THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. IX, No. 22, 9th Waxing of Kason 1384 ME | www.gnlm.com.mm | Sunday, 8 May 2022

Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

Industrial crop elephant foot yams – a gift of nature

By Nadi Min

Chin State possesses a beautiful landscape of mountain ranges and the elephant foot yams in their natural habitats. **PHOTO : KO AUNG (AGRICULTURE)**

"ELEPHANT foot yam is a natural gift that keeps on giving," said Salai Kyaw, Chin ethnic people.

His native town Chin State possesses a beautiful landscape of mountain ranges and the elephant foot yams in their natural habitats.

"There is a need to control weeds in tuber crops. It does not need fertilizer treatment. As it is a cash crop, some growers eye the yams and execute commercial farming. Once the yams are harvested, it makes handsome profits," Salai Kyaw said.

There are approximately 80 varieties of elephant foot yams. It is used in making traditional medicine in Japan.

The yams are rich in essential minerals. It is a rich source of dietary fibre, protein, and vitamins that brings many health and nutritional benefits. It contains oxalic acid, and it is not suitable to be consumed raw like taro. It can be used in food, pharmaceutical and industrial sectors with value-adding.

The yam is native from South East Asia. It is also naturally grown in Asia, Africa, and Indochina tropical regions. The yam species found in Myanmar contain 60 per cent of glucomannan, so Myanmar's native yam is highly nutritious and tasty compared to the yams from other Asian regions.

As a result, China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and India prefer the yams from Myanmar.

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Industrial crop elephant foot yams – a gift of nature

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"Most importantly, the yams (pink flesh) produced in Chin Hills and Bago mountains (Bago Yoma) have a high content of glucomannan which is greater than the standard amount. Those with white flesh from central Myanmar have a low content of glucomannan. This is why it is a gift bestowed by God ", said U Aung Thwin Ko, in charge of Nyaunghnapin's nursery yard under the Department of Agriculture.

The yams are primarily cultivated in Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Mon and Shan states and Sagaing, Taninthayi, Bago, Magway and Ayeyawady regions. Growers from the Yangon Region also started to plant that tuber crop. This being so, the yam growing acres have reached a hundred thousand.

PHOTOS : KO AUNG (AGRICUTURE)

The yam is fertile in well-drained soil, forest land and alluvial soil. If the soil drains too slowly and they are water-logged, it will lead to root rot. It is not a salt-resistant plant. It is a tropical tuber crop. It can be grown within 60-120 inches of rainfall, the temperature at 25°-35° and 1,000-5,000 above sea level. If it is above 2,500 feet, there need to be no shade trees. If grown below 1,000 feet, tree-based intercropping is required for shade. The yams can be cultivated by intercropping with perennial coffee, rubber, and oil palm trees. It can also be grown separately.

The yams can be grown naturally across Myanmar, except in the extreme hot regions. Nevertheless, early harvest resulted in the extinction of the natural yam. Therefore, systematic yam cultivation began in 2007.

"It is hard to harvest the naturally grown yams as we don't know where to dig. Sometimes, it affects quality. We can dig them up systematically if planted on our farms", U Aung Thwin Ko elaborated.

The propagation is possible by root stems and tuber. It takes about four years for them to be commercially valued for plant propagation by roots. It is marketable within two or three years for propagation by tubers.

"The yams can be naturally grown from stems as well as from tubers. That's why it is named as a cash crop which growers never give up on", U Aung Thwin Ko shared his opinion.

The harvested yams should be stored in cold and dry places before they are delivered to processing plants.

"Glucomannan extracted from elephant foot yam is exported to foreign markets. The remaining starch is sent to the feed processing industry", U Aung Thwin Ko explained.

Under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, the Agriculture Department is providing technical assistance and offering awareness courses for the growers to help choose pedigree seeds.

"The yam species of good quality originated in Chin State cannot be grown in Yangon because of different land quality. The growers must choose the species that are suitable for each region. They can contact the department for further information", U Aung Thwin Ko said.

"The elephant foot yam is not an alternative crop. It is industrial crops that can be grown under a tree-based intercropping system.

The growers have to pump in the capital of K5 million per acre for the commercially valued yam within one year. They can receive profits of K8-10 million. It is a lucrative crop with high profits and significant investments.

At present, the security issues impede the cultivation of elephant foot yams. Consequently, the market is quite sluggish.

The growers have to choose the climate-resilient seeds by aiming towards exports and making readiness for market recovery.

"The elephant foot yams are native to Myanmar like tapioca. It can be grown anywhere in the country. Nevertheless, the growers need to focus on quality control. The systematic growing and handling method is of vital importance for the yams to penetrate the external market. As it needs a large amount of investment, the growers need to consider thoroughly before planting them," U Aung Thwin Ko suggested.

Translated.

Public Notification

THE Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee was reconstituted under the State Administration Council's Order No 366/2021 dated 10.12.2021, and action is being taken effectively against illegal trade under the law.

The following telephone numbers, fax and email address can be reached to safely report information in connection with illegal trade.

Auto telephone number - 067 409 883
Mobile phone - 09 404339969
Fax - 067 409 886
Email address - antiillegaltradeinfo@gmail.com

Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

Public Notification

THE Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee was reconstituted under the State Administration Council's Order No 366/2021 dated 10.12.2021, and action is being taken effectively against illegal trade under the law.

Regarding the "request for money from departmental organizations in conducting trade", the following numbers can be reached to safely report such information.

Auto telephone number - 067 409 881
Mobile phone - 09 699611116
Fax - 067 409 887
Email address - antiillegaltradeoffice@gmail.com

Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee

This year is identified as the Year of Peace

THIS year is the pre-year of the Diamond Jubilee Independence Day. So, we have to make utmost efforts to enjoy the fruits of Independence and democratic administration fully. Hence, this year is identified as the Year of Peace. We are trying our best to restore the peace and tranquillity of the entire nation.

(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 Delegation led by MoIC Union Minister U Ko Ko Hlaing and Chairman of the Task Force to facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance to Myanmar through the AHA Centre arrives back

The Myanmar delegation led by the MoIC Union Minister arrives back at Yangon International Airport.

MYANMAR Delegation led by U Ko Ko Hlaing, Union Minister of the Ministry of International Cooperation and Chairman of the Task Force to facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance to Myanmar through the AHA Centre arrived back at Yangon International Airport via Bangkok on 7 May 2022 after attending the Consultative Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance in Myanmar which was held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

The Union minister was accompanied by members of the Task Force: Dr Aye Tun, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Health, U Aung Tun Khaing, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, U Chan Aye, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and officials from relevant Ministries. — MNA

MoI Union Minister views new TV programme on 38-principle Mingala

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn watched the 38-principle Mingala TV programme that will be broadcast soon, at MRTV Studio (A) in Yangon yesterday.

First, the Union minister viewed film materials and photos of artistes from the movie, theatrical and music industries together with the chairman of the Myanmar Motion Picture Oranization, artistes, and invitees among others.

Then, theatrical artiste U Nan Win reported on the making of the 38-principle Mingala programme.

The MoI Union Minister and party watch the new programme on 38-principle Mingala at MRTV Studio(A) in Yangon yesterday.

The Union minister and party enjoyed three programmes of the 38-principle Mingala and gave presents to producer theatrical artiste U Nan Win and his group.

The MRTV launched the 38-principle Mingala programme with basic school students in 1990 aiming for young people and children to be polite and get proper knowledge. Currently, the programme is recreated with artistes and will be broadcast on MRTV soon. — MNA

32 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 7 May, total figure rises to 613,049

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **613,049** after **32** new cases were reported on 7 May 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **591,947** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll still stands at **19,434** without more casualties.—MNA

MoEPE Union Minister inspects power projects in Nay Pyi Taw

UNION Minister of the Ministry of Electric Power and of the Ministry of Energy U Thaung Han inspected No (1) substation of the Department of Power Transmission and System Control and possible land for a solar power plant project in Nay Pyi Taw together with Deputy Minister for Electric Power Dr Aung Zeya yesterday.

On arrival at No (1) substation, the station in-charge reported on procedures, power distribution and transformer expansion. The Union minister then highlighted the successive power supply on full voltage to people, reduction of power losses, electronic devices maintenance, promotion and welfare of employees and agriculture and livestock breeding processed on vacant land of the substation.

He also inspected electricity distribution and transformer expansion processes in the switchyard and gave instructions to complete the operation in time.

Then, the Union minister and party went to the floating solar and ground-mounted solar power plant project area and relevant officials explained the project. The Union minister coordinated the necessary things and inspected the project site. — MNA

Pre-monsoon tree-planting ceremony held in Shwebo District

WITH a view to greening and preserving the environment, a pre-monsoon tree-planting ceremony, led Dry Zone Greening Department of Shwebo District, was held in the Shwebo University Compound in Shwebo District, Sagaing Region on 2 May.

Dry Zone Greening Department Assistant Director U Zaw Win Htwe distributed the plants to officials and residents. The District Administration Body deputy administrator, officials, the Shwebo University rector and teachers grew 2,000 saplings, including 600 Eucalyptus, 350 Gum-kino, 350 rain trees, 350 Thinbaw rain trees and 350 Maezali trees.

Moreover, a pre-monsoon tree-planting ceremony was also held in the Myotha Industrial Park City Project area in Nganzun Township of Mandalay Region.

District Dry Zone Greening Department Assistant Director U Win Maw Naing explained the ceremony. Regional Director U Thaw Naing Oo, officials and staff from the Forest Department, Township Administration Body and personnel from the Industrial Park City and residents joined the activity.

They grew 1,500 plants high over five feet, including 750 star-flower trees, 650 Golden Mohur trees and 100 Gum-kino trees on both sides of the road to TadaU Airport and Semeikhon Port in the Myotha Industrial Park City Project area. — MNA

Convocation continues at Computer Studies & Technological Universities

PHOTO : KANU

CONVOCATION ceremonies were held at Technological Universities and Universities of Computer Studies across the county following COVID-19 guidelines yesterday.

At the convocation, Union Minister for Science and Technology Dr Myo Thein Kyaw delivered a speech with a video message.

"Convocations are being held at 16 technical universities and seven computer universities," the Union minister said.

"Science and technology are evolving rapidly, and digitalization is becoming more and more popular. It is becoming an essential requirement for businesses and regional success," he elaborated.

He wished good luck to engineers and computer technicians and congratulated graduates at yesterday's convocation ceremonies. A total of 874 graduates, including 61 Master of Engineering graduates, 674 engineering graduates, 134 graduates of computer science and computer technology at computer universities, and five post-graduate diploma holders were awarded certificates by the rectors. And graduation speeches were given.

Cabinet members from each state and region, departmental officials, graduates and their parents, relatives and friends, members of the University Management and Education Committee and professors attended the convocation ceremonies. — MNA

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR
www.gnlm.com.mm
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Printed and published at the **Global New Light of Myanmar Printing Factory** at No.150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, by the **Global New Light of Myanmar Daily** under Printing Permit No. 00510 and Publishing Permit No. 00629.

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

Over 93 per cent of vaccine coverage in Bago Region

IN Bago Region, only 0.1 per cent of COVID-19 positive cases were reported from April to date. The region has more than 93 per cent of the COVID-19 vaccine coverage and measures will be continued for the target groups, said Bago Region Chief Minister U Myo Swe Win during the virtual meeting of the Region COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee (9/2022) held on 6 May.

The chief minister also said the officials will contact the relevant township officers for the remaining people, who are out of the regional areas and still do not receive the vaccines, to reduce the number of people who do not receive the vaccines in the region.

Then, the chairmen of district and township administration bodies reported on the vaccination programmes and other relevant officials including the Commander of Southern Command discussed the vaccination processes and the participation of Tatmadaw medics in the processes. —MNA

The Bago Region COVID-19 Control and Emergency Response Committee (9/2022) meeting in progress.

MoC Deputy Minister inspects construction of roads, bridges

DEPUTY Minister for Construction U Win Pe inspected the working process on the Kanbae-Pyawbwelay-Dala Road in Twantay Township through Yangon River by the ferry to Dala jetty from Wahdan jetty on 6 May.

The Deputy Minister addressed the road connectivity of Twantay-Kawhmu-Wahbalougthout-Khunchangon Road, Dala-Thakhout-Latkhokgon-Kanyingon Road and under-construction Kanbae-Pyawbwelay-Dala Road to make it easier transport access for residents of Dala Township, Kawhmu Township and Kungyangon Township.

He instructed officials to meet the specified standards, be clean and tidy and complete the work in time.

Next, the deputy minister and party inspected the Seikkyi Kanaungto Bridge Project and called for land compensation issues to be carried out in time in accordance with the procedures of the designated location on the Seikkyi Khanaungto side and Dala side and to make sure the safety of the worksite.

Afterwards, they left along the Dala-Twantay Road and inspected the strength condition of the Twantay Bridge and gave necessary instructions.

Then, the deputy minister and party arrived at the Khattiya-Padan Yaekyaw inter-village road project and gave the necessary instructions. — 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.

A total of 28,000 PPEs and packs of 26 tonnes of masks were imported by six vehicles and four companies for seven days from 1 May.

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

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.

Doctors and nurses from public hospitals, medical teams from the Tatmadaw, and relevant healthcare workers in collaboration with volunteers gave COVID-19 vaccines to 6,293 people from fourteen townships in Shan State (North), 22,009 people from twenty-six townships in Ayeyawady Region, 8,238 people from fourteen townships from Rakhine and Chin states, 26,140 people from seven districts in Mandalay Region and 180 people from Htantabin Township in Bago Region on 6 and 7 May, respectively.

Similarly, healthcare officials gave the vaccines to 95 students from five townships in Shan State (North) on 6 May.

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

A local in Pauktaw Township, Rakhine State receiving a Covid vaccine.

CRIME NEWS

Illegal teak, battery, textile and vehicles seized

Officials seize illegal timbers.

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

On 4 May, a joint team led by the Yangon North District Forest Department and the Myanmar Police conducted an investigation under the auspices of the Yangon Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force.

A total of 2.3020 tonnes of illegal teak (estimated at K690,600) and two vehicles carrying the timbers (approximately K30,000,000) were seized on the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway, Hlegu Township.

Similarly, 7.6314 tonnes of illegal timbers (estimated at K1,526,280) and a 10-wheel Nissan UD truck carrying these timbers (estimated at K45,000,000), and a total value of K77,216,880 were seized near Milepost 51/2, Yangon-Pyay Road, Taikkyi Township. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

In addition, the Customs and Excise Team inspected the container terminal of Myanmar Industrial Port under the management of the Customs Department on 6 May.

Battery and accessories not listed in the import declaration (ID), clothing, consumer goods and cosmetics (estimated at K125,232,000) were seized and action was taken according to the Customs procedures.

Next, the Customs team inspected the Kawkareik (Tadakyoe) Joint Inspection Station under the management of the Kayin State Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force on 7 May.

During the inspection, Lipo-Vitan-D soft drinks (estimated value of K4,550,000) were seized from a truck and action was taken according to the Customs procedures.

Similarly, a joint inspection team led by the Region Forestry Department conducted an inspection under the management of the Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force.

During their inspection, 0.7050 tonnes of illegal teak logs (estimated value of K141,000) were seized near Milepost 37/0 of the Yangon-Mandalay Expressway and action was taken under the Forest Law. Therefore, 11 arrests (approximately K207,139,880) were made on 4, 6 and 7 May, according to the Steering Committee for Combating Illegal Trade. — MNA

Myanmar Industrial Port

Myanmar Industrial Port

Myanmar Industrial Port

Stimulant tablets seized in Hpa-an, Kawthoung Tsps

A joint team consisting of members of the Kayin State Police Force made inspections on the Hpa-An-Thaton Road near Barkap Village, Barkap Village-Tract, Hpa-an Township at 2:30 pm on 6 May.

During their inspection, Ma Thanda Soe and Ma Aye Thida were found on the suspicion of possession of 4,000 psychotropic drugs. Similarly, a joint team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force conducted inspections in Kawthoung Township at 8:45 pm. Police raided Min Min's house on Mingala Taung Nyunt Road and confiscated 1,930 ecstasy tablets.

They are prosecuted under the Anti-Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. —MNA

Men sentenced to jail for human trafficking

YANGON'S South District Court sentenced two people to 10 years imprisonment for their role in trafficking a man to a fishing bamboo raft (Kyaphaung) work site on 5 May.

The victim Mg ..., aged 25, from Maubin Township of Ayeyawady Region was sent to Thinzar Tun fishing bamboo raft work site in Khapyat village of Pyapon Township by Win Lin Tun (aka) Kaung Gyi from Dala and Aung Bala (aka) Balagyi from Pyapon Township. The two suspects exploited the salary of the victim – K700,000 after he worked there for two months. The traffickers were prosecuted at Dala Myoma police station under Section 25/32 of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law. The South District Court sentenced them to a 10-year jail with labour under Section 25 of the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law on Thursday. — MNA

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Petrol price high; diesel price declines on 7 May

IN local fuel market, the petroleum price was high and the diesel price slightly declined on 7 May, according to the Fuel Import, Storage and Distribution Supervisory Committee.

The committee released the prices based on the 4 May reference retail prices of MOPS.

"Since the fuel price becomes over K2000, our business is not good. At that time, the CNG-fuelled taxis are in good condition but they have to queue at the gas station. The passengers want us to open the AC when they hire the taxi. They also think the taxi fare is high. They should know our condition that we do not even get the car rental fee for owner as the fuel price is high," said Ko Kyaw Swa Oo, a taxi driver from Sangyoung Township.

The fuel prices in Yangon yesterday were K2,065 per litre of 92 Octane, K2,125 per litre of 95 Octane that were higher K30 per litre than on 6 May.

It was K2,345 per litre of diesel and K2,375 per litre of premium diesel and the prices dropped between K50 and K20 than the prices of 6 May. The petrol prices were slightly high in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and other regions/states and the diesel prices declined. In the global fuel market, it was $1.21 per litre of 95 Octane in the US and $1.419 per litre of diesel while $1.399 per litre of 95 Octane in Thailand and $0.927 per litre of diesel. — TWA/GNLM

One of the pump stations in Yangon.

MIC invites EoI for eight investment sectors

The Office of the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration-DICA.

MYANMAR Investment Commission (MIC) called for EoI (Expression of Interest) submissions for eight sectors to fulfil the needs for the development of the country and nation-building.

The priority sectors are (a) fertilizer production, (b) cement production (c) steel production, (d) agriculture and livestock breeding, (e) value-added foodstuffs production (f) electronic vehicles production, (g) medicine and health related material production and (h) public transportation.

If interested Myanmar and foreign investors submit proposals for the investment, the MIC, ministries concerned and region/state governments will provide the necessary things.

The country approved 48 investments amounting to $684.686 million in foreign investments and 38 Myanmar citizens' investments totalling K468393.528 million between October 2021 and March 2022, and it created 42,880 job opportunities.

The MIC permitted $684million and K468 billion worth of local and foreign investments during the first six months of 2021-2022. —TWA/GNLM

MoC to revoke exporters/importers' registration certificates if exporters fail to deposit their export earnings within 3 months

THE Ministry of Commerce announced that the exporters/importers' registration certificates will be revoked if the export/import companies do not deposit their export earnings within the fixed period of the Central Bank of Myanmar.

The statement said exporters must deposit their export earnings into their banking accounts in foreign currencies within three months from the date of the shipment of goods without fail under the Foreign Exchange Management Law, Foreign Exchange Management Regulations and Notification No 46/2021of the CBM.

The exporters/importers' registration certificates of 346 export companies were revoked in 2021 for failing to follow the orders of the CBM. — TWA/ GNLM

Loading and unloading are underway at Thilawa Port.

Myanmar nationals convicted in Thailand deported home through Ranong

A total of 123 Myanmar nationals and nine children convicted in Thailand were deported to Myanmar in eight boats via Ranong on 6 May.

The Myanmar migrant workers have been released from prison in Thailand for various reasons. Cross-border special forces repatriated the Myanmar citizens from Ranong to Kawthoung by eight tugboats.

The migrant workers were welcomed by Myanmar authorities led by Labour Attache U Ye Lin Htet and officials from the Boundary Committee.

A total of 123 Myanmar migrant workers, including 96 males and 27 females, were handed over to Myanmar after serving their sentences in Thailand for various reasons, including seven children, two boys and two girls, officials said.

They were accepted following the COVID-19 rules and regulations, according to the Myanmar Labour Attache. — TWA/GNLM

OPINION
BOOKRACK

Turn out qualified, skilled workers without delay

NOT only economic growth but the development of human resources are of great importance in building a country. As such, developing countries, in addition to industrialized countries, focus on the improvement of human resources.

Despite an abundance of natural resources such as oil, natural gas, forest and forest products, the country will gradually decline these resources depending on a large volume of extraction and utilization. But, the human resources applying skills and knowledge will never run out, and these capacities will have enhancement depending on the utilization.

Myanmar, an agro-based country, is making efforts to transform its manual farming into mechanized farming. In so doing, the government is striving to build a new country with the development of the industrial sector. At present, the special emphasis is being placed on the emergence of skilled workers in respective sectors such as CMP industries, including garment factories and construction projects.

To build a modernized country, the government, the employers and the skilled labour need to join hands with one another in implementing the essential projects benefiting the State and the people in the long run. Hence, let's turn out qualified, skilled workers without delay!

The National Skill Standards Authority-NSSA is carefully turning out the skilled workers in Myanmar. It has been issuing recognition certificates on national level work skills since 2014. So far, it has assessed skilled labours in 30 kinds of jobs and recognized 17.103 qualified, skilled workers.

Currently, NSSA decided to assess 5,000 candidate labours for 33 kinds of jobs to recognize them as skilled labours in the 2022-2023 financial year. A plan is underway to conduct the training courses on skill standard scheming and assessment techniques to be able to contribute to the assessment process of the NSSA.

Indeed, the NSSA's processes to assess the skilled labour and issue the recognition certificates to the candidates emphasize the improvement of the skills of Myanmar labours. Hence, such a process is expected to meet the demand for skilled workers in the country's labour market.

As the development of human resources is a sector which is essential for the improvement of the nation, Myanmar workers should attend the relevant skill training courses to possess job opportunities by uplifting their capacity and skilled qualification. If so, they will have the firm confidence to encounter the challenges in the workplace with easily solving any problems.

To build a modernized country, the government, the employers and the skilled labour need to join hands with one another in implementing the essential projects benefiting the State and the people in the long run. Hence, let's turn out qualified, skilled workers without delay!

■■■

Countries in WHO South-East Asia Region renew commitment to eliminate malaria by 2030

THE WHO South-East Asia Region on 5 May 2022 renewed its commitment to eliminate malaria by 2030, with countries pledging accelerated action and greater efforts at the sub-national and community levels.

"We need the support of all leaders, policymakers, development partners, donors, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, civil society, and the public to actively support commitments to accelerate progress toward a malaria-free Region," said Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, addressing a seminar on 'Malaria High Burden to High Impact'.

At the seminar, ministers of health and WHO endorsed a Statement on Renewed Commitment for Malaria Elimination. The renewed commitment calls for greater efforts to get back on track, with ownership and governance of actions towards elimination being devolved to sub-national and community levels.

It calls for urgently scaling up proven implementation strategies and adopting newer, innovative strategies such as new investments, vector control approaches, diagnostics, antimalarial medicines, and other tools to speed the pace of progress against malaria.

In 2020, the Region had five million estimated cases and 8,900 estimated deaths – 80 per cent fewer cases and 77 per cent fewer deaths compared to 2010 – and the largest decline in any of the WHO regions.

While applauding efforts made by countries that enabled WHO South-East Asia to become the only WHO Region to achieve the 2020 global milestone of reducing malaria cases and deaths by 40 per cent against 2015 levels, the Statement cautioned that the achievements so far were not enough to reach the elimination targets.

The Maldives and Sri Lanka have maintained their malaria-free status. Eliminating malaria by 2025 continues to be a real possibility in Bhutan, DPR Korea, Nepal, Thailand, and Timor-Leste.

"We have a long way to go to eliminate malaria in all countries. The Region is at a crossroads in response to malaria elimination. Over the years, we have witnessed either stagnation or at times reduction in overall funding, contrary to the undeniable need for an increase in funding necessary for malaria elimination," Dr Khetrapal Singh said.

The Regional Director called for accelerating efforts to attain and maintain malaria elimination in all countries by implementing key strategic interventions outlined in the Regional Action Plan 2017–2030. These include - ensuring universal access to malaria diagnosis and treatment by enhancing and optimizing case management; universal access to malaria prevention by enhancing and optimizing vector control and increasing sensitivity and specificity of malaria surveillance.

High-burden countries with diverse geographical and population contexts must adopt subnational and locally relevant approaches, ensuring a speedier trajectory that prioritizes the hard-to-reach and underserved, and those at risk of being left behind, Dr Singh said.

"Across each of these areas, investment and innovation will continue to be crucial, with a focus on new vector control approaches, as well as better diagnostics and antimalarial medicines. Drug resistance must be addressed sooner rather than later," she said.

The renewed commitment statement calls for consistently high level of tailored elimination efforts and focused actions at the sub-national levels to prevent resurgence of cases, cross-border transmission, and achieve malaria elimination.

It also emphasizes on greater domestic funding and diversification of funding sources for malaria elimination along with increased political leadership and new partners to join in the malaria elimination efforts.

Today's renewed commitment follows earlier pledges by Member countries to eliminate malaria from the Region before or by 2030, made in the 2017 Ministerial Declaration for Accelerating and Sustaining Malaria Elimination and the 2018 Ministerial Call for Action to eliminate malaria in the Greater Mekong Subregion.

Experts and partners, and representatives from The Global Fund, Gates Foundation, USAID, Roll Back Malaria, Asia Pacific Leaders Malaria Alliance and Asia Pacific Malaria Elimination Network, Medicines for Malaria Venture, BRAC (Bangladesh), Save The Children, UNICEF and WHO Collaborating Centres, attended the virtual seminar.

(Source – WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia)

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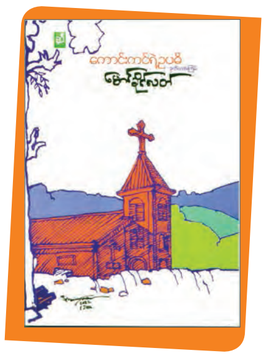


Book Title	-	Characteristics of Heavenly Life
Author	-	Maung Khine Latt
Publishing House	-	Duwun
Publication Date	-	March 2022 (2nd Edition)
Price	-	K3,000

Characteristics of Heavenly Life

AUTHOR Maung Khine Latt is a well-known critiquer in Myanmar. Additionally, his art of the literary essay is recognized. This book consisting of 21 essays was issued in 2004. It's the second edition of Duwun Publishing.

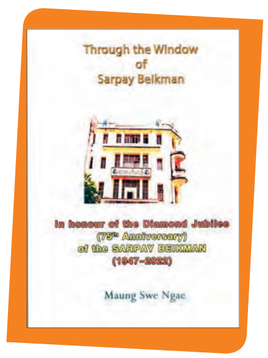
"The author's essays portray literary analysis of his life experiences as a teacher and writer, of his friends and travel experiences from the bird's-eye view. His knowledge of critique essays and literature is delivered as well. Maung Yint Mar (Kyaunggon) gave a remark in the preamble.

The book is titled "Characteristics of Heavenly Life", and leadership can be a natural gift as well as a man-made one with the compilation of knowledge and skills. Macro-management styles are also included in this piece of writing.

In writing about grief, people tend to realize the value of someone after he or she passes away.

An artist, a friend of the author, shared his opinion that the right to life is the right to live or die.

Readers will appreciate the compilation of writing pieces that involve the elements of literary evaluation and developing ideas.



Book Title	-	Through the Window of Sarpay Beikman
Author	-	Maung Swe Ngae
Publishing House	-	Naingngan Gonyi
Publication Date	-	December 2022
Price	-	K4,000

Through the Window of Sarpay Beikman

MYANMAR Translation Society was formed on 26 August 1947 with an aim to translate literature into Myanmar to enhance the knowledge of Myanmar citizens, explore Myanmar culture, literature and education, translate them into foreign languages and distribute the translated books. This book issued by Naingngan Gonyi Publishing House is to mark the Diamond Jubilee of the Sarpay Beikman, a major milestone that the Myanmar Translation Society (formerly Burma Translation Society-BTS) originated or was born.

The author Maung Swe Ngae described his life experiences as an editor and chief editor later, Sarpay Beikman's historical events and the birth of the National Lifetime Award for Literary Achievement. What makes this book so special and unique is the inclusion of the articles printed in the Global New Light of Myanmar daily English Newspaper.

Translators need competence in both languages, well-versed in grammar, and enrichment in vocabulary and cultural knowledge. This book was published in English; however, this book gives readers a variety of knowledge and experiences of the Myanmar author without losing its grip.

ARTICLE
Weather Report

Myanmar Daily Weather Report

(Issued at 4:00 pm Saturday 7 May 2022)

BAY INFERENCE: According to the observations at (12:30) hrs MST today, the well marked low pressure area over Southeast Bay of Bengal and adjoining South Andaman Sea still persists. It is likely to move Northwestwards and intensify into a Depression over the Southeast Bay of Bengal during next (6) hours and into a Cyclonic Storm over the East Central Bay of Bengal in the evening of (8.5.2022). It is forecast continuous to move Northwestwards and reach to West Central Bay and adjoining Northwest Bay of Bengal (off north Andhra¬-Pradesh Odisha coasts, India) around (10.5.2022) and recurve to North-North-eastwards and reach to Northwest Bay of Bengal (off Odisha coast, India). Weather is a few cloud to partly cloudy over the North Bay and cloudy over the Andaman Sea and elsewhere over the Bay of Bengal.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL MORNING OF THE 8 May 2022: Rain or thundershowers will be widespread in Yangon, Ayeyawady, and Taninthayi regions and Kayah State, fairly widespread in (Southern and Eastern) Shan, Kayin and Mon states, scattered in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and Bago regions and isolated in the remaining regions and states. Degree of certainty is (80%).

STATE OF THE SEA: Squall with rough seas are likely at times in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts. Surface wind speed in squall may reach (30-35) mph. Sea will be moderate elsewhere in Myanmar waters. Wave height will be about (8-10) feet in Deltaic, Gulf of Mottama, off and along Mon-Taninthayi Coasts and (5-8) feet off and along Rakhine Coast.

OUTLOOK FOR SUBSEQUENT TWO DAYS: Likelihood of increase of rain in Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay, Bago, Yangon, Ayeyawady and Taninthayi regions and Shan, Kayin, Mon states.

SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

Aerial photo taken on 1 July 2020 shows a view of Fenghua Town of Suiyang County, southwest China's Guizhou Province. **PHOTO: XINHUA/YANG YING**

China to make county towns priority in new phase of urbanization

CHINA has released guidelines demanding various localities across the country promote urbanization with a focus on county towns.

The guidelines, jointly issued by the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the State Council General Office, said the move aims to better meet the needs of rural residents to find jobs and settle down in county towns.

The guidelines list a series of measures including developing competitive industries, creating more jobs in county towns, and strengthening ecological conservation, adding that by 2025, major progress will be seen in the drive.

China's urbanization rate of permanent residents hit 64.72 percent in 2021, according to the National Development and Reform Commission.

The country aims to raise its urbanization rate to 65 per cent during the 2021-2025 period, according to the 14th Five-Year Plan.— Xinhua

India, Pakistan must brace for even worse heatwaves

THE devastating heatwave that gripped India and Pakistan over the last two months is unprecedented, but worse — perhaps far worse — is on the horizon as climate change continues apace, top climate scientists told AFP.

Even without additional global warming South Asia is, statistically speaking, ripe for a "big one" in the same way that California is said to be overdue for a major earthquake, according to research published this week.

Extreme heat across much of India and neighbouring Pakistan in March and April exposed more than a billion people to scorching temperatures well above 40 Celsius (104 Fahrenheit). The hottest part of the year is yet to come.

A volunteer distributes a cold sweet drink to people during a hot summer day, in Amritsar in India on 2 July 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

"This heatwave is likely to kill thousands," tweeted Robert Rohde, lead scientist at Berkeley Earth, a climate science research non-profit. The number of excess deaths, especially among the elderly poor, will only become apparent in hindsight.

Heatwave mortality in India has increased by more than 60 per cent since 1980, according to the country's Ministry of Earth Sciences. But "cascading impacts" on agricultural output, water, energy supplies and other sectors are already apparent, World Meteorological Organization chief Petteri Taalas said this week.—AFP

Microbe-based faux beef could save forests, slash CO2

GRADUALLY replacing 20 per cent of global beef and lamb consumption with meat-textured proteins grown in stainless steel vats could cut agriculture-related CO2 emissions and deforestation in half by 2050, researchers reported Wednesday.

Compared to a current-trends projection for population growth and food demand, swapping half of red meat consumption for so-called microbial proteins would see reductions in tree loss and CO2 pollution of more than 80 per cent, they reported in the journal Nature. "With a relatively small change in the consumption of ruminant meat, greenhouse gas emissions from tropical deforestation can be strongly reduced," lead author Florian Humpenoder, a scientist at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK), told AFP. "This is an important contribution to reaching the Paris Agreement climate targets, with additional co-benefits for other sustainability goals." —AFP

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

UN action plan for clean, affordable energy by 2030 announced

The United Nations launched its Energy Plan of Action on Wednesday to gain clean, affordable energy for all by 2030, a UN spokesman said.

The plan sets out steps for collective action by 30 entities of the world body and international organizations to achieve the massive pledge they made at the High-level Dialogue on Energy last September, said Stephane Dujarric, the chief spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

That commitment included gaining access for 500 million more people to electricity and 1 billion more to clean cooking solutions, the creation of 30 million jobs in renewable energy and energy efficiency by 2025, said Dujarric. Clean, affordable energy by 2030 is crucial to addressing the climate emergency and net-zero emissions by 2050.—Xinhua

Chinese scientists find potential in lunar soil to generate oxygen and fuel

Chinese material scientists have found the soil on the moon may potentially be able to generate oxygen and fuel, a find that signifies more tantalizing possibilities of utilizing lunar resources to further human exploration on the moon or beyond.

The researchers with Nanjing University showed that the lunar sample brought back by China's Chang'e-5 probe contains active compounds that can convert carbon dioxide into oxygen and fuel.

Initially, they hope to design a system that takes advantage of lunar soil and solar radiation, the two most abundant resources on the moon, according to a study published on Thursday in the journal Joule.

After analyzing the Chang'e-5 lunar soil, the team found the sample contains iron-rich and titanium-rich substances, which could work as a catalyst to make oxygen using sunlight and carbon dioxide. The team proposed a strategy using lunar soil to electrolyze water from the moon and the astronauts' life support system into oxygen and hydrogen. The process is powered by sunlight.—Xinhua

PANDEMIC WORLD

Hong Kongers relish beaches reopening as virus outbreak recedes

As other countries began easing pandemic-related restrictions, Hong Kong went in the opposite direction, hewing to a version of China's zero-Covid policy. **PHOTO: AFP/ISAAC LAWRENCE**

FILIPINO domestic worker Marites Saliganan loves getting outdoors on her one day off a week, and after Hong Kong's government lifted a pandemic ban on gathering at beaches on Thursday, she and her friends headed for the sand.

Nestled on the southern side of Hong Kong's main island, the wealthy town of Stanley offers a welcome respite from the city with its low-rise houses and seaside eateries.

But anyone venturing onto the beach in the last seven weeks faced hefty fines, as the city imposed its strictest social distancing measures yet to curb a virus outbreak earlier this year.

"We are so happy because today is the day of reopening the beach," Saliganan, sporting a wide-brimmed hat, told AFP.

While much of the world began adjusting to living with the coronavirus, Hong Kong has gone in the opposite direction, hewing to a lighter version of China's zero-Covid strategy.

A wave of the highly transmissible Omicron variant began tearing through the city's defences in January. It killed more than 9,000, mostly unvaccinated elderly people, and forced the reimposition of painful social distancing curbs that have plunged Hong Kong towards another economic recession.—AFP

Vaccines still protect against new COVID-19 variants: WHO

EXPERTS from the World Health Organization (WHO) emphasized on Wednesday that vaccines are still highly effective against COVID-19, even new variants of the disease emerging in South Africa and the United States, reported Xinhua.

WHO data shows that global cases of COVID-19 are continually declining, with reported weekly deaths at their lowest level since March 2020. However, the Organization's Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus cautioned at a press briefing on Wednesday that these trends don't tell the full story.

"Driven by Omicron sub-variants, we are seeing an increase in reported cases in the Americas and Africa. The South African scientists who identified Omicron late last year have now reported two more Omicron sub-variants, BA.4 and BA.5, as the reason for a spike in cases in South Africa," he said.

"It's too soon to know whether these new sub-variants can cause more severe disease than other Omicron sub-variants, but early data suggests vaccination remains protective against severe disease and death," he added.

According to Maria van Kerkhove from the WHO's Health Emergencies Programme, BA.4 and BA.5 have been detected in a number of countries. The WHO is still evaluating the severity of the two new variants.

However, van Kerkhove said it is not yet possible to confirm whether BA.4 and BA.5 have resulted in increased hospitalizations, as any rise in numbers could be due to a general spike in case numbers in South Africa. Nevertheless, she emphasized: "Vaccines still work incredibly well against preventing severe disease and death."

She also called for monitoring of, and testing for COVID-19 to continue in order for the WHO to be able to provide the public with the most accurate information and advice possible. —Xinhua

A doctor at Novavax labs in Gaithersburg, Maryland on 20 March 2020, works on developing a vaccine for the coronavirus. **PHOTO:: ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOLDS/AFP**

Airline giant IAG cuts loss on Covid recovery

AIRLINE giant IAG, owner of British Airways, said Friday that it narrowed its first-quarter net loss after Covid travel curbs were lifted, and forecast a return to annual profit.

The loss after taxation improved to 787 million euros ($832 million) in the first three months of the year, IAG said in a results statement.

That followed a net loss of 1.1 billion euros in the same part of 2021 when planes were grounded by the coronavirus pandemic.

Revenues more than tripled to 3.4 billion euros.

"The continued easing of government-imposed travel restrictions, particularly in the UK, resulted in improved travel demand, with no noticeable impact from the war in Ukraine," IAG said in the earnings release.

"Quarter one saw strong business travel recovery, with premium leisure remaining strong."

However, airlines generally post losses over the period because it covers the seasonally slower months of the year.

IAG added Friday that seasonal low demand, the Omicron Covid variant and rising costs had weighed on its performance.

Yet the overall proportion of seats filled on flights was better than one year ago as bookings accelerated and economies reopened.

"Demand is recovering strongly in line with our previous expectations," said chief executive Luis Gallego.—AFP

Airline giant IAG, owner of British Airways, said Friday that it narrowed its first-quarter net loss after Covid travel curbs were lifted, and forecast a return to annual profit. **PHOTO: JUSTIN TALLIS/ AFP**

Chinese recombinant protein vaccine effective against COVID-19 in phase-3 human trials: study

A China-developed recombinant protein vaccine against COVID-19 has shown to be safe and effective in the late-stage human trials, according to a study published online in The New England Journal of Medicine on Thursday.

The three-shot vaccine ZF2001 was jointly developed by the Institute of Microbiology under the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Anhui Zhifei Longcom Biopharmaceutical Co. Ltd.

Researchers conducted the Phase-3 trials between 12 December 2020 and 15 December 2021 at 31 clinical centers across Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Pakistan and Ecuador, and one in China. More than 28,000 adults aged 18 and above participated in the tests, with 6.4 per cent of them aged 60-plus. —Xinhua

ECONOMY
WORLD

World food prices fall slightly from record high over Ukraine war: FAO

The modest drop was led by vegetable oil prices, with the FAO's vegetable oil price index down 5.7 per cent in April. **PHOTO: SCOTT OLSON / GETTY IMAGES VIA AFP**

WORLD food prices fell slightly last month after hitting a record in March but remain high due to the Ukraine war, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization said Friday.

International sanctions against Russia as well as export flow disruptions resulting from the 24 February invasion have sparked fears of a global hunger crisis.

Russia and Ukraine, whose vast grain-growing regions are among the world's main breadbaskets, account for a huge share of the globe's exports in several major commodities, including wheat, vegetable oil and corn.

The FAO's food price index, which had reported records for both March and February, dipped 0.8 per cent in April compared to the previous month, the agency said in a statement.

"The small decrease in the index is a welcome relief, particularly for low-income food-deficit countries, but still food prices remain close to their recent highs, reflecting persistent market tightness and posing a challenge to global food security for the most vulnerable," FAO chief economist Maximo Torero Cullen said.

The modest drop was led by vegetable oil prices, with the FAO's vegetable oil price index down 5.7 per cent in April.

However, the FAO said that prices remain very high amid "uncertainties about export availabilities out of Indonesia, the world's leading palm oil exporter".

Indonesia's decision to suspend palm oil exports in the face of domestic shortages has pushed vegetable oil prices to new highs, further tightening a market already on edge due to the war in Ukraine and global warming.—AFP

China fine-tunes regulatory policy to boost property market development

CHINA'S central and local authorities are fine-tuning housing policies to seek a balance between defusing risks and spurring demand, amid efforts to boost the steady and sound development of the property market.

While reiterating the principle that "housing is for living in, not for speculation," a key meeting held last week by the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee called for efforts to improve real estate policies based on local realities.

Giving a shot in the arm to both the demand and supply sides, it urged support for meeting the demand from both first-time home buyers and home upgraders and optimizing regulation over the prepayment for commercial housing.

China's property industry, with a size of 10 trillion yuan (about 1.5 trillion US dollars) and involving scores of subsectors across the supply chain, has been a key underpinning for the economy. Official data showed that the industry's value-added output accounted for 6.8 per cent of the country's gross domestic product in 2021.—Xinhua

Closing the 'escape valve': Venezuela pursues de-dollarization

HAVING opened its arms to the US dollar as an "escape valve" Venezuela is now trying to re-energize its own currency, which has been crippled by devaluation in recent years.

The aim is to incorporate $3 billion circulating on the streets of the South American country into its financial system, but experts warn it is a risky gamble. Distrust in the bolivar due to severe devaluations, demonetization and four years of hyperinflation persists, despite a slow down in price rises and economic recovery following seven years of recession in which GDP fell by 80 per cent. The dollarization, described by President Nicolas Maduro as an "escape valve", alongside an easing of price controls brought an end to the scarcity of bare essentials and the interminable queues for what little was available, such as a bag of rice.—AFP

Soy boon for Argentina as Ukraine war boosts prices

RUSSIA'S war on Ukraine has sent grain prices skyrocketing — a worry for consumers worldwide but potentially a boon for producers like Argentina, which hopes an influx of soybean "agri-dollars" will boost its faltering economy.

South America's third-largest economy is the biggest exporter of soybean meal and oil in the world, and only the United States and Brazil export more soybean grains.

Soy represents nearly a third of Argentina's exports and in 2021 contributed $9 billion to the state coffers.

This year, the sector is expecting record sales of $23.7 billion — about $700 million more than in 2021 — despite a 10 per cent smaller harvest due to severe drought.

"The prospects for the producer are good... There is optimism," said Martin Semino, who sells farming equipment and presides over the Rural Society of Lobos, a fertile agricultural zone southwest of Buenos Aires.

Soy represents nearly a third of Argentina's exports. **PHOTO: AFP/ FILE**

The harvest season is at its height, and workers are labouring from dawn to dusk to clear the fields before the autumn rains arrive.

"Soy is the dollar, the currency of the countryside," Semino told AFP.

In the past, the grain has been a saviour for inflation-troubled Argentina.

A soybean boom in the 2000s is widely considered to have helped the country recover from its worst economic crisis in 2001.—AFP

Cameroon, European Investment Bank sign agreement on funding railway line

CAMEROON and the European Investment Bank (EIB) on Thursday signed an agreement on funding the railway line between Belabo and Ngaoundere in the eastern part of the Central African nation.

Vice-President of the EIB Thomas Ostros began a working visit in Cameroon Thursday, hoping to explore further avenues of economic cooperation between the EU and the Central African nation. During his stay, Ostros met with the country's Prime Minister Joseph Dion Ngute and other senior government officials in Yaounde, the capital of Cameroon, and discussed the prospects for increasing investment.

It is believed that the signing of the agreement during his visit will involve an investment of 80 billion XAF (about 129 million US dollars).—Xinhua

German industry production in March falls due to ongoing supply problems: Destatis

PRODUCTION in Germany's industry in March fell by 3.9 per cent compared to the previous month due to ongoing supply problems, according to preliminary figures published by the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis) on Friday.

The last time there had been a sharper decline was during the first COVID-19 lockdown in Germany in April 2020, when monthly production figures plummeted 18.1 per cent, according to Destatis.

A worker prepares a ladder for delivery in a production hall of German ladder, stool and scaffold-maker Munk Group (or Munk Guenzburger Steigtechnik), at the company's headquarters in Guenzburg, southern Germany, on 25 January 2022. **PHOTO: THOMAS KIENZLE/AFP**

Due to interrupted supply chains resulting from the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict, many German companies were still facing problems completing their orders. 80 per cent of companies currently had to deal with supply problems, according to a study by the ifo Institute.

"Germany, as an export-oriented country, has been disproportionately affected by the trade sanctions against Russia," the Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) said in a statement.

Important intermediate products had become scarce due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the ministry added, pointing to a 14 per cent drop in automotive production in March due to a shortage of wiring harnesses.

Energy production slumped 11.4 on the previous month, following a "marked increase" in February. According to Destatis, fluctuations were "mainly due to changes within energy production from wind power." — Xinhua

Indonesia seizes tanker over palm oil export ban violation

THE Indonesian Navy has seized a tanker that was carrying palm oil out of the country in violation of an export ban, a spokesman said Saturday.

Indonesia, the world's largest producer of palm oil, prohibited its export last week to rein in skyrocketing domestic prices and shortages.

An Indonesian warship intercepted the Singapore-flagged MV Mathu Bhum on Wednesday as it headed for Malaysia, Navy spokesman Agung Prasetiawan said in a press release.

"The ship was carrying... 34 containers containing refined, bleached, deodorized (RBD) palm olein. This is the type of material that is temporarily prohibited for exports," he added.—AFP

Dutch bank ING profits hit by Ukraine war

TOP Dutch bank ING said on Friday that profits dipped by more than half for the first quarter of 2022 as results were hit by Russia's war in Ukraine. The Amsterdam-based lender posted a net profit of 429 million euros ($453 million), down 57.3 per cent year on year from 1.005 billion euros. Total income was also down, falling 2.2 per cent to 4.6 billion euros year on year. ING said in March that it would freeze any new business deals with Russian companies and abide by international sanctions on Moscow.—AFP

Vietnam's footwear export up 12.6 pct in past 4 months

Workers make shoes for export at a workshop of the footwear company in Hanoi, Vietnam, 1 April 2022. **PHOTO: VNA/HANDOUT VIA XINHUA**

VIETNAM raked in more than 7.3 billion US dollars from exporting footwear between January and April this year, witnessing a year-on-year increase of 12.6 per cent, according to the country's Ministry of Industry and Trade on Friday.

Over the months, the country also earned nearly 1.3 billion dollars from exporting handbags, wallets, suitcases, hats and umbrellas, up 21.1 per cent year on year.

In 2021, Vietnam reaped over 17.6 billion dollars from exporting footwear and approximately 3 billion dollars from handbags, up 4.9 per cent and down 4.1 per cent year on year respectively, according to the country's General Statistics Office.— Xinhua

China's box office gets holiday boost, amassing 297 mln yuan

CHINA'S movie box office enjoyed a bounce over the May Day holiday, amassing 297 million yuan (44.77 million US dollars) over the five-day period ending Wednesday.

The amount, though much lower than 1.67 billion yuan generated during the holiday last year, has been regarded as "better than expected" by a China Film News report quoting film industry experts.—Xinhua

The Global New Light of Myanmar
www.gnlm.com.mm

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CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V AEGEAN EXPRESS VOY.NO. (233N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V AEGEAN EXPRESS VOY.NO. (233N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **8-5-2022** 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 CONTINENTAL SHIPPING LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V RESOLUTION VOY.NO. (2212S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V RESOLUTION VOY.NO. (2212S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **8-5-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S SITC CONTAINER LINE CO., LTD

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Havana hotel explosion death toll doubles to 18: Cuban President

EIGHTEEN people, including a pregnant woman and child, died as a result of a powerful explosion that destroyed the Saratoga hotel in Havana on Friday, the Cuban presidential administration said on Saturday.

"Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel thanked friendly countries for the solidarity shown in the face of the Saratoga Hotel accident. According to preliminary figures announced at the meeting, 18 people were killed, including a pregnant woman and child," the administration said after the meeting.

The Cuban authorities said earlier in the day that nine people died and 40 injured as a result of the explosion.—ANI

The Cuban authorities said earlier in the day that nine people died and 40 injured as a result of the explosion. **PHOTO: ANI**

Over 24 million Afghans need humanitarian aid

70 per cent of the Afghans are unable to provide for their basic needs. Afghans visit a market in Kabul on Tuesday. **PHOTO: AFP**

MORE than 24.4 million people are in need of humanitarian aid in Afghanistan–an increase from 18.4 million in 2021, said a report by the US Special Inspector-General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR).

The report states that the Taliban takeover of the country and the resulting cut in international assistance has led to a worsening humanitarian crisis.

70 per cent of the Afghans are unable to provide for their basic needs, SIGAR said in a report to the US congress.

"Some 70 per cent of households reported being unable to cover basic food and non-food needs, reflecting the impact of decline in household incomes," according to the study, citing US State Department figures.

The report adds that people selling their kidneys as evidence of how dire the situation has become.

According to international assessments, Afghanistan has now the highest number of people in emergency food insecurity in the world, with more than 23 million in need of assistance, and approximately 95 per cent of the population having insufficient food consumption.

Of particular concern is the vulnerability of more than four million internally displaced, including people belonging to minorities and over 3.5 million seeking refuge in neighbouring countries.—ANI

S Korean ex-presidential candidate Lee to run in by-election

SOUTH Korea's ruling Democratic Party on Friday picked Lee Jae Myung, who ran in the March 9 presidential race from the party, as a candidate for parliamentary by-elections slated for 1 June.

Lee lost to Yoon Suk Yeol of the main opposition People Power Party in the presidential election after a neck-and-neck race. The DP said Lee will run in the National Assembly by-elections for a seat in a constituency in Gyeyang, Incheon.

The Gyeyang district in the western port city had been represented by former Democratic Party Chairman Song Young Gil, who resigned as a lawmaker and made a bid to become the next mayor of Seoul.

The by-elections will be held concurrently with local elections. Lee will also head the party's campaign for the elections, said Koh Yong Jin, a spokesman for the DP.—Kyodo

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bali to deport Russian couple for nude photos on sacred tree

A Russian influencer and her husband will be deported from Bali after staging a nude photo shoot on a sacred tree in violation of local culture, officials on the Indonesian holiday island said Friday.

Alina Fazleeva, who has thousands of followers on Instagram, posed naked on a 700-year-old banyan tree at a temple in Tabanan district.

The picture, which was taken by her husband Andrey Fazleev, was uploaded to Instagram and went viral, irking Balinese communities.—AFP

US sanctions cannot stop Iran's drone capability: lawmaker

THE United States cannot stop the development of Iran's drone capability by putting embargoes on it, a senior Iranian lawmaker told official news agency IRNA on Friday.

"By sanctioning Iran's drone power, the United States is trying to create Iranophobia in the region," said Mohammad Hassan Asfari, a member of the Iranian parliament, referring to the recent US lawmakers' move to sanction Iran's drone power.

Through these pressures, Washington also seeks to get more concessions from the Islamic republic at the negotiating table in Vienna, said Asfari. But Iran's drone capability is "non-negotiable and unstoppable", he said.—Xinhua

Pro-Marcos misinformation targets main rival in Philippine polls

THE son and namesake of the Philippines' late dictator Ferdinand Marcos is on track to win Monday's presidential poll, after a massive misinformation campaign whitewashed the family's past and smeared his main rival.

Leni Robredo, the incumbent vice-president, is the last obstacle to the controversial clan achieving their goal of returning to the presidential palace they fled in disgrace in 1986 following a popular uprising.—AFP

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

N Korea fires apparent submarine-launched ballistic missile

Missiles are displayed during a military parade to commemorate the 8th Congress of the Workers' Party in Pyongyang on 14 January 2021.
PHOTO: KCNA/KYODO/FILE

NORTH Korea on Saturday fired what is presumed to be a short-range, submarine-launched ballistic missile into the sea off its eastern coast, South Korea's military said, three days before President-elect Yoon Suk Yeol's inauguration.

The apparent SLBM was likely launched from waters near North Korea's eastern port city of Sinpo at around 2:07 pm, according to South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Japanese Defence Minister Nobuo Kishi also said North Korea fired what is believed to be an SLBM, adding it flew about 600 kilometres with an altitude of around 50 km.

It likely landed outside Japan's exclusive economic zone and the Japanese government has received no reports of damage, according to officials.

Kishi said North Korea could complete its preparation by the end of this month to conduct a nuclear test and Japan's Defence Ministry has shared such a view with the United States.

North Korea, which has been conducting a series of missile tests since the beginning of this year, last launched an SLBM in October.

The latest test came three days after Japan and South Korea detected North Korea's test-firing of a ballistic missile from Pyongyang's Sunan area and ahead of the inauguration of the South Korean president-elect on Tuesday.

North Korea's show of force came also as US President Joe Biden is scheduled to visit South Korea and Japan from 20 to 24 May, making it his first trip to Asia since taking office in January 2021.—Kyodo

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CRISIS

Moscow museum chronicles NATO 'cruelty' amid Ukraine campaign

PAINTINGS of wounded children and grieving women line the walls, while loudspeakers spit out the sound of approaching war planes.

Welcome to a Moscow exhibition depicting NATO's "crimes" amid Russia's military campaign in Ukraine.

"NATO. A chronicle of cruelty" opened at the Museum of Contemporary Russian History in Moscow in early April, over a month after President Vladimir Putin sent troops to the pro-Western country.

According to the museum, the display is dedicated to the history of NATO including the United States' atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, despite the Western military alliance being founded only in 1949.

The exhibition lists NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, and US-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. **PHOTO: KIRILL KUDRYAVTSEV/AFP**

It also lists the bloc's bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, US-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as cooperation between Ukraine and NATO "that has led" to the current conflict.

"Every time it's difficult to talk about the crimes committed by NATO troops," guide Yaroslav Polestrov, 46, said.

The Kremlin considers the US-led military bloc an existential threat to Russia and Putin blames Washington for using Ukraine as an instrument to draw Moscow into a conflict.—AFP

Dozens of civilians evacuated from besieged Ukraine plant

FIFTY civilians were evacuated Friday from Mariupol's besieged steelworks, the last pocket of Ukrainian resistance against Russian forces in the city, Kyiv said, but reports of renewed firing cast doubt on a promised truce.

About 200 civilians, including children, had been estimated to still be trapped in the Soviet-era tunnels and bunkers beneath the sprawling Azovstal factory, along with a group of Ukrainian soldiers making their last stand.

Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk, who announced Friday's evacuation of the 50, said the operation would continue Saturday morning.

Russia had earlier announced a daytime ceasefire at the plant for three days, starting Thursday.

But the Ukrainian army says Russian "assault operations" have continued by ground and by air.—Xinhua

G7 leaders will hold video conference with Zelensky on Sunday

LEADERS of the world's top industrialized nations will hold video talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Sunday, a spokeswoman for the German government as acting G7 chair said.

"The German chancellor (Olaf Scholz) will hold the third video conference since the start of the year with his G7 partners," Christiane Hoffmann told reporters on Friday, noting that 8 May is a "historic date marking the end of World War II in Europe".

"It will cover current issues, particularly the situation in Ukraine. Ukrainian President Zelensky will take part and report on the current situation in his country."—AFP

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Here are the latest developments in the war in Ukraine:

New Mariupol mission

A new UN-led rescue mission is under way to evacuate the last civilians still trapped inside a besieged steel plant in Mariupol that has become the devastated city's final holdout against Russian forces, Ukraine says.

About 200 civilians, including children, are estimated to remain in hiding in the Soviet-era tunnels and bunkers beneath the sprawling Azovstal factory, along with hundreds of Ukrainian soldiers.

President Volodymyr Zelensky's office earlier said almost 500 civilians had been evacuated.

Oil embargo a 'red line': Hungary

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban says European Commission head Ursula von der Leyen has crossed "a red line" with a proposed EU Russian oil ban.

Von der Leyen has said the bloc would "phase out Russian supply of crude oil within six months, and refined products by the end of the year". Hungary and Slovakia -- both highly dependent on Moscow's oil exports -- would have until the end of 2023.

"I avoid the word 'veto'," Orban, who has cultivated close ties with Putin, says on state radio, adding the proposal "has been returned to sender, to Madame President, to work on further".

SOURCE: AFP

N. Korea fires apparent submarine-launched ballistic missile

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THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

SPORT

SEA Games: Myanmar to play Timor Leste today

Myanmar team players take their special training in Viet Nam ahead of the SEA Games men's football tourney. **PHOTO: MFF**

MYANMAR men's national football team will play against the Timor Leste team today in group A match of the men's football event of the SEA Games which is being held in Viet Nam.

Team Myanmar match will begin at 3:30 pm Myanmar Standard Time.

In the meantime, host Viet Nam will take on the Philippines at 6:30 pm Myanmar Standard Time.

Timor has lost to the Philippines 0-4 in their opening match.

Given the individual situation, the team Myanmar is likely to win by three points as they have advantages in individual skills, but scoring more goals will help boost their hopes of reaching the semi-finals.

The match between Viet Nam and the Philippines is also likely to be highly competitive.

However, the hosts, who beat Indonesia 3-0, will have a better chance of reaching the semi-finals if they beat the Philippines again.

Myanmar and Timor-Leste have met in the group stage of the 2019 SEA Games, with Myanmar winning by three goals to one. —Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Laos to send over 400 athletes to 31st SEA Games in Viet Nam

Hanoi began counting down 31 days left until the opening of the 31st Southeast Asian Games (SEA Games 31) at a ceremony held at Ly Thai To Statue and Hoan Kiem lake area on 11 April, which attracted the attendance of more than 3,000 athletes and local people. **PHOTO: VNA**

MORE than 400 athletes from Laos are to participate in the 31st Southeast Asian Games in Viet Nam from 12 to 23 May.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence, Chansamone Chanyalath, and Minister of Education and Sports, Phout Simmalavong, held a press conference in Laos' capital Vientiane on Thursday to announce the country's participation at the Games.

Laos is to send teams to compete in petanque, billiards, kickboxing, Lao and Thai boxing, wushu, cycling, taekwondo, Sepak Takraw, pencak silat, karate, judo, professional wrestling, archery, running, weightlifting, vovinam and swimming.

Other sports at the Games are badminton, football, tennis, volleyball, golf, gymnastics, E-sports, shooting, table tennis, body building and dance sports. Lao wushu team, comprising five male and two female athletes, is expected to bring home a gold medal.

In 2019, Lao athletes competed in 24 sports at the 30th SEA Games in the Philippines, winning a gold medal in kickboxing, as well as five silver and 29 bronze medals. — Xinhua

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

(a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.

(b) To emphasize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).

(c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy.

2. Economic affairs

(a) To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern techniques and strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.

(b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.

(c) To promote and support local businesses to create employment opportunities and increase domestic production.

3. Social affairs

(a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.

(b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National peoples and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national characteristics.

(c) To enhance the health, fitness and education quality of the entire nation.

Seven teams to compete in SEA Games women's football tournament

WITH the Indonesia team resigning, there will be seven teams left in the women's football tournament of the Viet Nam SEA Games, sports authorities said.

Previously, the eight teams were scheduled to be divided into two groups of four, but Indonesia withdrew, leaving only three teams in Group A and four teams in Group B.

According to the fixtures, host Viet Nam, the Philippines, and Cambodia are placed in Group A while Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore and Laos are falling in Group B.

Myanmar team matches will be played on 10, 13, and 15 May.

Myanmar will take on Laos on 10 May, the Thai team on 13 May, and Singapore team on 15 May.

Group A matches will be played on 9,11 and 14 May.

Semifinal matches will be held on 18 May while the third-place match and final will be on 21 May. —Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Man Utd concede four in dismal defeat at Brighton

Manchester United's dismal season hit a new low as Brighton condemned them to a 4-0 defeat that ended their hopes of finishing in the Premier League's top four on Saturday.

United have endured a host of humiliations in one of their most embarrassing seasons for decades and this lacklustre loss was among the very worst.

Ralf Rangnick's side were routed by goals from Moises Caicedo, Marc Cucurella, Pascal Gross and Leandro Trossard at the Amex Stadium. — AFP