Korean U-20 youth team during their friendly match on 29 April 2022. PHOTO: MFF