

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

Vol. IX, No. 89, 2nd Waning of Waso 1384 ME

www.gnlm.com.mm

Thursday, 14 July 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.

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing holds talks with President of the Republic of Tatarstan

THE delegation led by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, currently in the Russian Federation, were welcomed by President of the Republic of Tatarstan Mr Rustam Nurgaliyevich Minnikhanov and officials at Kazan Airport in Kazan of the Republic of the Tatarstan yesterday afternoon.

The Senior General and party were greeted by the President of the Republic of Tatarstan at the President's Office in Kremlin. They held a special meeting at the office of the President.

They frankly exchanged views on further promotion of Russian-Myanmar diplomatic relations and friendly relations, holding discussions on economic cooperation during the visit of the President of the Republic of Tatarstan to Myanmar this April, issues to enhance trade and investment for promotion of bilateral relations, cooperation in oil and natural gas production, construction of factories and maintenance of machinery, and cooperation in industrial de-



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and President Mr Rustam Nurgaliyevich Minnikhanov of the Republic of Tatarstan hold the special meeting at the latter's office on 13 July 2022.

velopment, education, economic and health sectors.

Officials from businesses in Kazan reported on the work process of each business and situations to cooperate in the bilat-

eral economic sector. The Senior General and the President gave supplementary discussions on cooperation in each business.

After the meeting, the President of the Republic of Tatarstan

hosted a dinner in honour of the Senior General and party.

During the dinner, the traditional music troupe of the Republic of Tatarstan performed traditional songs and cultural dances.

The Senior General presented cash awards to the troupe. The Senior General and party spent a night at the Special Guesthouse of the President of the Republic of Tatarstan. — MNA

INSIDE TODAY

NATIONAL

MoTC Union Minister inspects completion status of Yangon-Tounggoo rail section, bridge construction and Yangon RBE train factory

PAGE-5

NATIONAL

Myanmar to donate rice to Sri Lanka

PAGE-5

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Some roads to be closed on Martyrs' Day in Yangon

PAGE-6



LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar avocado body preps for Hass avocado cultivation in Leshi Tsp

PAGE-7

A black and white portrait of a woman in a military uniform. She is wearing a dark peaked cap with a circular emblem on the front. Her hair is pulled back. She has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the left. She is wearing a dark jacket with a high, light-colored collar. The background is a plain, light color. The portrait is framed by a white border.

Information Team
State Administration Council

We will have to continue to consolidate the strength of the national unity in the future also

AS for the country which is a heterogeneous society, historical lessons have taught us that only the national unity can ensure the non-disintegration of the Union and the perpetuation of sovereignty. We will have to continue to consolidate the strength of the national unity in the future also.

(Excerpt from the message sent by Chairman of the State Administration Council
Senior General Maha Thray Sithu Min Aung Hlaing on occasion of 74th Anniversary Union Day on 12 February 2021)

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party visit Kazan Federal University in the Republic of Tatarstan

THE delegation led by Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, currently in the Russian Federation, visited the Kazan Federal University in Kazan of the Republic of Tatarstan yesterday morning. They were welcomed by Pro-Rector Mr Timirkhan Ali-shev and officials who conducted the Senior General and party round the university, meeting halls, lecture halls, the convocation hall and display of documentary photos on professors and outstanding persons of the university. The Senior General



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views the Kazan Federal University in the Republic of Tatarstan.



Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, and party visits one significant place in Kazan.

asked what he wanted to know. At the hall, the Pro-Rector briefed the Senior General on a brief history of the university, formation of academic departments, lecturing of subjects, food and accommodation for students, and admission of foreign students. The Senior General asked for further information. The Senior General and the Pro-Rector exchanged gifts, and the delegation went round in the university. The Kazan Federal University was established as an imperial Kazan in 1804. Renowned astrologist Nikolai Ivanovich Lobachevsky discharged his duty as Rector from 1837 to 1876. It was famous for finding organic chemistry and Electron Spin Resonance. The university was upgraded to the federal level in 2011, and it was involved in the 18 universities of Project 5-100 held by the Russian government. The university especially gives biomedical science, pharmacy, oil refinery and production, communications and aerospace technology, and social science. In 2020, the university admitted more than 10,000 foreign students. Daw Kyu Kyu Hla, wife of the Senior General, together with outstanding award winner male and female officers, visited significant places in Kazan.—MNA

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

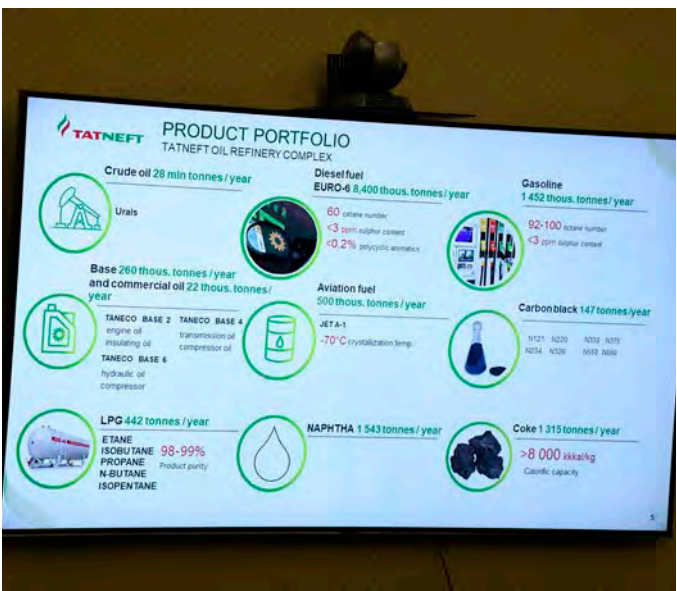
THE Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee was reconstituted under the State Administration Council's Order No 366/2021 dated 10.12.2021, and action is being taken effectively against illegal trade under the law. Regarding the "request for money from departmental organizations in conducting trade", 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

SAC Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing meets PJSC “Tatneft” CEO in the Republic of Tatarstan

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and party, accompanied by Military Attaché Brig-Gen Moe Kyaw, met responsible personnel of the PJSC “Tatneft” company in Kazan, the Republic of Tatarstan, and visited the Kazan Hi-Technology Park yesterday morning.

First, Chief Executive Officer Mr Nail Ultatovich Maganov and responsible personnel of the PJSC “Tatneft” company explained to the Chairman of the State Administration Council a brief history of the company, measures for the development of the company taken since its establishment, production work of the factory and its branches and production of fuel oil and consumer goods from petroleum.

After hearing the explana-



The CEO of the PJSC “Tatneft” company explains the brief history to the Senior General.

tions, the Chairman of the State Administration Council and party discussed matters relating to possible cooperation with the company and investments in petroleum and natural gas. After the meeting, the SAC Chairman and the CEO of “Tatneft” company exchanged souvenirs.

Next, the SAC Chairman and party visited the Kazan Hi-Technology Park (IT Park) and was welcomed by Deputy Minister of Digital Technology Development and Social Management Mr Khidiyatallin Ildar Rustamovich and responsible personnel. The SAC Chairman and party studied the technological work being carried out in the park. After hearing the presenta-

tions, the SAC Chairman asked for further information and had a discussion.

It is learnt that the IT Park has been conducting 100 courses and have turned out 827 technological experts. — MNA

Union Defence Minister meets Sagaing Region cabinet, district, township-level officials, town elders, officers, other ranks, families of local station



SAC member MoD Union Minister General Mya Tun Oo warmly greets the town elders in Khamti.

STATE Administration Council member Union Minister for Defence General Mya Tun Oo, accompanied by the Sagaing Region chief minister, the commander of the Sagaing Command and officials met officers, other ranks and their families of Khamti Station and provided foodstuffs and COVID-19 prevention gear yesterday.

The Union minister and party then went to the Nansimun Guesthouse to meet the town elders and local ethnic people. They discussed regional development activities, and the Union minister coordinated the submissions with relevant officials and provided food to the local people.

He then met district-level and township-level departmental officials at Khamti District Administration Office. Then, Khamti District Administration Body Chairman reported on the situation in the region and the Union minister fulfilled the requirements and cordially greeted the attendees.

Afterwards, the Union minister and party visited the Khamti People’s Hospital and cordially met the local people under medical care. He also visited the Theravada Buddhist Monastery (Central) and paid homage to the monks and donated offertories and cash. — MNA

MoTC Union Minister inspects completion status of Yangon-Toungoo rail section, bridge construction and Yangon RBE train factory

UNION Minister for Transport and Communications Admiral Tin Aung San inspected the upgrade work of the Yangon-Toungoo railway section in Pyuntazar, Nyaunglebin Township, which is the Phase I of the Yangon-Toungoo Railway Section Upgrade Project, the Kawliya Bridge construction located on the DaikU-Phaungtawthi project section, the completion status of the bridges and railroads between Darpain Station and Yangon Central Station, and the maintenance work in the Rail Bus Engine-RBE factory in Yangon yesterday.

During the inspection tour, the Union minister instructed those responsible to complete the railway section upgrade

work in time as it is not only a big investment but also a vital role for public transport, to pay attention to workplace safety.

While inspecting the completion of bridges and the railway road between the Darpain Station and the Yangon Central Station, he gave instructions to keep the sidewalk of the railway clean and tidy, make sign posts brighter, and coordinate with local authorities where necessary.

At the RBE factory, the Union minister highlighted the need to modify the train carriages to high quality and security and inspected the train carriage which was being renovated. He also presented crews with gifts during his inspection tour yesterday. — MNA



Union Transport & Communications Minister Admiral Tin Aung San looks into the progress of the Yangon-Toungoo rail section yesterday.



MoC holds the meeting for rice donation to Sri Lanka, yesterday.

Myanmar to donate rice to Sri Lanka

THE Ministry of Commerce held a virtual meeting on rice donation to Sri Lanka yesterday.

During the meeting, the leader of the Donation Supervisory Team Deputy Minister U Nyunt Aung said Sri Lanka faces a recession and so the supervisory team arranges to buy 1,000 tonnes with national funds and donate them as humanitarian aid. The ministries concerned should give suggestions regarding the donation such as type of rice, procurement plan, container rental, due date and expenditures.

Then, officials of ministries concerned and the chairman of the Myanmar Rice Federation coordinated the discussion.

The meeting was attended by the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Commerce, directors-general of departments concerned, officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, and Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Myanmar Rice Federation. — MNA

CBM holds coordination meeting on MMQR standardization for payment switch on 13 July

A coordination meeting to discuss the MMQR standardization for the digital payment switch system was convened at the Learning and Training Centre of Yangon Branch, the Central Bank of Myanmar (CBM) at 9 am on 13 July 2022.

Deputy Governor Daw Than Than Swe of the CBM and officials concerned from the State-owned banks, private banks, digital wallets, merchant acquiring service providers and executive managers of PayPlus Co., Ltd were present at the meeting.

Officials from the foreign bank and branches virtually attended the meeting.

According to the CBM's National Payment System Strategy (2020-2025), a digital payment switch system that routes payment transactions between multiple acquirers and payment service providers is being implemented in line with the existing payment policies. CBM-NET system to handle large payrolls and utility bills was also carried out. Moreover, a digital payment switch system to facilitate the



The CBM's coordination meeting on the digital payment switch system is in progress.

settlement of small payments between different service providers is also being undertaken.

Afterwards, Payment Land-

scape in Myanmar, Digital Payment Switch System, QR Code Standardization, QR Code Generation and MMQR Standardiza-

tion new version were explained. The attendees raised some questions. Earlier, digital payment can be made through a single payment gateway. The payment switch will build communication between different financial service providers and ensure smooth financial transactions between multiple providers.

Digital payment can reduce cash handling for the convenience of customers. They can choose the best payment gateway with the cheapest merchant services. — MNA

CURRENT
AFFAIRS

Some roads to be closed on Martyrs’ Day in Yangon

SOME Yangon roads will be temporarily closed on 19 July 2022, during the 75th Martyrs’ Day ceremony at the Martyrs’ Mausoleum in Bahan Township, from 4 am to the completion of the ceremony, according to the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC).

During the ceremony, West Shwegondine Road from Yedashe Road, Dhammazed Road from U Wizara-Dhammazed Junction, Dhammazed Road from Inya Myaing Junction, Martyrs’ Road from West Shwegondine Road and U Wizara Junction, Martyr’s Road from U Htaung Bo Road and Martyrs’ Junction, U Wizara Road from U Wizara Roundabout to U Wizara-Dhammazed Junction, the northern arch-

way of the Shwedagon Pagoda (Thwaysaykan Road) will be closed, and divert routes will be arranged.

In addition, Natmauk Road from Wingaba Junction, Natmauk Road from Pho Sein Junction, Bogyoke Museum Road from Ngahtetgyi Pagoda Road and the Junction, Bo Cho Road from Shwe Kyat Yat Junction, Bogyoke Museum Road from Saw Maha Junction, will be temporarily closed for the opening of the Bogyoke Aung San Museum from 5 am to 6 pm, from 19.7.2022 to 21.7.2022, and divert routes will be arranged.

During the flag-hoisting ceremony to be held at the Ministers’ Office from 5 am to 6 pm, from 19-7-2022 to 21-



The photo shows today’s Ministers’ Office where the martyred leaders fell in Yangon.

7-2022, Theinbyu Road from Bogyoke Junction, Anawrahta Road from Bo Myat Tun Junc-

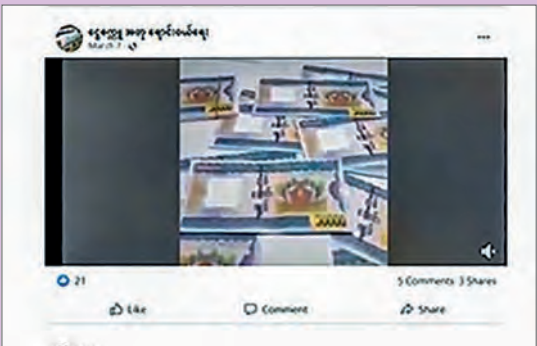
tion, Maha Bandoola Road from Pansodan Junction, and Bo Aung Kyaw Road from Mer-

chant Junction, will be temporarily closed, it is reported. – TWA/GNLM

Three charged for possessing counterfeit K10,000 notes

THREE people were charged on 12 July for their involvement in possessing and using counterfeit 530 K10,000 notes (K5.3 million) for which they paid K1,700,000. Police arrested the man, aged 21, during the inspection in Taungup Township, Rakhine State, with 105 K10,000 notes believed to be fake.

According to the interrogations, the man, accompanied by two women, paid K1,700,000 for the forged 530 K10,000 notes through contact from Facebook Messenger near the Aung Mingala bus stop in Yangon. They



Some counterfeit money-selling accounts and pages are seen on social media.

also stated that some of the fake notes were used on the way back.

Officers also raided the house of the two women and recovered 229 K10,000 notes. The laser line colour in seized fake currency notes was not changed, however, it was found to be a type of copy paper, and the length is

one millimetre longer and the width is one millimetre shorter than the original banknote.

Those found guilty of possessing and using counterfeit notes have been charged under Section 105/106 of the Central Bank of Myanmar Law. —TWA/GNLM

Onion sales slack, prices remain unchanged in countryside and Yangon

THE onion transaction is slack in monsoon and the prices are stable in the countryside and Yangon, said onion purchaser Ko Hla Win.

The Seikphyu onion was priced at K800/900 per viss and only K1,100/1,200 per viss of Myittha summer onion between March-May 2022 when the summer onion with the highest transactions in the local commodity market (Yangon) entered the market. The onion prices rose in certain regions

as there was demand from Viet Nam by the end of May.

In the Yangon market, the Seikphyu onion was priced at K1,000 per viss on 2 June and it rose to K1,500 per viss on 9 June. It was K1,900 per viss of Seikphyu onion and K2,100 per viss of Monywa onion on 15 June. However, the sales are slack in some regions to export to Viet Nam and the price dropped again to K1,100/1,200 per viss of small size onion and only K1,700/1,800 per viss of

large size onion. The price did not change until 13 July, according to the Yangon onion market.

If there are over 150 million visses of onion for local consumption and export in the first seven months of 2022, there would be over 50 million visses left within the next five months before the new monsoon onion season, said an onion market analyst. During the five months, the onion can be exported in addition to the local consumption. — TWA/GNLM

Six airbag trains to operate on Yangon, Mandalay, Mawlamyine and Pyay routes

THE Myanma Railways operates six airbag trains on Yangon, Mandalay, Mawlamyine and Pyay routes. The extended routes of the trains will be two up/down trains each for Yangon-Mandalay, Yangon-Mawlamyine and Yangon-Pyay routes.

The two Yangon-Mandalay up/down trains offered services starting 10 July. The departure time of the No 5 up train is 3:45 pm from Yangon and will arrive in Mandalay at 9:15 am the next day. The No (6) down train from Mandalay will leave at 2 pm and arrive in Yangon at 7:40 am.

The No 81 up train will leave from Yangon at 8 pm on 25 July and arrive in Mawlamyine at 6 am the next day. The No 82 down train from Mawlamyine will leave at 8 pm and arrive in Yangon at 6:15 am. On 20 August, the two Yangon-Pyay trains will be operated. The No

61 up train from Yangon will depart at 8:30 pm and arrive in Pyay at 5:15 am. The No 62 down train from Pyay will depart at 7:45 am and arrive in Yangon at 4:30 pm.

The ticket prices are increased to 67 per cent – the Nay Pyi Taw-Yangon train ticket price is K12,850 for upper class (sleeper), K9,350 for the upper class and K4,700 for ordinary class, the Nay Pyi Taw-Mandalay train ticket price is K 8400 for upper class (sleeper), K6,100 for the upper class and K3,050 for ordinary class.

In the past, the Yangon-Mandalay express train ticket price was K13,000 for the sleeper, K9,300 for the upper class, K4,650 for the ordinary class and now it is K21,250 for upper class (sleeper), K15,450 for the upper class and K7,750 for ordinary class. —TWA/GNLM



A Yangon-Mandalay airbag train is seen at the railway station

LOCAL BUSINESS

Corn price slides to over K900 per viss

THE price of corn touched a low of over K900 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes), according to the Yangon Region Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Bayintnaung wholesale commodity centre).

In early June, the corns were priced at K1,120 per viss depending on the quality. The current market price dipped to the lowest of K960 per viss.

The directive released on 30 June said that transactions for the exports of agricultural produce including corn, rice, bean and oil crops are to be made in dollars instead of Yuan-Kyat/Baht-Kyat as border transaction settlement negatively affected the corn prices.

Additionally, the foreign currency earnings are set to be

converted into local currency at K1,850. The US dollar is valued at over K2,000 in unofficial forex markets. The large gap between the official and unofficial exchange rates is vividly seen. This being so, traders have to closely observe the impacts of this move, traders shared their opinions.

Corn harvest season is coming soon in Thailand, the leading buyer of Myanmar's corn. The prices of corn in Thailand are also declining, said U Min Khaing, chair of the Myanmar Corn Industrial Association. It is too close to call at the moment, he added. The prevailing FOB price of corn stands at US\$340-360 per tonne.

Thailand gives green light to corn imports under zero tariff



In early June, the corns were priced at K1,120 per viss depending on the quality. The current market price dipped to the lowest of K960 per viss.

(with Form-D), between 1 February and 31 August. However, Thailand imposed a maximum tax rate of 73 per cent on corn imports to protect the rights of

their growers if the corn is imported during the corn season of Thailand.

Therefore, only two months (July and August) are left for corn

exports under Form D exemption.

Myanmar conveyed 1.7 million tonnes of corn to Thailand in the 2020-2021 Financial Year. In the current corn season, Myanmar targets to ship 1.5 million tonnes of corn to Thai market, U Min Khaing added.

Myanmar exported 2.3 million tonnes of corn to foreign trade partners in the 2020-2021 corn season. The majority of them were sent to Thailand, according to the association.

At present, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions. Myanmar has three corn seasons- winter, summer and monsoon. The country produces 2.5-3 million tonnes of corn every year. — NN/GNLM

Myanmar avocado body preps for Hass avocado cultivation in Leshi Tsp



Awareness campaigns of the avocado growing methods were conducted in Leshi Township, in coordination with the Department of Rural Development.

MYANMAR Avocado Producer and Exporter Association is endeavouring to develop the cultivation of marketable Hass avocado on a commercial scale in Leshi Township of Naga Self-Administered Zone in Sagaing Region to enhance the socio-economy of the rural community, said U Myo Nyunt, vice-chair of the association.

Awareness campaigns of the avocado growing methods were conducted in Leshi Township, in coordination with the Department of Rural Development. Leshi Township located 5,000 to 7,000 feet above sea level has favourable weather conditions for avocado commercial farming.

The locals are also eyeing the crop and joining hands with the association to grow Hass avocado varieties.

"Naga Self-Administered Zone is suitable for avocado. There is no mineral exploitation in the region. Avocado trees are seen but a lack of technique hinders the growers to engage in commercial production. Therefore, nutrient management and growing techniques that suit the region are disseminated to growers in the first week of July. The association went on surveys of the avocado farms and conducted an awareness course. They managed to draw the attention of the local growers," he elaborated.

The strength of the region is sharing a border with India. Additionally, it has penetrated markets to a great extent. To increase profitability, the systematic cultivation of avocado will be carried out. Avocado is an important crop for regional development and the local community agreed to this. Therefore, training for growing techniques is undertaken for the avocado growers to ramp up production. Cultivation of the commercially profitable Hass avocado is increasingly implemented in the township to effectuate the development of the region. — Min Htet Aung (Mandalay Sub-Printing House)/GNLM

Thailand remains top trade partner among neighbouring countries in Q1

THE bilateral trade with neighbouring Thailand is recorded as the highest among the neighbouring countries, amounting to US\$1.315 billion in the first quarter of the current financial year 2022-2023, statistics issued by Myanmar Customs Department indicated.

During the April-June period, Myanmar's border trade value stood at \$587 million with China, \$1.3 billion with Thailand, \$9.358 million with Bangladesh and \$5.377 million with India respectively.

Myanmar's exports mostly have gone to Thailand in the past three months. Exports to Thailand via border posts were estimated at \$916 million, while imports were valued at \$398.9 million.

Additionally, Thailand has been Myanmar's largest trade partner among the regional countries as well.

Exports of natural gas from the Taninthayi Region contributed to the enormous increase in border trade with Thailand. The corn exports to Thailand have also shown a significant increase since 2019, the Ministry of Commerce stated.

Myanmar primarily exports natural gas, fishery products, coal, tin concentrate (SN 71.58 per cent), coconut (fresh and dry), beans, corn, bamboo shoots, sesame seeds, garment, footwear, plywood and veneer, broken rice and other commodities to Thailand. It imports capital goods such as machinery, raw industrial goods such as cement and fertilizers, and consumer goods such as cosmetics, edible vegetable oil and food products from the neighbouring country.

Myanmar is doing border trade with the neighbouring country Thailand through Tachilek, Myawady, Myeik, Mawtaung, Hteekhee, Kawthoung and Maese border areas respectively. Among them, the Myawady border post performed the largest trade in border trade with Thailand, followed by Hteekhee. — KK/GNLM

Don't forget that the strength of the nation lies within

THE political driving force, the economic driving force and the defence driving force are pivotal in building the nation. In this regard, public participation in these driving forces is also an important force in the nation.

According to the ideology of political science, if the country is stable and united, the political force will be strong. Only when the military might and security might are strong will the defence capability be high. As the economic might is essential for the improvement of political and defence might, strengthening the economic driving force is based on turning out many intellectuals and intelligentsia.

The population in the rural area of the nation accounts for 70 per cent of the total population. Development undertakings in the rural area initiate the booming of the economy at township and district levels, and then the regional level as well as the national level. The urban economic sector should be a root for developing the industrial zones and special economic zones capable of shaping the new mechanized nation. At this juncture, public participation plays a crucial role in booming the businesses in both rural and urban areas.

The strength of the nation lies within. Only when public participation is better will the government place more emphasis on the improvement of the nation. It is necessary to turn out a large number of educated new generation youths accumulated with a wide range of knowledge and high talented skills. A wide range of youths will be capable of effectively applying the modern economic tactics how to overcome economic crises and tackle financial situations so as to catch up with businesspersons from developing and developed nations.

If so, human resources based on those educated youths can be deployed for the sake of the nation and the people. Indeed, human resources never run out depending on the number of educated persons although natural resources of the nation can run out due to extraction and utilization.

Currently, the government is striving for the exportation of value-added products, manufacturing the various import-substitute products and increasing the export volume more than the imports in line with the economic objective involved in the nine State objectives.

As such, both the government and the people need to rely on internal strength in order to improve the State and private economic sectors with greater contributions of educated youths. If so, Myanmar will grasp a great economic opportunity in the future.



An Actually Good Medicine

By Yin Nwe Ko

THOSE who always laugh have longer longevity than those who do not.

When young, I had a friend who always smiled and talked about jokes. He never seemed sad and worried about anything. As it was in our university life and we were in the same hostel, we happened to meet almost every day. I often heard his laughter from distance. He was fat and good-natured. I have remembered his words up to now. It was nothing but “Laughter is a kind of medicine”.

You all might probably have heard the saying, “Laughter is the best medicine.” Many medical studies show that laughter has both physical and mental benefits, but in today’s fast-paced stressful world, there is definitely a lack of laughter. People get so caught up in the have-to’s and should-do’s that they forget to lighten up. Laughter and humour are two powerful tools that can help people cope and get through threatening situations. Looking at life’s situations with a sense of humour and laughter provides perspective and helps keep things in balance when life seems unfair.

There are some benefits of laughter but there are also a few limits to what we really know about laughter. There have been many theories to explain the link

between laughter and health. Laughter is often part of a bigger picture, the social picture. Health benefits can come from having fun with family and friends, and laughter just naturally goes along with that. While no one really knows the precise connection, we do know that it improves your quality of life.

By the way, I have met a person who never laughed. I have never seen a wink of his smile. His son and I were in the same grade when I was a high school student. Therefore, I had a chance to visit his house frequently. He was also an officer of a department at the township level. Whenever I visited my classmate, I saw him in an easy chair in the headroom sitting without saying any words to me or to other visitors of his sons. Sorry to see his laughter and even a wink of a smile from him! I did not understand what kind of man he was.

Here, I would like to state Philosopher John Morreall’s belief about laughter. It came about as a gesture of shared relief at the passing of danger. Many researchers believe that the purpose of laughter is related to human connections. Laughter happens when people feel comfortable with each other. With more laughter comes more bonding. Robert Provine, professor of psychology and



Laughing stimulates both sides of the brain. ILLUSTRATION PICTURE: NEURO LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

neuroscience at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, believes that laughter is a social function. People are 30 times more likely to laugh in social settings than when they are alone. Laughter is not a learned behaviour; it is instinctual. People who are born blind and deaf still laugh, and infants laugh before they are two months old. Before humans used speech, laughter was a simpler method of communication.

Healthy infants we have ever

seen can be noticed they laugh secretly. Those lovely infants are adored by many people; even by those who do not often smile or laugh. Their laughing secretly means they are fit and fine and they like everything around them. However, some adults keep their wish to smile quietly in order to control their impression and dignity.

Each of us has our own unique sense of humour. What people find funny seems to be most signifi-

cant to age. Young children are constantly discovering new things that may seem ridiculous and surprising to them and so they laugh. They also laugh, much to their parent’s dismay, at toilet jokes and cruelty to others. Pre-teens and adolescents often use humour as a tool to protect themselves or feel superior. As people mature, humour becomes more developed as they learn more. As adults gain more experiences, their sense of humour usually centres around

the issues that stress them out. Other factors that affect humour are culture and the community that people come from.

There is an interesting query about laughter. It is what we have when we laugh.

Laughter has many psychological benefits. Laughter lets people harmlessly release negative emotions such as anger, sadness, and fear. While we are working at surviving, laughter can help us maintain our perspective. The next time you feel like you are losing control, allow yourself a little “humour time”. If you can find what’s funny in a situation, your upsets may not seem as important as they once did.

This is somewhat important to those who do not often laugh at least one time a day. It is not worth being human when one cannot laugh.

There are many things in life that we have no control over and cannot change. As long as we have a sense of humour, we can do something. Humour has the power to turn almost any situation around. A lot of the suffering and troubles we experience are not a result of our difficulties, but how we view them. People use humour as protection against change and uncertainty. Using humour in difficult times can be one of the smartest ways to cope

with difficulties, ease our worries, and get on with life.

This proves that a man of laughter can do more things in his daily routine than one who is not interested in laughing. Laughter knows no cultural boundaries. You don’t have to speak the same language to laugh together. Laughter also helps break the ice when you are in a group. It is one form of communication to which everyone can relate.

The world’s current situation is making everyone more and more stressed. Food, clothing, and shelter are basic needs for a human being but there are so many things left to keep up with today’s standard of living. We all know the relief we feel when someone in a group makes a funny comment during a tense situation. Humour dispels anger and aggression in ourselves and others. It helps to use humour when dealing with an angry child. A study of humour in the classroom showed lower scores on aggression for students viewing a humorous video clip.

There is another interesting benefit. It is said laughing stimulates both sides of the brain. People get the message quicker and remember it longer. Children, as well as adults, learn more when they are having fun and participating in the learning.

Humour is an important, often overlooked tool. The better adjusted you are and the more satisfying your lifestyle, the more readily you will respond to the humour in jokes, cartoons, and everyday situations. Be aware of taking yourself too seriously. It is important to learn to laugh at

yourself. You can learn to share your laughter and help make others laugh. This does not mean telling jokes unless that is one of your talents. It means beginning to share your humorous perspective and giving others permission to do the same. A good sense of humour is something everyone can work on. It does not just happen. Here are some suggestions to help add more laughter to your life:

- Recognize the value of humour.
- Don’t worry or analyze why people laugh — just participate.
- Think funny — look for humour in every situation. Learn to laugh at the incongruities in life.
- Keep a notebook and jot down the funny things you hear. Do it daily.
- Adapt material. Use humour from any source. If you think nothing funny happens to you, personalize it and change it to fit you.
- Laugh at yourself. We all do stupid things. If you laugh at your mistakes, it gives others permission to do the same.

All in all, although laughter cannot cure all kinds of diseases, it is sure it can be able to make one’s mind fresh and awaken. It can also be able to make one’s muscles relax which leads to being comfortable with the difficulties for the respective person. Therefore, I would like to give my esteemed readers some useful words. “Don’t forget to laugh, please”.



Covid-19 pandemic is ‘nowhere near over’: WHO

“The virus is running freely and countries are not effectively managing the disease burden based on their capacity, in terms of both hospitalization for acute cases and the expanding number of people with post-Covid condition, often referred to as Long Covid,” : WHO

FRESH waves of Covid infections show the pandemic is “nowhere near over”, the World Health Organization’s chief warned Tuesday, voicing concern the virus is “running freely”.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said he was worried that case numbers were continuing to rise, putting further pressure on stretched health systems and workers.

Covid-19 is nowhere near over

“New waves of the virus demonstrate again that Covid-19 is nowhere near over,” he told a news conference, adding: “As the virus pushes at us, we must push back.”

“The virus is running freely and countries are not effectively managing the disease burden based on their capacity, in terms of both hospitalization for acute cases and the expanding number

of people with post-Covid condition, often referred to as Long Covid,” he said.

“As Covid-19 transmission and hospitalizations rise, governments must also deploy tried and tested measures like masking, improved ventilation and test and treat protocols,” Tedros insisted.

The WHO’s emergency committee on Covid-19 met on Friday via videoconference and determined the pandemic remains a

Public Health Emergency of International Concern — the highest alarm the WHO can sound.

WHO emergencies director Michael Ryan told the meeting global Covid cases reported to the WHO increased by 30 per cent in the last two weeks, largely driven by Omicron sub-variants BA.4, BA.5 and the lifting of public health and social measures.

Ryan said recent changes in testing policies were hindering

the detection of cases and the monitoring of virus evolution.

Implications of a pandemic

The committee stressed the need to reduce transmission of the virus as the implications of a pandemic caused by a new respiratory virus would not be fully understood, the WHO said in a statement Monday.

SOURCE: AFP



People, wearing the Chinese transitional dress, known as Hanfu, prepares to visit the Forbidden City in Beijing on 7 June 2022, after the government eased some Covid-19 restrictions with most museums resuming in the city. PHOTO: WANG ZHAO / AFP

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, raw chemicals, consumer goods, car parts and vehicles seized

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

Under the instructions of the Mandalay Region Anti-Illicit Trade Task Force, an on-duty inspection team conducted the inspections at the 16-Mile Kyaukchaw Checkpoint of Mandalay on 9 July.

K22,972,000 worth of car parts and other related things without official documents were seized from a Nissan Diesel 22-wheel truck (approximately K35 million), and the action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

In addition, a total of 1.6944 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K118,608 were captured in



Seized items in Shan State.

Thandwe township under the management of the Rakhine State Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force, and the action was taken under the Forest Law.

Similarly, a combined on-duty team under the supervision of the Customs Department at the Yepu Permanent Checkpoint of Shan State made

inspections on 11 July.

Officials confiscated a total of 2,500 kilogrammes of restricted chemical – Sodium Acetate – worth K5 million from a Toyota HiAce car (approximately K6 million) heading from Muse to Lashio township and a total of 750 mobile phones worth K15 million from a Nissan Diesel 12-wheel truck (approximately K10 million). The action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

Afterwards, the team at Kawkareik (Tadakyoe) Combined Checkpoint captured K7,620,000 worth of car parts and sports shoes without official documents from two trucks on 12 July. The action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

Similarly, on 11 and 12 July,

a combined team led by Police Force captured K3 million worth of an unregistered Voxy car at the Sittoung Bridge on the Toungoo- Thandaung Road and K3 million worth of an unregistered Honda Fit between the 6/3 and 6/4 milepost on the Yangon-Mawlamyine Road. The action was taken under the Export and Import Law.

In addition, on 13 July, a total of 1.9172 tonnes of teak worth K1,265,352 was confiscated in Bago township. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

Therefore, 12 arrests (approximately K108,975,960) were made on 9, 11, 12 and 13 July, according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee. — MNA

60 heroin blocks worth K210 mln seized in Muse, Shan State (North)

ACCORDING to the Myanmar Police Force, 21 kilogrammes of 60 heroin blocks (an estimated value of K210 million) were confiscated in Muse, Shan State (North).



An arrestee is seen together with seized heroin blocks and a motorbike.

On 10 July, a team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force pulled over and inspected a motorcycle driven by Ma Yan Pain Kyaung (aka) Arr Kyaung heading from Pangh-

kam Village to Muse township, according to information, in front of the No 2 Myayni bus terminal near the Muse-Namhkam Road in Muse, Shan State (North). The team found K210 million worth of 60 heroin blocks weighing 21 kilogrammes from the paper box on the motorcycle.

After the investigation, the suspect admitted that the seized drugs were to be carried from Panghkam Village to Swamsao Ward.

The MPF stated that the suspect is being prosecuted under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law. —MNA

Over 115 tonnes of illegal timbers seized in Nay Pyi Taw, regions/states



THE Forest Department of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation is implementing various ways and methods including the community monitoring and reporting system (CMRS) to control illegal timber and forest products.

According to the data collected by relevant forest departments, a total of 115.6032 tonnes of illegal timbers – 50.5002 tonnes of teak, 46.9738 tonnes of hardwood and 18.1292 tonnes of others were confiscated in regions/states and Nay Pyi Taw between 4 and 10 July, and the department stated that they arrested eight suspects along with eight vehicles. — 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 Nissan vehicle driven by Zar Ni Aung (aka) Zarni accompanied by Zay Yar Oo in Nant Si Aung village, Pinlon village-tract of Mohnyin Township on 10 July evening. They captured 1,760 kilogrammes of Ammonium Nitrate.

Similarly, the combined task force examined a motorbike driven by Moe Kyaw Thu at the checkpoint, which was located at the Tadakyoe village, Ye Kyaw Gyi village-tract of Kawkareik Township on 12 July. They nabbed 21,248 stimulant tablets, a pistol, 11 rounds of ammunition and a magazine. The combination team consisting of

members of the Anti-Drug Police Force searched a house in Chaungtuunge village, Kalwin village-tract of Myeik Township, at around 11:30 am on 12 July. They found Ma San Thi and her son, Myo Thiha(aka) Thar Phyu and captured 19,000 stimulant tablets from the handbag in the house.

Likewise, the task force in-

spected Ma Sabai Win's house in No(19/A), Bo Myat Htun Street, Bo Htun Zan ward, Dawbon Township at 7:05 am on 12 July. They seized 36,000 stimulant tablets. At 5:30 pm on the same day, the task force examined a motorbike driven by Sai Naw on the Muse-Lashio Road in Kutkai Township and seized 0.02 kilogrammes of heroin. The team

further inspected Eike Kyuu (aka) Hein Htet's house in Pyilongchantha extension quarter, No (1) ward, Kutkai Township and nabbed 0.03 kilogramme of heroin and 3,400 of stimulant tablets.

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

PANDEMIC
WORLD



A man wearing a face mask walks past Russian Orthodox cathedrals at the Zaryadye park in Moscow on 24 May 2022. **PHOTO: YURI KADIBNOV / AFP**

Moscow sees rise in Covid cases, recommends mask wearing

CORONAVIRUS cases have risen steeply in Russia’s capital Moscow over the past week, the city’s health authorities said.

Many of the infections are of the Omicron subvariants BA.4 and BA.5.

“Over the course of the past week, there has been a 57-per cent rise in new cases of Covid-19 compared to the previous week,” Moscow social services wrote on Telegram.

“We recommend that you wear a mask in public places because the new Omicron subvariants BA.4 and BA.5 spread more rapidly from person to person.”

For several weeks now, European countries have seen coronavirus infections rise again, largely due to the same Omicron subvariants.

The European Union on Monday recommended that all over-60s have a second vaccine

injection because of the forecast “summer wave” in Covid infections. Its recommendation had previously been for people over 80. Since 6 July, the Russian capital has registered between 500 and 600 new cases daily, compared to less than 400 the week before.

This is still far from the high of more than 20,000 new cases per day recorded in Moscow in February this year.—AFP

As Covid surges in US, health officials say vaccines remain key

FACED with a doubling of Covid hospitalizations in recent months, US health authorities reiterated the need Tuesday for vaccine vigilance to fight the pandemic, even as the jabs’ immunity against new Omicron subvariants remains unclear.

The United States is recording some 5,100 coronavirus-related hospitalizations per day, “a doubling of hospital admissions since early May”, Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Rochelle Walensky told a press briefing. The increase is linked to the meteoric rise of the Omicron variant’s BA.4 and BA.5 sublineages, which were first detected in April and which respectively represent 16 per cent and 65 per cent of the virus currently circulating in the United States.

While they do not appear to

be more severe than previous variants, “we do know it to be more transmissible and more immune-evading,” Walensky said, although she added that vaccination and booster effectiveness against severe illness and death likely remains high with the new variants.

“So staying up to date on your Covid-19 vaccines provides the best protection against severe outcomes,” she said.

Despite the rise in cases, the new variants should not be allowed to cause panic or “disrupt our lives,” President Joe Biden’s chief medical advisor Anthony Fauci told the briefing.

While daily tolls have reduced substantially since the crisis peaked more than a year ago, the United States is still recording 300 to 350 deaths per day, an “unacceptable” number, Fauci said.—AFP

China locks down city of 300,000 over single Covid case

HUNDREDS of thousands of people were under lockdown in a small Chinese city Tuesday after just one case of Covid-19 was detected, as Beijing’s strict no-tolerance virus strategy showed no sign of abating.

China is the last major economy glued to a zero-Covid policy, crushing new outbreaks with snap lockdowns, forced quarantines and onerous travel curbs despite mounting public fatigue and damage to the economy.

Authorities in several regions have imposed a range of restrictions as they struggle to tamp down fresh flare-ups driven by the fast-spreading Omicron variant.

After reporting a new domestic infection, the steelmaking hub of Wugang in Henan province announced Monday that it would implement three days of “closed control” in response to “the needs of disease prevention”, according to an official

notice.

None of the city’s 320,000 people are allowed to set foot outside their homes until midday Thursday, the notice said, adding that basic necessities would be delivered by local authorities.

Residents are not allowed to use their cars without permission and must obtain official authorization to travel under “closed-loop” conditions in case of emergencies, the notice said.—AFP



After reporting a new domestic infection, the steelmaking hub of Wugang in Henan province announced Monday that it would implement three days of “closed control” in response to “the needs of disease prevention”. A farmer carries her baskets balanced on a bamboo pole as the sun sets over a village near the Wugang Manganese Smelting Plant in Hunan province in central China. **PHOTO: FREDERIC J. BROWN/AFP / FILE**



As of 22 June, around 78% of people in the US had received their first shot to guard against COVID-19 and 67% were considered fully vaccinated. **PHOTO: ANDREW CABALLERO-REYNOL / AFP**

Queen gives UK’s health service top award, praises Covid vaccine rollout

BRITAIN’S Queen Elizabeth II on Tuesday awarded the George Cross to the state-run National Health Service (NHS) for its work over the past 74 years and praised its Covid-19 vaccine rollout.

The George Cross is the highest non-military award for gallantry bestowed by the British government.

The queen presented the medal to health leaders from across the UK. They were joined at the ceremony by frontline workers, who nursed the country through the pandemic.

The latter included May Parsons, the nurse who delivered the first shot of the world’s Covid-19 vaccine rollout.

The nurse told the queen:

“We’re terribly, terribly proud of the vaccination roll-out.”

“Yes, it was amazing,” she replied. Britain was the first country in the world to deploy an approved Covid-19 vaccine.

The 96-year-old head of state was joined by her son and heir Prince Charles at the ceremony in Windsor Castle, the queen’s residence west of London.—AFP

ECONOMY WORLD

UN General Assembly adopts resolution on strengthening connectivity between Central, South Asia

THE United Nations General Assembly on Monday adopted a resolution on strengthening connectivity between Central and South Asia.

The resolution recognizes the importance of cooperation in establishing safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport networks with a view to achieving transport connectivity across Central and South Asia.

It encourages the continuation and advancement of cooperation between Central and South Asia by expanding transport and information and communications technologies infrastructure and creating new international transport corridors that open convenient, sustainable, commercially viable, affordable, accessible, inclusive and safe routes to seaports.

It recognizes the importance of Afghanistan's poten-



Pakistan and Uzbekistan have exchanged goods through war-torn Afghanistan. **PHOTO: RFE/RL/XINHUA**

tial role in connecting Central and South Asia, as well as its economic development and integration into interregional economic processes for lasting peace and stability.

The resolution emphasizes the importance of developing potential tourist routes covering the historical and cultural centres of the Central and South

Asian states, and supports the efforts of Central and South Asia to further strengthen relationships between the regions and their people, including in the fields of education, science and technology, innovation, tourism, culture, art and sports. It recognizes the importance of energy connectivity between Central and South Asia.—Xinhua

Haiti to lose 4,000 textile jobs due to fall in US demand

HAITI'S textile industry will shed at least 4,000 jobs by year's end due to the slowdown in the US market, further hurting an impoverished Caribbean country already racked by unemployment, instability and gang violence.

The Haitian subsidiary of the South Korean textile group Sae-A, which currently employs 10,000 people in the Caribbean country, announced the sharp cut in its workforce via a press

release dated July 4.

"Due to the recent economic decline in the US market, 45 per cent of orders from our US retail customers have been cancelled," said S&H Global, which supplies the Gap, Target and Walmart, among others.

That drastic reduction in activity is pushing the industry to "lay off up to 4,000 employees by the end of the year", said the company, calling it "a heart-breaking situation".

S&H Global started operating in Haiti in 2012, when the Caracol industrial park opened near the country's second city Cap Haitien on the northern coast.

In its warehouses, where scores of sewing machines are lined up, many members of the overwhelmingly female workforce found their first formal job in a country where nearly half of the population suffers from food insecurity.—AFP



Haiti is a free market economy that enjoys low labour costs and tariff-free access to the US for apparel exports. **BETTER WORK.ORG/AFP**

EU to again slash growth forecast as high inflation persists

THE European Commission on Monday said it will again cut its growth forecast for this year and hike its expectations for inflation, but it signalled it saw no sign yet of recession in Europe.

"What we see is that economic growth is proving quite resilient this year. Still, one can expect some downward revision and even more so for the next year because of many uncertainties and risks," EU executive vice-president Valdis Dombrovskis told reporters in Brussels.

He was giving a sneak preview of the commission's most up-to-date forecasts for the EU's 27 member states that are due on Thursday.

The commission, the EU's executive arm, in May already

sharply cut expectations for growth in the EU to 2.7 per cent in 2022 and 2.3 per cent in 2023, down from a forecast of 4.0 per cent and 2.8 per cent just months earlier. This followed the International Monetary Fund that also warned that the war in Ukraine will weigh heavily upon economic growth in Europe.

Inflation in the eurozone last month beat a new record, hitting 8.6 per cent in defiance of hopes that the surge in consumer prices would begin to cool even as the war in Ukraine still rages.

This was still far higher than the current forecast by the commission, which in May projected inflation in the eurozone at 6.1 per cent for 2022 and 2.7 per cent in 2023. — AFP



Rungis, located south of Paris, is the largest fresh produce market in the world, serving 18 million French consumers every day. **PHOTO: AFP**

German investor morale slumps as gas crisis looms

GERMAN investor confidence dropped in July, a closely watched survey showed on Tuesday, as industry fretted over the potential impact of a halt in Russian gas supplies on Europe's largest economy.

The ZEW institute's economic expectations index fell 25.8 points to minus 53.8 points, its lowest level since 2011.

For its survey, ZEW quizzes experts about the current economic situation and the outlook for the coming six months. A negative reading means that most experts are pessimistic.

The July reading was "slightly lower" than the level

seen in March 2020 at the start of the coronavirus pandemic, when shutdowns effectively halted large parts of the economy, ZEW said in a statement.

Concerns surrounding Germany's energy supply, an imminent rise in European Central Bank interest rates and continuing coronavirus-related restrictions in key market China contributed to a "significant worsening of the economic outlook", ZEW president Achim Wambach said.

Morale among export-oriented and energy-intensive industries fell "particularly sharply", Wambach said.—AFP

GLOBAL
AFFAIRS

China slams US consular official's remarks on Hong Kong policy

ANY actions and activities aimed at meddling in China's internal affairs, including Hong Kong affairs, undermining China's national security and the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong are not allowed and are doomed to fail, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said Tuesday.

Spokesperson Wang Wenbin made the remarks at a daily news briefing when answering a query relevant to the so-called "farewell remarks" of Hanscom Smith, outgoing US Consul-General in Hong Kong. "The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) government has already made a solemn response to this," Wang said. Wang added that the US consular official disregarded facts, made wild talks on China's Hong Kong policy, and denigrated Hong Kong's political and eco-



A government-sponsored advertisement promotes the national security law near an entrance to the Cross-Harbour Tunnel in Hong Kong, China, on Monday, 29 March 2021. China's National People's Congress is holding a standing committee meeting on 29 and 30 March to review draft revisions regarding the elections of Hong Kong Chief Executive and Legislative Council. **PHOTO: SAM TSANG/XINHUA /FILE**

nomic situation. The Chinese side deplores and rejects this. Wang said, since the implementation of the Law on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong SAR, national security has been safeguarded, Hong Kong society has been brought back to the right track, and the rule of law and justice have been upheld." It is highly recognized by all sectors of Hong Kong's society and welcomed by the international community," Wang added.

According to a poll, 76.2 per cent of Hong Kong residents believe the freedom granted by the Basic Law has not been affected since the implementation of the Law on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong SAR. Also, 63 per cent believe the law has improved Hong Kong's business environment.—Xinhua

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Russia and Ukraine seek to break grain impasse in Türkiye

RUSSIA and Ukraine were due Wednesday to hold their first talks with UN and Turkish officials aimed at breaking a months-long impasse over grain exports that has seen food prices soar and millions face hunger. The four-way meeting in Istanbul comes with Russia's invasion of Ukraine showing no sign of abating and the threat of food shortages spreading across the poorest parts of the world. Ukraine is a vital exporter of wheat and grains such as barley and maize. It has also supplied nearly half of all the sunflower oil traded on global markets. But exports across the Black Sea have been blocked by

Russian warships and mines Kyiv has laid to avert a feared amphibious assault. The negotiations are being complicated by growing

suspensions that Russia is trying to export grain it has stolen from Ukrainian farmers in regions under its control.—AFP



The four-way meeting in Istanbul comes with Russia's invasion of Ukraine showing no sign of abating and the threat of food shortages spreading across the poorest parts of the world. **PHOTO: AFP**

Iran to supply Russians with UAVs for Ukraine: White House

IRAN is planning to supply hundreds of drones with combat weapon capabilities to Russia for use in Ukraine, a top US official said Monday.

Jake Sullivan, the White House national security advisor,

said the information received by the United States supported views that the Russian military is facing challenges sustaining its weaponry after significant losses in Ukraine.

"The Iranian government

is preparing to provide Russia with up to several hundred UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles), including weapons-capable UAVs, on an expedited timeline," Sullivan told reporters.—AFP

Belarus president claims West plotting to attack Russia

BELARUS President Alexander Lukashenko claimed on Tuesday that the West was preparing to attack Russia via Belarus.

Speaking to military graduates and officers, Lukashenko said he discussed the alleged Western plot with Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday.

"Strategic plans for an attack against Russia are being developed," Lukashenko alleged, saying the West would

seek to target Russia "through Ukraine and through Belarus".

"History is repeating itself," he said, in an apparent reference to the invasion of Russia by Napoleon's troops in 1812 and by Nazi Germany in 1941.

Putin sent troops into Ukraine on 24 February.

Belarus, the Kremlin's main ally, has served as a staging ground for the Russian army in its offensive on neighbouring Ukraine.—AFP

Putin to travel to Tehran for Raisi-Erdogan summit on 19 July: Kremlin

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin will travel to Tehran on 19 July for a Syria summit with his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi and Turkish Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Kremlin announced Tuesday.

"The president's visit to Tehran is being planned for 19 July," Kremlin spokesman

Dmitry Peskov said. He said the trio would meet for peace talks on Syria.

Russia, Turkey and Iran have in recent years been holding talks on Syria as part of the so-called "Astana peace process" to end more than 11 years of conflict in the Middle Eastern country.—AFP

Biden heads to Middle East for first tour as president

US President Joe Biden lands in the Middle East on Wednesday for a trip that will see Israeli leaders urge tougher action against Iran, before a delicate stop in Saudi Arabia. The 79-year-old president's visit to Jeddah on Friday will be the focus of the tour, after Biden branded Saudi Arabia a "pariah" over the 2018 murder of dissident Saudi journalist and US resident Jamal Khashoggi.

Air Force One — which has left the United States and is expected to land at 1230 GMT in Tel

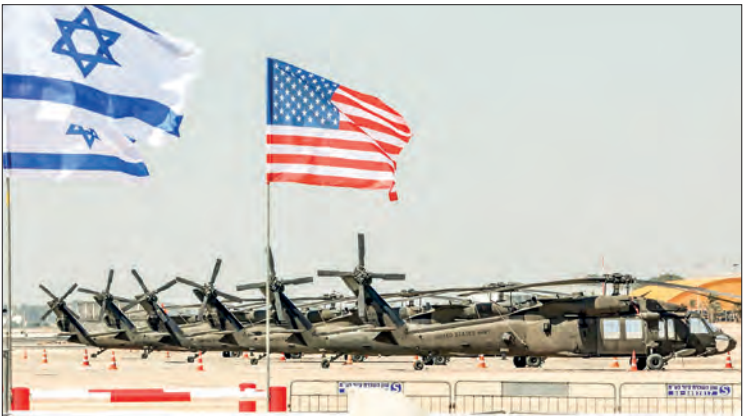
Aviv — will also make an unprecedented direct flight between the Jewish state and the conservative Gulf kingdom that does not recognize its existence.

Before that, Biden will meet Israeli leaders seeking to broaden cooperation against Iran, and Palestinian leaders frustrated by what they describe as Washington's failure to curb Israeli aggression. The persistent frustrations of Israeli-Palestinian diplomacy are nothing new for Biden, who first visited the region

in 1973 after being elected to the Senate.

Jerusalem to Bethlehem

Moments after Biden touches down, Israel's military will show him its new Iron Beam system, an anti-drone laser it claims is crucial to countering Iran's UAV fleet. Israel insists it will do whatever is necessary to thwart Iran's nuclear ambitions, and is staunchly opposed to a restoration of the 2015 deal that gave Tehran sanctions relief.— AFP



Military helicopters — and the Israeli and US flags — are pictured at Israel's Ben Gurion Airport ahead of US President Joe Biden's visit. **PHOTO: JACK GUEZ / AFP**

Sri Lankan president flees to Maldives amid economic crisis, protests



As president, Gotabaya Rajapaksa enjoys immunity from arrest, and he is believed to have wanted to go abroad before stepping down to avoid the possibility of being detained. **PHOTO: AFP**

PRESIDENT Gotabaya Rajapaksa fled Sri Lanka on Wednesday, a government official said, just days after protesters stormed his official residence as the island nation grapples with its worst economic crisis since independence.

The president, who was due to resign the same day, boarded a military transport plane with his wife and others and flew to the Maldives in the Indian Ocean, the official said, drawing to a close of the lengthy Rajapaksa family rule.

Rajapaksa has already

signed a resignation letter dated Wednesday, according to local media. The selection of a new president is planned for 20 July.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe on Wednesday declared a state of emergency across Sri Lanka as acting president, Reuters news agency reported. Last Saturday, several thousand demonstrators entered the president's official residence in the country's largest city Colombo and seized the compound, demanding he step down. The protesters managed to enter the residence despite police attempts to stop them by using tear gas and water cannons. Rajapaksa tried unsuccessfully to leave for Dubai in the United Arab Emirates on Monday. His attempt was thwarted at airport immigration. There is speculation he feared losing immunity from arrest after he is no longer president.— Kyodo

Shooter knew of Abe's video message to religious group-linked event

THE man accused of fatally shooting former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has told investigators he learned online about a video message that Abe sent to an event hosted in September by a group affiliated with a religious organization that he resents, investigative sources said Wednesday.

Tetsuya Yamagami, 41, believed the former prime minister was associated with the organization, but the head of the Japan branch of the Family Federation for World Peace

and Unification, widely known as the Unification Church, has said Abe was not a member of the church.

Yamagami is likely to have watched the video message in March or April this year, according to the sources.

Yamagami has told police the attack was not motivated by Abe's politics and he chose to make an attempt on the former prime minister's life after initially planning to target an executive of a religious group.—Kyodo



Circled are what appear to be bullet holes in the wall of a car parking facility near the scene of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's assassination in Nara on 13 July 2022. Abe was shot on 8 July during an election campaign speech. **PHOTO: KYODO**

US VP Harris launches Pacific push with new embassies, envoy

THE United States launched a major push into the Pacific Wednesday as it seeks to hold off China's advances in the region, with Vice-President Kamala Harris announcing the opening of two new embassies at a key regional summit.

Washington will open missions in Tonga and Kiribati and also appoint its first-ever Pacific regional envoy, Harris said as she pledged \$600 million in fund-

ing for the region in her address to the Pacific Islands Forum in Fiji.

The video-link appearance was a diplomatic coup for the United States, with China's attempts to secure a meeting on the sidelines of the summit rebuffed.

The forum marks the first time Pacific leaders have met since the Solomon Islands signed a controversial security

pact with China earlier this year.

And the mounting US-China rivalry in the Pacific has directed intense interest towards this year's meeting, which brings together leaders from across the strategically important region.

Tongan Prime Minister Siaosi Sovaleni told AFP his country was "really happy that the US will be opening an embassy in Tonga, it will be the first time".— AFP



Myanmar women's team reach semi-finals with second-placed position

THE final day of Group B of the 2022 ASEAN Women's Championship was held in the Philippines yesterday evening and Myanmar lost to Viet Nam 0-4.

The Myanmar team has already reached the semi-finals before this match, so all the strong players were rested and the young players were allowed to play in the match.

The Myanmar team competed with young players in order to play at full strength in the semi-finals.

Myanmar key players Captain Khin Malar Tun, Win Theingi Tun, Khin Than Wai, and Khin Moh Moh Tun were left on the line-up list.

Myanmar head coach Daw Thet Thet Win used only youth players: goalkeeper Myo Mya Mya Nyein, Phyu Phyu Win, Khaing Thazin, Moe Ma Ma Soe, Zun Yuya Oo, Win Win, May Phoo Ko, Pont Pont Pyae Maung, Wai Phoo Eain, Hnin Pwin Aye and Yin Loon Eain for the match.

A Myanmar team player (white) controls the ball during the AFF Women's Championship group match against team Viet Nam in the Philippines on 13 July 2022. **PHOTO: MFF**

The Myanmar team, which featured young players, could not compete with the defending champions Viet Nam and conceded three goals in the first half.

The Myanmar team had to concede another goal in the second half and lost by four goals by the final whistle.

At the end of Group B matches, Viet Nam finished first in the

group with 12 points, while the Myanmar team finished second in the group with nine points and advanced to the semi-finals. Timor-Leste and Laos were eliminated from the group.

The semi-finals will continue on 15 July with Myanmar facing Thailand and Viet Nam will take on the Philippines. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Myawady FC grab consecutive victories in MNL 2022



GFA FC players (red) vie for the ball against Myawady FC players (white) during their Myanmar National League Week-3 match at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on 13 July 2022. **PHOTO: MNL**

MYAWADY FC made their straight wins after beating GFA FC 4-2 in their Week-3 match of the 2022 Myanmar National League at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on 13 July.

GFA tried to win their first match but conceded three goals in the first half.

Myawady defeated Yangon in the first match of the season but

beat ISPE and GFA FCs.

Both teams came out with a full set of strong players to win the match and the Myawady team managed to control the match with a series of goals in the first half. Thet Wai Moe scored the first goal for the Myawaddy team in the 5th minute and Kaung Si Thu scored the second goal in the 31st minute.

Near the end of the first half, the Myawady team had to take a penalty kick and goalkeeper Tun Nanda Oo made no mistake. The Myawady team was leading by three goals at the end of the first half. In the second half, the GFA team increased their attacking power to get revenge. In the 78th minute, the match was intense as Tan Toe Aung scored the equalizer from the penalty spot.

GFA tried to get more equalizers but the Myawady team scored the fourth goal in the 85th minute by Ye Moe Yan. Myawaddy has six points from three matches, while GFA has lost all three and has not scored. The last match of MNL Week-3 will be held at Thuwunna Stadium at 3 pm today and Rakhine United will play against Yangon United. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

1. Political affairs

- (a) To build a Union based on democracy and federalism, through a disciplined and genuine multiparty democratic system that is fair and just.
- (b) To emphasize the achievement of enduring peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).
- (c) To continue implementing the principle of peaceful co-existence among countries through an independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy.

2. Economic affairs

- (a) To enhance production based on agriculture and livestock through modern techniques and strengthen all-round development in other sectors of the economy.
- (b) To develop a stable market economy and promote international investment in order to enhance the economic development of the entire National people.
- (c) To promote and support local businesses to create employment opportunities and increase domestic production.

3. Social affairs

- (a) To ensure a strong and dynamic Union spirit, the genuine spirit of patriotism.
- (b) To respect and promote the customs and traditions of all National peoples and preserve and safeguard their cultural heritage and national characteristics.
- (c) To enhance the health, fitness and education quality of the entire nation.

Sports confirmed for 32nd SEA Games

OFFICIALS have confirmed the sports events for the 32nd SEA Games to be held in Cambodia.

The SEA Games Federation meeting was held on 12 and 13 July in Cambodia and was attended by representatives from Southeast Asian countries.

The 32nd SEA Games will be held from 5 to 16 May 2023 and will feature 40 sports.

Only 39 of these sports will be awarded medals, and Teqball will be included as a demonstration competition only.

Athletics, Swimming, Badminton, Basketball, Billiards and Snooker, Bodybuilding, Boxing, Chess, Cricket, Cycling, Dance Sports, Esports, Swordsman-ship, Finswimming, Floorball, Football, Golf, Gymnastics,

Hockey, Jet Ski, Judo, Karate, Kun Khmer, Martial Arts (Jujitsu, Vovinam, Kickboxing, Arnis, Kun Bokator, Martial Arts Korea), Obstacle Race; Petanque, Sailing, Sepak Takraw, Silat, Soft Tennis, Table Tennis, Taekwondo, Tennis, Traditional Boat Race, Volleyball, Weight Lifting, Wrestling and Wushu were included as the SEA Games event.

Most Southeast Asian countries have called for more sports to participate including shooting, Rhythmic, and Kurash.

Myanmar sports teams are under training for the upcoming SEA Games.

Myanmar teams won nine gold, 18 silver and 35 bronze medals at the last Viet Nam SEA Games. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM