

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Friday, 3 June 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.

Thriving trees can bring health and happiness to society: Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing speaks on the occasion of the monsoon tree-planting event of families of the office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army, Navy and Air) for 2022 in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

FAMILIES of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army, Navy and Air) and relevant military commands hold the monsoon tree-growing ceremonies as of 2011 to contribute to the environmental conservation and climatic conditions, create shade and support the State economy on one hand.

Yesterday, the first monsoon-tree growing ceremony of families of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army, Navy and Air) for 2022 took place near Yezin Dam of Zeyathiri Township, attended by Chairman of the State Administration Council

Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing who planted a teak sapling.

Aim to ensure the sustainability of forest resources, conserve the ecosystem and enable the people to actively participate in forest conservation tasks

In his address, the Senior General said tree growing directly or indirectly benefits the growers as well as creates shelter for the people. The Tatmadaw holds the tree-growing ceremonies with

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Invitation to basic education staff absent from duties extended

THE Information Team Committee of the State Administration Council invited teachers and education staff who have been absent due to intimidation, participation in protests, and travel difficulties and concerns to report to the nearest Township Education Offices before 31-5-2022 so as to resume their teaching duties.

To date, 2,482 teachers have contacted there.

For teachers who wish to report but are unable to report within the deadline due to transport and other difficulties, the reporting deadline has been extended to 7-6-2022.

Information Team
State Administration Council

Peace delegation led by UWSP Vice-Chair leaves Nay Pyi Taw



The UWSP Vice-Chairman-led delegation leaves Nay Pyi Taw.

AS Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing called for peace talks, a peace delegation led by Vice-Chairman of the United Wa State Party (UWSP) U Lau Yaku left Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning after the peace talks in Nay Pyi Taw.

On leaving the Horizon Lake View Resort in Nay Pyi Taw, the delegation was seen off by officials and members of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee, departmental officials and ethnic people of the Department of Fine Arts and locals by holding miniature State flags and placards bearing: “Perpetual peace is the real aspiration of the people”, “Achieving peace is the true desire of all citizens”, “Let’s hold talks for peace in the Union”, “Only the ethnic nationalities are in unity, stability, peace and tranquillity will be achieved”. — MNA

Earthquake News

A slight earthquake of magnitude (4.1) Richter Scale with its epicentre inside Myanmar (about (21) miles northwest of Kunhing), latitude 21.53°N, longitude 98.21°E, depth (10) kilometres, about (52) miles northeast of Namsang seismological observatory was recorded at (23)hr (45)min (26) sec M.S.T on 2 June 2022. —DEPARTMENT OF METEOROLOGY AND HYDROLOGY

Department of Meteorology and Hydrology
Seismological Division
Nay Pyi Taw
Tel 067-3411269 Fax 067-3411253

Earthquake Information	
Date	02.06.2022
Time (MST)	23:45:26
Magnitude	4.1 (Slight)
Latitude	21. 53N
Longitude	98.21E
Depth	10km
Region	About (21) miles NW of Kunhing.

MYANMAR GAZETTE

Heads of Service Organizations confirmed

1. The State Administration Council has confirmed the appointment of the following persons as Heads of Service Organizations shown against each of their names on expiry of a one-year probationary period.
- | Name | Appointment |
|-------------------------|---|
| (1) Dr Tin Tin Htwe | Rector
Yangon University of Economics
Department of Higher Education
Ministry of Education |
| (2) Dr Thida Kyu | Rector
Monywa University of Economics
Department of Higher Education
Ministry of Education |
| (3) Dr Khin San San Win | Rector
Mandala University
Department of Higher Education
Ministry of Education |
2. The State Administration Council has appointed U Zaw Phyo Win, Deputy Director-General of the Strategic Studies and Training Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Director-General of the same department on probation from the date he assumes charge of his duties.

7 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 2 June, total figure rises to 613,355

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **613,355** after **7** new cases were reported on 2 June 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, **592,312** have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll stands at **19,434** without more casualties.—MNA

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Tatmadaw is also steering and monitoring to be straightforward on building the Union Republic rooted in democracy and the federal system having peace and tranquillity

HAVING duty consciousness among the country and people, loyalty and a variety of selfless performances with a spirit of goodwill by Tatmadaw have been witnessed in the past. Currently, Tatmadaw is also steering and monitoring to be straightforward on building the Union Republic rooted in democracy and the federal system having peace and tranquillity, and community development. I would like to highlight that every effort partaken by Tatmadaw tend to be beneficial for our motherland and ethnic people, and Tatmadaw also performs the tasks with a spirit of goodwill to be able to stand rigidly as a country among the world.

(Excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of the State Administration Council Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Maha Thray Sithu Min Aung Hlaing at the passing out parade of the 8th intake of Graduate Female Cadet Course on 22 December 2021)

Thriving trees can bring health and happiness to society: Senior General

FROM PAGE-1
the aim of ensuring the sustainability of forest resources, conserving the ecosystem and enabling the people to actively participate in the forest conservation tasks. Yezin region suffered from the hot season in the past. Thanks to growing trees, now the region has the chance to taste the fine weather and greening results.

All must cooperate in the establishment of firewood in regions and states to try to successfully thrive all saplings
In order to reduce reliance on natural forests, each village is ordered to have at least two



The Senior General and wife grow the teak saplings.

acres of firewood plantation in regions and states. Just growing trees is not enough, and it is necessary to nurture the plants for growth. Relevant departments need to make efforts for thriving all saplings in cooperation with the people.

As the country faces a declining area of forest coverage year by year, it is necessary to restrict extreme extraction of forest products, illegal timber logging and cultivation of slash and burn farms. The lifestyle of

the people must be uplifted due to the larger number of wood-based infrastructures. These must be in conformity with the current era.

Continuous efforts must be made to perpetually take pride in the emergence of the greening State
Thriving trees can bring health and happiness to society. It is necessary to reduce wood-based fields as much as possible so as to contribute to the prosperity of the State on the other hand.

Senior General and wife plant a teak sapling
Then, the Senior General and wife grew a teak sapling. Likewise, the SAC Vice-Chairman Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Commander-in-Chief (Army) and wife, Union ministers and their wives, and party planted saplings in the set places. The Senior General, wife and party then viewed round cultivation of saplings by Tatmadaw members and families.

As the country faces a declining area of forest coverage year by year, it is necessary to restrict extreme extraction of forest products, illegal timber logging and cultivation of slash and burn farms. The lifestyle of the people must be uplifted due to the larger number of wood-based infrastructures. These must be in conformity with the current era.

172,749 precious, perennial and shade saplings grew around Yezin Dam from 2011 to first time in 2022
Today's first tree-growing ceremony of families of the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army, Navy and Air) have planted 2,152 teak saplings, 1,076 gum-kilo plants and 1,076 wind-break Manjansha plants, totalling 4,304 saplings. They have cultivated 172,749 precious, perennial and shade saplings around Yezin Dam from 2011 to 2022.

The whole Tatmadaw planted 216,107 saplings today

Likewise, relevant military commands held the monsoon tree-growing ceremonies—11,435 plants in Nay Pyi Taw Command, 18,128 in Northern Command, 10,497 in North-East Command, 13,277 in Eastern Command, 14,300 in Eastern Central Command, 29,600 in Triangle Region Command, 12,095 in South-East Command, 12,474 in Coastal Region Command, 15,128 in Yangon Command, 6,355 in South-West Command, 17,874 in Western Command, 10,065 in North-West Command, 26,666 in Central Command and 13,909 in Southern Command. — MNA

COVID-19 vaccination underway for students at reopened basic education schools



Union Ministers and dignitaries views the school classroom in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

UNION Minister for Education Dr Nyunt Pe, Union Minister for Health Dr Thet Khaing Win, Council Dr Maung Maung Naing, Deputy Minister for Edu-

cation U Zaw Win, and officials visited No 5 Basic Education High School in Zabuthiri Township and No 18 Basic Education High School in Dekkhinathiri Township in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

During the visits, Union ministers and party observed enjoyable and peaceful study of teachers and students and provided the necessary assistance in the school-based COVID-19 vaccination of students from 5 to 12 years old, which was carried out with the cooperation between officials and health workers.

Similarly, Chairman Dr Maung Maung Naing of the Nay Pyi Taw Council also visited No 1 Basic Education High School in Pyinmana Township, No (3) Basic Education High School in Pobbathiri Township, No 12 Basic Education High School in Ottarathiri Township and distributed masks to students and gave necessary instructions for the vaccination of the students.

In Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory, a total of 190,200 students are currently studying at 757 basic education schools, 28 monastic schools, and 57 private schools, which have been reopened. It is reported that 109,682 students between the age of 5 and 12 will be vaccinated against COVID-19. — MNA

15th Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia Governing Board Meeting held

DEPUTY Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations and Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) Governor for Myanmar U Than Aung Kyaw joined the 15th ERIA Governing Board Meeting which was held via video-conferencing at the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Nay Pyi Taw.

The meeting was attended by ERIA governors who are deputy ministers, permanent secretaries, director-generals and professors from ASEAN Member States, Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and New Zealand, and ERIA academic advisory council members, ASEAN Secretary-General and senior officials also joined the meeting. The meeting was chaired by Professor Dr Cielito F. Habito from Ateneo de Manila University of the Philippines.

At the opening session, Professor Dr Cielito F. Habito, Chairperson of the ERIA Governing Board, Professor Hidetoshi Nishimura, President of ERIA and Dato Paduka Lim Jock Hoi, Secretary-General of ASEAN gave the remarks.

After that, Chief Economist of ERIA, Prof Fukunari Kimura presented the impacts of recent global developments on the ASEAN and East Asia region, and Senior Policy Fellow of ERIA, Prof Jun Arima presented the East Asia energy policy research roadmap for 2022-2023. Then, ERIA governors exchanged views on the impacts of global developments on the ASEAN and East Asia region and gave guidance on ERIA's 2022 activities.

At the meeting, the deputy minister appreciated the ERIA's achievements for 2021 and the proposal for 2022. Regarding the implementation of



The fifteenth ERIA Governing Board Meeting is in progress online.

the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement, he mentioned that Myanmar already entered into force bilaterally with 10 members of RCEP countries, and Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar have been granted transition periods to fulfil the commitments of some RCEP provisions. Therefore, he requested ERIA to provide the capacity building programme for Myanmar, especially in institutional and legal capacity enhancement within the transition period.

Officials from Foreign Economic Relations Department also attended the meeting. — MNA

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Korean Air (KE) to resume YGN-Seoul-YGN flights on 6 July

KOREAN Air (KE) which has been suspended for more than two years due to the COVID-19 outbreak, will resume on 6 July. The airlines will resume Yangon-Seoul-Yangon weekly flights every Wednesday from 6 July. From 17 April, when international flights and tourists were welcomed back to Myanmar, to the end of April, there were 6,455 arriving passengers and 9,593 departing passengers, according to the Department of Civil

Aviation. In addition, it is reported that Thai Smile airlines will resume on 1 June, Air Asia on 3 June, and Nok Air on 1 July, respectively. The Myanmar National Airlines is also flying regularly to Singapore, Bangkok, and Kuala Lumpur, and the MAI is flying to Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Tokyo, Singapore, Seoul, Guangzhou, Dubai, Phnom Penh, and Kolkata on scheduled days. — TWA/GNLM



A Korean Air aircraft is seen along with its flight attendants.

Kawthoung-Ranong border reopens on 1 June



THE Kawthoung-Ranong border post reopened on 1 June after more than two years of closure. Myanmar and Thailand have agreed to allow the people from the two countries to stay two-night three days with a border pass in Ranong, a town in southern Thailand. Holders of PV passports, those who are going to study in Thailand, and those who have had a three-month visa from the Thai Embassy in Yangon are now able to go to Thailand through Kawthoung. As a travel expense, THB 500 for a boat fare

from Kawthoung to Ranong, K300 for a stamp in Myanmar and THB150 for Thailand. Passport holders will not be required to pay THB2,000 as the deposit, while those who will visit Thailand for seven or 15 days will be required to pay the deposit and they will be able to withdraw it when they arrive back in Kawthoung, according to Ma Win Yi, a Ranong resident. On 24 May 222 Myanmar workers were sent to Thailand under the MoU system through the Kawthoung-Ranong border. — TWA/GNLM

About 220 shelters built in event of natural disasters in 11 regions/states

TO provide shelters for the people in the event of natural disasters, a total of 219 disaster-resistant buildings have been built in 11 regions and states, said Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun, SAC Information Team Leader, at the 15th press conference of the State Administration Council. “When it comes to cyclone news, the people are informed through the media; It is also necessary for the people to follow the precautionary measures of the relevant organizations; They should know the type and the route of the cyclone; The Chairman of the State Administration Council stressed to publish the cyclone information,” he said. The government has set up 134 relief warehouses in various regions, including Nay Pyi Taw, to carry out disaster

relief work, and relief supplies are stored in advance for respective households. Of 219 shelters, 23 are under construction. Motorboats and life jackets are made in advance for emergency response, search, rescue, and evacuation in the event of a natural disaster. “As of May 2022, 496 motorboats have been deployed where needed. The Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services has ordered the regiments and units to respond to the natural disaster immediately without having to wait for the above order,” Maj-Gen Zaw Min Tun added. — TWA/GNLM



The MoSWRR coordination meeting was held on 1 May to build shelters.

Dealers eye profits for surging onion prices

AS the price of onion becomes high in the Yangon market, it brings benefits to the onion brokers a lot, according to merchants of the Bayintnaung market. “Today, the onion price is high at Bayintnaung wholesale. The price is K1,075 per viss of large size onion. Seikphyu onion is priced at K550-775-900-925. The

brokers get many profits,” said Ko Aung, an onion trader from the Naungpinlay Market. On 1 June, Pakokku market received 76,000 viss of onion and all were sold out at K500-650-700-925 per viss. The Seikphyu market also received 15,000 viss of onion and sold at K475-550-685-775 per viss while 70,000 viss to Myingyan market and sold at

K900 per viss. “The two sizes of large onion are on sale at K1,000 per viss at Monywa market. There are only 400 visses to the market this year although it received a million visses of onion last year,” said Ko Zaw Lin, onion importer to Pakokku wholesale centre. Although the Pakokku wholesale centre received about

200,000 viss of onion on 23 June 2021, the onion from Pale was priced at K360 per viss while onion from Yaw was K335 per viss, according to the data of the wholesale centre. The Seikphyu onion was priced at 175-300-350 per viss in the Yangon market on 1 June 2021, according to the data of the centre.

“The Myittha onion, not the kept ones, was priced at K800-1,100-1,400 per viss,” said purchaser Ko Chit Ko. In 2022, the price of summer-season alone gyi htate sa onion was only K850 per viss in the Yangon market recently and it became K1,000 per viss as the price surged in the countryside. — TWA/GNLM

Over 91% of students joyfully study at 3,207 schools in Yangon



Students are seen learning peacefully at the BEHS No 1 Latha Township.

A total of 91.46 per cent of students were joyfully studying in 3,207 basic education schools in Yangon Region yesterday. There are 2,759 basic education schools, 229 monastic schools, and 219 private schools in 44 townships located in the Yangon Region, where a total of 732,034 students are currently studying.

COVID-19 disease prevention and clean-up of school environments are provided to enable students to study comfortably during the school opening season, and the government has distributed free textbooks, stationery, notebooks, and one

primary school uniform to each student. The Yangon Region government provided teachers and students with masks.

“When schools open today, teachers are happy to see their students. We are also delighted at seeing the happiness of the teachers. It is gratifying to see the parents of the students at the entrance of the school with happy smiles as they send their children to school,” said U Kyaw Moe Tun, an education officer at the Yangon Region Basic Education Department.

Yesterday, basic education schools were opened in the re-

gions and states at the same time. 800,395 students were enrolled and 91.46 per cent of them attended the schools in Yangon Region.

— Aung Myint (IRPD)/GNLM



At the BEHS No 1 Bahan Township. **PHOTOS: KANU**



Schools reopened in Nay Pyi Taw for 2022-2023 Academic Year

THE government set school enrolment week for the 2022-2023 Academic Year from 26 May to 1 June and reopened the basic education schools (primary, middle, high) across the nation yesterday.

Similarly, the schools were opened in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and the teachers conducted the health-related measures at the entrance of the schools.

Headmistress Daw Yamin Thu of No (8) BEHS said, “There were only about 1,000 students in the previous year and it did not exceed 1,000. Now, we expect

there would be about 1,200 students this year and there will be more enrollments. We will admit the enrollment of students during the school opening period until there is no restriction. We have enough classrooms if the number of enrollments is high. We made preparations at schools on 15 May for school enrollments. We have a medical room for students. The students who cannot make enrollment for two successive years miss two classes. Therefore, I want them to enrol on any situation.”

The government did not collect any charges for school enrollments and provided free education, stationaries and school uniforms to the students.

“Ninety per cent of high school students attend our school in addition 90 per cent of middle school students and 95 per cent of primary students. There are 1,231 students who enrolled at our school as of today. There are 1142 students today and so it shows 93 per cent of attendance. We cooperate with the officials and parents for the



Headmistress Daw Yamin Thu



Headmistress Daw Khin Myint Yi.

children who are not afford to go to school for various reasons. We admit the enrollment of students during the school opening

(7) BEHS.

Officials of the Ministry of Education arranged the furniture in classrooms following COVID-19 health rules, timetables, school ferries and preventive measures for COVID-19 in school compounds.

The traffic police, township officials, Myanmar Fire Brigade and Myanmar Police Force members conducted necessary measures for road safety during school hours in Nay Pyi Taw. There are 842 schools in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area — 757 basic education schools, 28 monastic schools and 57 private schools — and a total of 158,525 students attended the schools yesterday.

— Aung Thant/GNLM



Schoolchildren are seen joyfully playing at the school in Nay Pyi Taw. **PHOTOS: KO KO HTEIN**



At the BEHS No 6 Nay Pyi Taw.

school-age children to achieve their learning opportunities. We also urged the township officials to urge the people to send the children to school as there are

days. We distribute stationeries free as we have free education. The students attend the schools peacefully today,” said Daw Khin Myint Yi, Headmistress of No

Schools kick off new academic year, students return to schools in Mandalay Region

STUDENTS are now happily and peacefully back in school in Mandalay Region as all schools across the country are reopened on 2 June for the 2022-2023 Academic Year following the health protocols for the COVID-19 issued by the Ministry of Health.

The handwash basins are installed on the school premise. All the students and the teachers are mandatory to strictly adhere to the health guidelines and assigned teachers to measure body temperatures and check

dents this academic year is up by 60,000 compared to the year-ago period. Schools were prepared in line with health guidelines for the COVID-19. Furthermore, under the guidance of regional government, authorities, in co-operation with the parents, are controlling school premises, taking duties for security concerns and ensuring no outsiders enter the school premises”.

There is no deadline for school enrolment. We would accept the enrolment of the



Parent U Aye Min



Headmaster Dr Than Htike Soe



Deputy Director-General U San Aung

encourage the parents to make the children return to school, he added.

Headmaster Dr Than Htike

curricula, there will be no flaw in our education system. For the COVID-19 precaution, students in kindergarten are vaccinated today. The children must be in

U Aye Min, a parent also shared his opinion that “education plays a crucial role in the children’s lives and parents are making them pursue education. Education is of vital importance in state-building as well. As the young people will lead the country in future, we need to educate them. I feel delighted with fellow parents who came to enrol their children in school. I like to call them to enrol their children”.

There is no school fee charged for enrollment. Those who joined enrollment week (26 May-1 June) have enjoyed free education. School textbooks and stationery are provided free of charge as well. Moreover, school uniforms will be contributed within the school year.



Schoolchildren are pictured returning to schools happily.



the students whether they are wearing protective masks and face shields and washing hands systematically or not.

Deputy Director-General U San Aung of the Mandalay Region Education Office stated, “Basic education schools were reopened on 2 June and school enrollment date was set between 26 May and 1 June. We have admitted over 580,000 students so far. The number of stu-

students today. The COVID-19 situation forced the school to shut down. Consequently, children were kept away from class. School closing affected the children, learning opportunities and mental health. The State laid down free education policy for basic education and encouraged all the children to enrol at schools. The State has a plan to provide school uniforms for children as well. I cordially

Soe of BEHS 16 in Chanayethazan Township remarked, “The number of students grew this year. We are accepting the enrollment of students this month. Nearly 3,000 students are attending the school. We are trying to drive the education momentum. What a surprising thing for the current academic year is having three new curricula in line with international standards. When the students are adapted to new

school and nothing should take them away from the school. This being so, I cordially invite the students.”

To create a fun and enjoyable school environment for students, officials concerned from the Ministry of Education and township CSOs undertook necessary measures to keep the school premises clean and maintain a distance in the classroom setting.

Traffic police are also ensuring road safety in the schools that are connected to main roads in Mandalay city. The respective township administration teams, members of the fire brigade and police force are taking security guard duties as well.

There is a total of 4,268 basic education schools, 241 private schools and 135 monastic schools in the Mandalay Region. — Maung Aye Chan/ GNLM

Daily imports of essential anti-COVID-19 equipment conducted in smooth process

THE Ministry of Commerce supervises the import of essential medical supplies as well as anti-COVID-19 devices critical to the COVID-19 prevention, control and treatment activities through border trade posts, international airports and seaports.

A company imported one tonne of disposable face masks by a vehicle via the Muse border trade zone yesterday.

Officials from relevant departments provided necessary facilities in order to beef up the standard operating procedures-SOP for the import process.

The public can browse the Ministry’s Website — www.commerce.gov.mm — for notifications on the importation of medicines and related accessories. — MNA



Imported anti-Covid supplies are checked at the Chinshwehaw border post.

Try to actually understand the nature of life in the secular world

AS UNPRECEDENTED material development can be seen throughout the world, all the global peoples are chasing these developments steadfastly so as to enjoy the fruits of improvement in all aspects. Truly, everybody prefers to possess good things, better things and the best ones. So, it cannot be said their behaviours would be wrong. It is because they all are people from the secular world.

Realistically, the secular world is based on materials. It is naturally true that all the global peoples spend their valuable

In truth, the wealth is much better than the poorness. Wealth is not a problem among the global people. But they should understand that the wealth in money without having an untroubled state of mind is a problem for all. Without possessing the advancements in materials, the state of peace of mind is the best for all.

the paper for materials they would possess. Indeed, just a time of signing deceives them to seem the possession of something.

In truth, the wealth is much better than the poorness. Wealth is not a problem among the global people. But they should understand that the wealth in money without having an untroubled state of mind is a problem for all. Without possessing the advancements in materials, the state of peace of mind is the best for all.

As such, all the people have a chance and try hard to meet the chance for utilizing their lives as they like. Otherwise, the lives will utilize them as much as possible. Indeed, all global people should hope for happiness in their lives with the contents and a state of peace of mind.

Significant legal maxims and principles

By U KHIN MAUNG
(A retired diplomat)

INTRODUCTION What is law?

“Nobody is above the law”, and “equality before the law.”

1. Law is the regime that orders human activities and relations through the systematic application of the force of a politically organized society or social pressure, backed by force, in such a society. It is the legal system'. Under Myanmar culture and civilization, the law is everybody's concern, everybody's business. There is an old saying in Myanmar: If freely translated, I think it may read: “a man may not live hundred years long, but he may be faced with over a hundred cases or problems 2. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines the term “law” as follows: -
“Law is the whole system of rules that everyone in a country or system must obey”. Thus, there is a legal maxim or principle:

Significant legal maxims and principles

1. Law is so wide, so delicate, so demanding, so difficult a subject that nobody could claim that he knows all the best about the laws. As such, may I, with some sort of legal background, present to you some of the significant legal maxims and principles as follows: -
 - (1) The rule of law, law and order
 - (2) Equality before the law, nobody is above the law.
 - (3) The letter of the law, the spirit of the law.
 - (4) Ignorance of the law is no excuse
 - (5) Conflict of laws

1. The rule of law, law and or-

der

The incumbent government is not democratically elected. But together with the people, our incumbent government is carrying out a variety of tremendous tasks. And one of those tremendous tasks, I would like to present to you, with pride and glory as an ordinary citizen is, about the democratic people's government's noble aim and vision to set up a democratic federal union. And in connection with this article, may I present to you a relevant quotation as follows: “The first essential condition for making democracy secure in our lives” is to base all our activities, firmly on the rule of law. There are never two sets of law, one for those within and another for those outside the ruling party. Whoever breaks the laws, must take the consequences. The rule of law and equality before the law must prevail. Law and order are often equated with the rule of law, and in this equation, the punitive and deterrent functions

of law tend to be overemphasized”.

2. Equality before the law. Nobody is above the law

3. Regarding this legal maxim, I would like to quote a British author Fielding Hall's impression of Burmese (Myanmar) people, mentioned in his book. “The soul of a people”. The learned author observed that “the Burmese are a community of equals”, in a sense that has probably never been known elsewhere”. And according to our traditional justice system, “the King was the mighty fountain-head of justice, though he was not himself above the law”.

4. Well, in explaining this legal maxim, “equality before the law” may I also mention its definition in Black's Law Dictionary” as follows:
“Equality before the law” means the status or condition of being treated according to regularly established norms of justice” 1. And many constitutional laws prescribe the notion that all persons

are subject to the ordinary law of the land; administered by the ordinary law court and officials are not exempt from the general duty of obedience to the law3. And with reference to this legal maxim, may I present to you from the collection of my memories something about diplomatic immunity. Diplomatic immunity is the general exemption of diplomatic agents from the operation of local law or the law of the country where he is serving. But this immunity or exemption means only from procedural matters and not from legal liabilities. So, if a diplomatic agent had committed offences in the receiving state he would be declared as a “persona non-grata” and he would be called back by the sending state and then legal action would be taken against him. In essence, nobody is above the law.

3. The letter of the law, the spirit of the law

“The letter of the law” means the strictly literal meaning of the

law, rather than the intention or policy behind it. The spirit of the law means the general meaning or purpose of the law, as opposed to its literal content. So, the learned lawyers would like to advise and assert that when studying and applying the law, both the letter and spirit of the law should be studied and applied.

4. Ignorance of the law is no excuse

As stated in the introduction, the law is everybody's business', everybody's concern. Nobody could argue that I have committed such an act or such an offence, just because I do not know the law. Lack of knowledge about a legal requirement or prohibition is never an excuse in a criminal charge. In Latin, “ignorantia juris non excusal”.

5. Conflict of laws

A difference between the laws of a state or between the laws of different states or countries is

known as a conflict of laws. If there is a conflict of laws within a state, the later law shall prevail over the earlier law. And if there is a conflict between the laws of a state party to a convention and the stipulations of the convention, then those of the convention shall prevail.

Conclusion

To sum up, I would like to quote some relevant words of wisdom from our legal and literary giant Dr Maung Maung who mentioned in his book “Law and Custom in Burma and the Burmese Family” as follows: “Law is founded on morality and morality finds its foundation in the moral integrity of the individual. Law is not or must not be reduced to mere words in statute books and legal decisions, but the law is or should be an active, ceaseless social process that runs like a nerve system in the living society, and the bloodstream of law needs to be constantly renewed and nourished so that it may accommodate the

change in its continuity, youth in its age.” Our incumbent government is carrying out tremendous tasks, together with the people. These noble tasks include setting up a democratic federal union. And to quote two of the State Administration Council Nine objectives of political affairs “to build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine democratic multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.” “To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy.” So, we need a new free and fair election under our 2008 Constitution. What do you say, sir? Thank you.

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- (3) Law and customs in Burma and the Burmese Family.

Dr Maung Maung, B.L (Rangoon), J.S.D (Yale), LL.D (Utrecht), of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister-at-law.

Pandemic hinders efforts to achieve universal energy access by 2030

The findings are from the 2022 edition of Tracking SDG 7: The Energy Progress Report, which monitors global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 7) of ensuring affordable modern energy supply for everyone by 2030.

THE COVID-19 pandemic has slowed the progress towards universal access to electricity and clean cooking fuels and technology, according to a UN-sponsored report published on Wednesday.

Globally, 733 million people lack access to electricity, and 2.4 billion still cook using fuels that are harmful to their health and the environment.

The findings are from the 2022 edition of Tracking SDG 7: The Energy Progress Report, which monitors global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 7) of ensuring affordable modern energy supply for everyone by 2030.

The study was produced by UN entities and partners, known as the SDG 7 custodian agencies, who urge governments and policymakers to step up action.

The impacts of COVID-19, such as lockdowns and supply chain disruptions, have affected progress towards SDG 7.



The report discovered that renewable energy was the only energy source that grew during the pandemic despite continued disruptions in economic activity and supply chains. Solar panels and a mini wind powered turbine are seen for walkway lights sits along the Marina bay overlooking the skyscrapers of Singapore on 26 April 2016. PHOTO: ROSLAN RAHMAN/FILE

Those countries that are most vulnerable have been hit hardest. In Asia and Africa, almost 90 million people who previously had access to electricity cannot afford to pay for their basic energy needs.

Africans remain the least electrified in the world, with 568 million without access to electricity. The percentage of people without electricity in Sub-Saharan Africa rose from 71 per cent in 2018 to 77 per cent in 2020, while most other regions declined.

Moreover, the progress in access to clean cooking fuels and technologies, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, wasn't enough to keep pace with population growth.

The report discovered that renewable energy was the only energy source that grew during the pandemic despite continued disruptions in economic activity and supply chains.

Despite this, countries most in need of electricity have been left behind – a

situation exacerbated by the fact that international financial flows declined for the second consecutive year.

SDG 7 also includes targets towards energy efficiency. From 2010 to 2019, global annual improvements in energy intensity averaged around 1.9 per cent, which is well below the levels needed to both meet the targets and to make up for lost ground.

The SDG 7 custodians are IRENA and the International Energy Agency, the United Nations Statistics Division, the World Bank, and the World Health Organization.

International community and policymakers were urged to preserve gains towards SDG 7, and to continue working towards affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all. The focus should remain on countries most in need of assistance, according to the report.

SOURCE: AFP

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Illegal timbers, fertilizers, fuel oil, foodstuffs, consumer goods and vehicles seized



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

A combined inspection team conducted inspections and captured 420 gallons of illegal fuel worth K4,074,000 and a vehicle (approximately K13,800,000) that carried these illegal items on 31 May. The action was taken under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law.

Moreover, on 1 June, the on-duty inspection team made inspections at the Mayanchaung Permanent Checkpoint and

confiscated K3,124,000 worth of foodstuffs that showed no official documents from an express bus. The action was taken under the Customs Law.

On 2 June, a combined team under the management of the Mon State Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force captured 2.7114 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K271,140 on the Chaunghngak-wa-Tayana Road in Kyaikmaraw Township and action was taken under the Forest Law.

Similarly, on the same day, a team led by the General Administration Department seized 380 bags of illegal fertilizers worth

K13,300,000 from a truck and action was taken under the Export/Import Law.

On the same day, the on-duty team at the Kawkareik (Tada-kyoe) Checkpoint captured two sets of air-conditioners worth K600,000 and various sandals worth K1,800,000 that showed no official documents from a vehicle and action was charged under the Customs Law.

Thus, five arrests worth approximately K36,969,140 were made on 31 May, 1 and 2 June, according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee. — MNA

Drugs seized in some townships across Myanmar

A combined inspection team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force stopped and searched a motorbike driven by Htun Myint Oo accompanied by Ma Nyunt Nyunt Htwe (aka) Mi An in Mongsai Township on 30 May at noon. They captured 66 kilograms of heroin.

At 6:30 pm on the same day, Police Force examined a motorbike driven by Htet Zaw Moe (alias) Mae Lone on the Hpa-an-Eindu Road in Hpa-an Township and seized 4,000 stimulant tablets.

In addition, at 6:30 pm on 30 May, the Anti-Drug Police Force searched a passenger vehicle driven by Thant Zin Aung with Nyan Phone Myint and Thant Zin aboard on the Pulaw Bridge in Pulaw Township and confiscated 200,000 stimulant tablets.

Similarly, a combined team consisting of members of the security force examined a Toyota Mark II car on the Mandalay- Lashio Road in Nawngkhio Township at 5:00 am on 31 May. They captured 8,000 stimulant tablets from passenger Ko Ye (aka) Myint Naing Oo.

Moreover, at 6:30 pm on the same day, the combined inspection team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force stopped and searched a Toyota Hilux Vigo car driven by Shaung Sei (alias) Le Shaung Sei with Ma Aye Chan Nyein on the Ywangan-Han Myintmo Road in Ywangan Township. They seized 10 kilograms of solid opium extract.

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



Thant Zin Aung, Nyan Phone Myint and Thant Zin are pictured along with seized stimulant pills.

Drugs seized in Loilem township

A combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force stopped and searched a Toyota Fielder car driven by Kyaw Kyaw Khaing on the Loilem-Taunggyi Road near Hotint village in Loilem Township and seized 112,000

stimulant tablets at 12:30 pm on 1 June.

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



An arrestee is seen together with seized drugs and Toyota Fielder car.

K750 million worth of drugs in Pyigyidagun township

K750 million worth of heroin and stimulant tablets were captured in Pyigyidagun Township of Mandalay Region, according to the Police Force.

A combined inspection team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force searched a warehouse on 52ndx53rd streets, 139th street in Pyigyidagun Township, according to information. Police found Hein Win Soe and Tar Ro Sae with a Hino 12-wheel car and a Nissan van. They captured over K750 million worth of 9.9 kilograms of heroin and 0.336 million stimulant tablets from a Hino 12-wheel car on 30 May at 1:30 pm.



The arrestees are pictured along with seized drugs.

According to the examination, they admitted the drugs to be carried from Shan State to Mandalay Region. Police are investigating, and the suspects were prosecuted under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, the Myanmar Police Force stated. — MNA

LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar ships over 404,000 MT of rice in past two months

MYANMAR delivered over 404,453 metric tonnes of rice and broken rice in the past two months this year (April-May), according to the Myanmar Rice Federation-MRF.

In the past two months, a total of 35 exporter companies delivered over 391,580 MT of rice to foreign trade partners through sea trade, whereas 12,873 MT were sent to neighbouring countries via border posts. The export volume in cross-border trade significantly plunged compared to the previous year's record owing to trade delays triggered by China's strict border rules. Myanmar shipped rice and broken rice to China, regional countries, countries in Africa and European Union member countries through maritime trade.

Myanmar exported rice to around 20 foreign markets, most-



Myanmar also generated an income of US\$700 million from two million tonnes of rice exports to the foreign countries in the past 2020-2021 financial year.

ly to China (35,121 MT), Cameroon (34,000 MT), the Philippines (28,460 MT), Poland (24,155 MT) and Madagascar (22,000 MT).

Additionally, Myanmar conveyed over 47,100 MT of broken rice to China, 37,204 MT to Bel-

gium, 25,000 MT to Spain, 19,100 MT to Poland and 14,790 to the Netherlands respectively and over 700 MT to other four markets respectively.

The prices of rice for the export market are rocketing on

low supply, according to the Bayintnaung Rice Wholesale Depot.

The prices of low-quality white rice varieties were approximately US\$320-360 per MT depending on the different varieties and quality. The export price

of Myanmar's rice was relatively lower than the rates of Thailand and Viet Nam. Yet, the prices were higher than those of market prices of India and Pakistan, MRF's data showed. The export rice prices (Low Quality) move in the range of K29,000 and K30,000 per 108-pound bag depending on different varieties in the domestic market, according to Bayintnaung Commodity Centre.

Myanmar has shipped more than 1.4 million tonnes of rice and broken rice to foreign trade partners between 1 October and 31 March in the past mini-budget period (2021-2022), the Myanmar Rice Federation stated.

Myanmar also generated an income of US\$700 million from two million tonnes of rice exports to the foreign countries in the past 2020-2021 financial year. — KK/GNLM

Ywangan locals implement marketable soybean cultivation on manageable scale



The soybeans from Ywangan are delivered to the commodity centres in Aungban.

THE growers in Yehla village of Myinkydoo village-tract in Ywangan Township, are cultivating commercially valued soybean on a manageable scale.

As it is a lucrative crop, the growers are adding more acres. Earlier, the yield of the native soybean variety was low. At present, they are widely cultivating the highly-yielding Yezin 14 soybean variety which is a hybrid seed produced by the Agricultural Research Department.

A 90-day soybeans cultivation starts in June and ends in early October (in the pre-Thingyan period).

About 6-8 Pyi (a pyi equals eight tins of condensed milk) are utilized per acre. The distance between plants is 2 feet. The locals use organic fertiliz-

ers such as soil compost and cattle manure. After 35-45 days, fertilizer treatment is made before the blossom of flowers. Although there is a pest threat, they can prevent it with the right amount of pesticide on time. The growers have to consider weather conditions, land type, seeds, pest control and systematic farming methods.

The soybean like pH of 5.5 and 6.6. It is highly yielded at 20 °C to 30 °C. A soybean plant can produce about 40-60 seed pods (a pod includes three seeds). The yield rate is 15-20 baskets per acre. It is worth K2,200-2,500 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilograms). The soybeans from Ywangan are delivered to the commodity centres in Aungban, said a grower. — Pyay Phyio Thant/GNLM

Rubber price edges up to approximately K1,200 per pound

THE prices of rubber returned to rise to around K1,200 per pound, rubber traders said.

In early April, sundried rubber sheet (Local 3) was worth K1,235 per pound and ribbed smoked sheet Local 3 fetched K1,255 per pound. The prices gradually declined and reached K1,050 per pound for sundried sheets and K1,070 per pound for ribbed smoked sheets.

Additionally, rubber production usually drops in April. The market was sluggish in the post-Thingyan period as well.

Rubber prices in Mon State are heavily relying on the

Global demand for rubber, rubber production of the Southeast Asian nations and their market supply are contributing factors to the rubber price condition of Mon State, a major producing state in Myanmar, traders elaborated.

Rubber prices climbed up in the monsoon season on strong demand when there was low supply in the previous years. However, the rubber price is likely to go downwards owing to the Central Bank of Myanmar's currency policy and negative consequences, traders shared their opinions.

Nonetheless, the rubber

price has risen these days. The prices of rubber stand at K1,140 per pound for sundried rubber Local 3 and K1,160-K1,170 per pound for ribbed smoked sheet Local 3.

Rubber is commonly produced in Mon and Kayin states and Taninthayi, Bago, and Yango regions in Myanmar. As per 2018-2019 rubber season data, there are over 1.628 million acres of rubber plantations in Myanmar, with Mon State accounting for 497,153 acres, followed by Taninthayi Region with

348,344 acres and Kayin State with 270,760 acres. About 300,000 tonnes of rubber are produced annually across the country. Seventy per cent of rubber produced in Myanmar goes to China. It is also shipped to Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Viet Nam, the Republic of Korea, India, Japan, and other countries.

Myanmar shipped 303,293 metric tons of rubber to its foreign trade partners and generated more than US\$449 million in revenue in the previous financial year 2020-2021. — NN/GNLM



A worker is pictured collecting the rubber sap.

ECONOMY WORLD

India growth slows on inflation, higher oil prices

INDIA'S growth slowed further in the first three months of 2022, the National Statistics Office said Tuesday, with inflation and higher oil prices denting a post-pandemic recovery.

Asia's third-largest economy grew 4.1 per cent, year-on-year, in the last quarter, NSO data showed.

Annual growth for the 12 months to the end of March stood at 8.7 per cent.

Rising global commodity prices have sparked concern

among policymakers, with India's central bank announcing its first interest rate hike in nearly four years this month.

The country of 1.4 billion people imports more than 80 per cent of its crude oil and the cost of meeting domestic fuel demand has soared since Russia invaded Ukraine in February.

India is also the world's largest importer of edible oils, prices of which are at record highs since the conflict began.

"The pandemic may be receding, but growth has not returned," economist Mihir Swarup Sharma of the New Delhi-based Observer Research Foundation told AFP.

"Instead, imports as a proportion of GDP -- driven by higher prices for food, fuel, and other commodities -- are rising."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government this month announced tax breaks to offset higher food and petrol costs.—AFP



Inflation and higher oil prices have dented India's post-pandemic recovery. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Singaporeans in a flap at Malaysian chicken export curbs



A day before the export curbs kicked in, Singaporeans flocked to the city's food courts to get a taste of their favourite chicken rice ahead of a feared hike in prices. **PHOTO: AFP**

LONG queues at stalls selling a popular chicken dish, increasing prices and warnings about supply disruptions -- Singaporeans are in a flap due to curbs on poultry exports from neighbouring Malaysia.

Malaysia's move to halt exports of 3.6 million chickens a month, which kicks in Wednesday,

is the latest protectionist move in Asia aimed at tackling domestic shortages and taming surging inflation.

But the surprise step has caused consternation in Singapore, a tiny city-state that relies on its larger neighbour for a good chunk of food imports, including around a third of its chicken.

Of particular concern is the impact on chicken rice, a hugely popular dish of poached chicken, rice and chili dip, often sold at the city-state's ubiquitous open-air food courts.

Chicken prices "will definitely go up", said Foo Kui Lian, founder of Tian Tian Hainanese Chicken Rice, one of the best-known stalls selling the dish in Singapore.

"If (suppliers) raise prices by a lot we would have to raise ours a bit, or it'll be difficult for us to survive."

A day before the export curbs kicked in, a long queue formed at the stall as diners sought to get a taste of the dish before a feared surge in prices.

Office worker Meilan Lim was among those who bought the dish ahead of the restrictions.

"Even though I'm not really a chicken rice person, it's just that sometimes you do have the craving," she told AFP.—AFP

NEWS IN Brief

China's factories creep back to life as Covid curbs ease

THE contraction gripping China's manufacturing sector slowed in May, data showed Tuesday, as some factories gradually resumed work after the easing of strict Covid lockdowns.

The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) -- a key gauge of manufacturing activity -- edged up to 49.6, officials said, from April's 47.4, which was the worst reading since early 2020.

However, the reading remained stuck below the 50-point mark separating growth from contraction. The figures come as Beijing's zero-Covid policy aimed at stamping out infections with lockdowns and mass testing is challenged by a surge in the fast-spreading Omicron variant. Dozens of cities, including economic powerhouses Shanghai and Shenzhen, have been either fully or partially sealed off in recent months, prompting warnings of the gouge to growth being made by zero-Covid.—AFP

Netherlands, Germany to jointly drill for gas in North Sea

THE Netherlands and Germany will jointly drill for a new gas field in the North Sea, the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate announced on Wednesday.

State Secretary Hans Vijlbrief has "issued permits for the Dutch part today," said the ministry in a statement. The permits will be "available for inspection online" from Friday, and an "accelerated procedure" for the required permits is underway in Germany.—Xinhua

EU's Russian oil ban unlikely to affect OPEC+ decision

SAUDIA Arabia, Russia and their allies are likely to stick to their policy of modest oil output increases when they meet Thursday after the EU banned most imports from Moscow.

European Union leaders agreed on Monday to ban more than two-thirds of Russian oil imports, tightening economic

screws on the country over its invasion of its neighbour Ukraine.

This has caused oil prices, which have already hit record highs so far this year, to soar further amid pressure on the 23-member OPEC+ to open tabs more widely and relieve the market.

Brent, the international

benchmark, hit a two-month high above \$124 per barrel while the US contract, WTI, topped \$119.

But analysts say OPEC+ will stick to its strategy of only slightly increasing output when it holds its monthly videoconference on Thursday as it remains united with Moscow.—AFP



European Union leaders agreed on Monday to ban more than two-thirds of Russian oil imports. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Forbes terminates plan to go public through merger

BUSINESS news publication Forbes announced Wednesday that it has pulled the plug on a merger transaction with a specially created investment company as fewer of such deals get completed.

Forbes said that its shareholders had terminated the transaction with Magnus Opus Acquisition Limited. The media company gave no reason for the shift but expressed confidence in its future.

“The Forbes brand is a sought-after and trusted brand with more than 100 years of equity that is synonymous with success and validation,” said Forbes Chief Executive Mike Federle, who pointed to double-digit revenue growth over the past year. Forbes had announced the deal in August 2021,



A copy of the Vietnamese version of Forbes Magazine is seen on sale at a roadside newsstand in Hanoi. PHOTO: AFP PHOTO/HOANG DINH NAM/FILE

envisioning raising about \$600 million through the union with Magnum Opus, a special-purpose acquisition company (SPAC), Magnum Opus is a shell investment vehicle set up specifically to merge with an operating company

that entered public markets in March 2021. First established around 30 years ago, SPACs became a popular means of entering public markets in 2020 and 2021 amid low interest rates and surging equity mar-

kets. But the shift in Federal Reserve to a tightening monetary policy has slowed the arrival of new public companies as the stock market as a whole has struggled in 2022. — AFP

Gunmaker Ruger shareholders demand report on impact of firearms

SHAREHOLDERS of gunmaker Sturm Ruger voted Wednesday for the company to prepare a report on the human rights impact of its business, following a series of recent deadly mass shootings in the United States.

The manufacturer’s annual meeting approved a proposal by members of the Interfaith Centre on Corporate Responsibility, which are also shareholders of Sturm Ruger, that calls for a human rights impact assessment, the ICCR

said in a statement. “Proponents successfully made the case to their fellow shareholders that gunmakers could not abdicate their roles and responsibilities in helping to stem the carnage perpetrated with the products they sell

to the public,” ICCR said. Sturm Ruger, founded in 1949, did not immediately confirm to AFP the outcome of the vote. The gun manufacturer had called for members to oppose the proposal, which is non-binding.—AFP

Abu Dhabi moves to restrict single-use plastics

RESTRICTIONS on single-use plastic bags took effect in the United Arab Emirates capital Abu Dhabi Wednesday, as part of its efforts for a “greener future”.

The “single-use plastic bags ban starts today... to encourage sustainable living in Abu Dhabi”, the emirate’s media office said. “Retailers in the emirate are encouraged to offer environmentally friendly reusable bags with a nominal fee to encourage positive behavioural change in the community, and support emirate-wide efforts for a greener future.” There are exemptions for medicine bags, bag rolls for produce in supermarkets, rubbish sacks and large brand name shopping bags. The restrictions come

as the UAE prepares to host the COP28 global environmental conference in 2023, having set a target to become carbon neutral by 2050, in line with goals set by the COP26 conference in Britain last year.

Dubai, one of the seven other emirates that make up the UAE, has also announced it is ending the free provision of single-use plastic bags. The decision is scheduled to come into force at the start of July. Like its Gulf neighbours, the UAE’s economy is largely dependent on fossil fuels.

A report submitted to the World Government Summit in Dubai in February 2019 said the UAE consumes 11 billion plastic bags a year, the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi has said.—AFP



Women wearing masks for protection against the coronavirus, walk in the Mall of Dubai on 28 April 2020. PHOTO: KARIM SAHIB / AFP

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US lifts restrictions on air links to Cuba



Tourists wait to board a charter flight at Juan Gualberto Gomez airport in Varadero, Cuba on 6 March 2022. **PHOTO: YAMIL LAGE/AFP**

THE US government lifted restrictions Wednesday on air links to Cuba, one of the measures announced in May by President Joe Biden’s administration in a gesture of conciliation towards the Communist-run island.

The decision will allow US airlines to serve other airports in Cuba aside from the capital Havana, a Department of Transportation document said.

The re-authorization of certain group trips is also planned, it said.

On 16 May, the Biden administration announced the upcoming lifting of a slew of sanctions targeting the island, which a US official described at the time as “practical decisions” to help alleviate the humanitarian situation and to “expand economic opportunities” for Cubans.

In addition to expanded flights, the United States intends to reinstate a programme that was suspended for several years and which had facilitated immigration procedures for

members of the same family. Washington had also promised to increase capacity for processing visa applications in Havana.

It will also abolish a quarterly ceiling of \$1,000 that was permitted to be sent to Cuba by relatives in the US, and will also authorize the sending of money outside of family members.

That ceiling was imposed by Biden’s predecessor Donald Trump, who took a series of measures against Cuba during his presidency. —AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Parts of Ukraine could vote to join Russia in summer: lawmaker

MOSCOW-CONTROLLED areas of southern Ukraine could stage a referendum to become part of Russia as early as July, a senior Russian lawmaker said Wednesday.

Ukraine has accused Moscow of plotting to stage sham independence referendums in the southern regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. “I don’t rule out that this may happen as early as July,” said Leonid Slutsky, the head of parliament’s foreign affairs committee and a senior member of Moscow’s team of negotiators with Ukraine. “I won’t predict where it will take place, but I assume that the liberated territories will hold a referendum more or less simultaneously,” Slutsky said in comments carried by Russian news agencies. —AFP

Danes begin voting on joining EU’s common defence policy

TRADITIONALLY eurosceptic Denmark began voting Wednesday in a referendum on whether to overturn its opt-out on the EU’s common defence policy after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

The vote comes on the heels of neighbouring Finland’s and Sweden’s historic applications for NATO membership, as the Ukraine war forces countries in Europe to rethink their security policies. —AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

‘No to wheat as weapon of war’, pope says



This picture in the Khmelnytskyi region, Ukraine displays a harvester in a field. **PHOTO: AFP / SOKOLOVSKA INNA/FILE**

blockade of grain exports from Ukraine, on which the lives of millions of people depend, especially in the poorest countries,” Francis said at the end of his weekly general audience.

“Please do not use wheat, a staple food, as a weapon of war!” he said.

The pontiff appealed for “every effort to be made” to “guarantee the universal right to food”.

Russia’s offensive in Ukraine and Western sanctions have disrupted deliveries of wheat and other commodities from the two countries, fuelling concerns about the risk of hunger around the world.

Russia and Ukraine produce around 30 per cent of the global wheat supply. —AFP

POPE Francis on Wednesday pleaded against the use of grain as a weapon of war, as fears grow

over a global food crisis caused by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. “Of great concern is the



Ukraine’s Military Forces servicemen shop in the Donetsk region town of Avdiivka, on the eastern Ukraine front-line with Russia-backed separatists on 21 February 2022. **PHOTO: ALEKSEY FILIPPOV / AFP**

Pro-Russia separatists claim gains outside Ukraine’s Avdiivka

KREMLIN-BACKED separatists in Ukraine on Wednesday claimed they were edging closer to completely encircling the eastern town of Avdiivka after cutting off one of its two main roads.

Together with pro-Moscow separatists, Russian troops have been ramping up attacks on Ukraine’s eastern Donbas region that has seen heavy fighting since the start of Russia’s military campaign in Ukraine.

The village of Novosselovka 2, located on the outskirts of Avdiivka, “has been liberated” and separatist forces “have taken control of a portion” of the nearby highway, the militia of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People’s Republic said on messaging app Telegram.

It added that separatists have “finally cut off the Avdiivka garrison from one of the two available supply routes”.

AFP could not independently verify these claims.

Avdiivka is an industrial town north of the separatist-controlled city of Donetsk, the de-facto capital of the Donetsk People’s Republic.

Taking Avdiivka would mark a symbolic victory for Russia and would open the way to the Ukraine-controlled city of Kramatorsk, located about 100 kilometres (60 miles) away. —AFP

The ‘predatory’ global economy of looted antiquities

THE charging of the Louvre’s former director in an antiquities trafficking investigation has shone a light on a vast, transnational criminal problem that remains fiendishly difficult to target.

Ancient burial grounds around the world have increasingly become “open-air supermarkets” for everyone from petty thieves to organized criminals, said Vincent Michel, professor of archaeology at the University of Poitiers in France.

He describes a “sophisticated chain” stretching from sites in unstable places such as Iraq, Syria and Libya — but also many other parts of the world — via transit countries to auction houses and private collectors in Europe and the United States, and increasingly Asia and the Gulf.

It is an illicit trade that “serves mafias, drug traffickers and terrorist groups, abusing collectors and museums with complete impunity”, said Michel.

The ex-director of the Louvre in Paris, Jean-Luc Martinez, was charged last week over the purchase of a pink granite stele depicting the pharaoh Tutankhamun and four other histor-



People wearing a protective face mask visit the Louvre museum on 6 August 2020 in Paris. PHOTO: STEPHANE DE SAKUTIN / AFP

ic works for eight million euros (\$8.5 million) by the museum’s branch in Abu Dhabi.

Martinez, who has strongly denied any wrong-doing, is accused of turning a blind eye to fake certificates of origin for the pieces, a fraud thought to involve several other art experts, according to French investigative weekly Canard Enchaîné.

Such allegations are far from a rarity in the art world where the value of looted antiquities is thought to reach into the “tens or even hundreds of millions of euros” per year, ac-

cording to Michel.

He trains police, judges and customs officials to help counter the trade but resources are notoriously limited in the sector, and he has called for deeper public awareness and a more concerted interdisciplinary fight.

“This transnational crime feeds a predatory economy that undermines our national security. It is also an irreversible attack on heritage because a looted object, taken out of its context, loses all scientific value,” Michel said.— AFP

Deadly clashes break out in WB over Israeli demolition



Israeli security forces inspect the scene of a stabbing attack in a bus near the Elazar settlement in the occupied West Bank on 31 March 2022. PHOTO: OREN BEN HAKOON / AFP/FILE

A Palestinian young man was killed and six were injured on Wednesday during clashes with the Israeli soldiers near the northern West Bank city of

Jenin, reported Xinhua, quoting Palestinian health authorities.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said in a press state-

ment that Bilal Kabaha, 24, was killed after he was shot by Israeli soldiers in the chest and leg during clashes in the village of Ya’bad, west of the Jenin city.

It added that six other young men were injured by live ammunition, including one shot in the abdomen and the other in the face. The two casualties were transferred to the hospital, and are in critical condition, the statement said.

Palestinian eyewitnesses said clashes broke out when an Israeli army force stormed the village with a bulldozer to demolish the home of Deya’a Hamarsheh, a Palestinian who carried out a shooting attack in Tel Aviv that killed five Israelis on 29 March.—Xinhua

NEWS IN BRIEF

Yemen truce hangs in balance as extension talks falter

A fragile UN-brokered truce between the Yemeni government and Huthi rebels hung in the balance Wednesday as talks on renewing it hit trouble, threatening the humanitarian gains of the past two months.

Aid agencies and Western governments have urged Yemen’s warring parties to extend the truce, which has significantly reduced the intensity of fighting in a conflict the United Nations says has triggered the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.

But with just one day before the truce expires, there was no sign of any breakthrough in UN-backed talks.

A Yemeni aircraft left the rebel-held capital Sanaa for Cairo on the first commercial flight between the two cities since 2016, the latest gain from the truce deal.

The office of the United Nations special envoy for Yemen told AFP there were 77 people on board the Yemenia flight from Sanaa airport, which has been closed to commercial flights for nearly six years. It is the seventh such flight since the truce went into effect on 2 April. The six previous flights had all been to the Jordanian capital Amman.—AFP

Anti-femicide group goes on trial in Turkey

A prominent Turkish anti-femicide campaign group went on trial on Wednesday accused of activity against law and morals, with several hundred women rallying outside Istanbul’s main court in protest.

Prosecutors had filed a lawsuit in April against We Will Stop Femicide Platform, one of the country’s leading feminist organizations. If convicted, the group could be shut down. Protesters outside the court waved banners bearing slogans such as “You will never walk alone!” and “We will stop women’s murders”, alongside the families of women murdered by men. We Will Stop Femicide Platform has been campaigning against the murder and abuse of women since its foundation in 2010.—AFP

South Korean ruling party wins landslide in local elections

SOUTH Korea’s ruling party won a landslide victory in local elections for leaders of major cities and provinces, official results showed Thursday, giving newly elected president Yoon Suk-yeol a significant boost.

An avowed anti-feminist and political novice, Yoon won the March presidential election by just 0.7 per cent — the narrowest margin ever — and faces an opposition-controlled National Assembly that has vowed to closely scrutinize his policies.

But Yoon’s People Power Party won 12 of the 17 major posts up for grabs in elections held Wednesday for mayors and provincial governors, in-

cluding the capital Seoul and the country’s second largest city, Busan.

The PPP’s current Seoul mayor, Oh Se-hoon, was re-elected with 59 per cent of the vote, while the PPP’s Park Heong-joon was re-elected mayor of Busan with 66.4 per cent.

Yoon thanked South Koreans for the “successful completion” of the elections on Thursday.

“I want to accept the results of this election as the will of the people to revive the economy and take better care of the people’s livelihood,” Kang In-sun, Yoon’s spokeswoman, quoted him as saying.—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.

Midfielder Kyaw Min Oo joins Yangon United

MIDFIELDER Kyaw Min Oo has joined Yangon United FC for one season, according to the club statement. “We are pleased to announce that midfielder Kyaw Min Oo has signed with the club till the end of the season 2022, said team officials.

Yangon United which always looks for a talented player to provide an opportunity and a pathway to a professional football career has signed the former national team again and Yangon United midfielder Kyaw Min Oo who was away from the field for some time due to injuries.

“A 26-year-old midfielder Kyaw Min Oo was nurtured by Myanmar Football Academy (Mandalay) from 2011 to 2013. Starting in 2014, he has begun his professional career with Myanmar National League club Ayeyawady United for two years. His stunning performance could be seen vividly and clinched the knock-out Champions in 2015,” club officials said.

“Then Yangon made a deal with him in 2016 on a three-year contract, and the youngster con-



Myanmar Midfielder Kyaw Min Oo holds the insignia of Yangon United after signing a contract with Yangon United. PHOTO: YUFC

quered the two times Champions of Charity Cup, Myanmar National League, and General Aung San Shield.

Bringing up in Nyaung Chay Htauk, Bago region, he has been selected in Myanmar International aged group team since 2013. His performance prominently shined like a star in 2015 FIFA U-20 World Cup in New Zealand,” officials added.

“I would like to thank our president and team officials for bringing me back home. As I feel like I did not fully play for the team in my previous time with this club, I am sure I can give a full performance to the team starting from now on. As my injury fully recovered now, I believe that I am ready to play for the club,” Kyaw Min Oo said. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

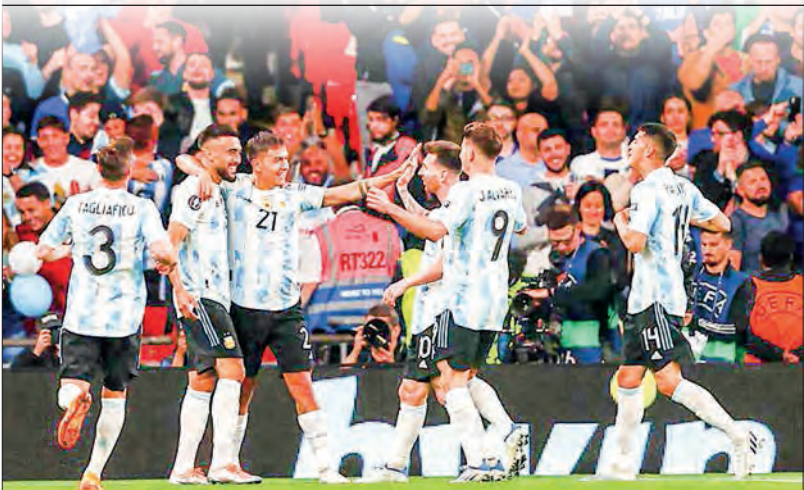
France investigating Champions League final chaos: UK

FRANCE is investigating the chaos at last weekend’s Champions League final between Liverpool and Real Madrid, Britain’s top diplomat said on Wednesday, as pressure on the French interior minister grew over the police’s handling.

The mayhem outside the Stade de France stadium ahead of the showpiece event, which saw thousands of Liverpool supporters with tickets struggle to enter and police respond with tear gas, raised questions over the capacity of Paris to host the Olympic Games in 2024. French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin, who has faced accusations of lying after he blamed the chaos on massive ticket scams, admitted that the organisation could “clearly” have been better.—AFP



France is investigating the chaos at last weekend’s Champions League final between Liverpool and Real Madrid, Britain’s top diplomat said on Wednesday, as pressure on the French interior minister grew over the police’s handling. PHOTO: AFP



Messi stars as Argentina beat Italy in Finalissima

LIONEL Messi stole the show as Copa America holders Argentina powered to a 3-0 win against European champions Italy in the Finalissima at Wembley on Wednesday.

Inspired by the peerless Messi, Argentina raced into a two-goal lead in the first half of the prestigious friendly thanks to strikes from Lautaro Martinez and Angel Di Maria.

Paulo Dybala capped Argentina’s rout, but after a disappointing season with Paris Saint-Germain by his sky-high standards, it was the sight of Messi back to his imperious best that took the spotlight. The 34-year-old’s eye-catching display featured two assists and was worthy of his rare appearance at one of football’s great cathedrals. —AFP

Lionel Messi stole the show as Copa America holders Argentina powered to a 3-0 win against European champions Italy in the Finalissima at Wembley on Wednesday. PHOTO: AFP