THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

CMP constitutes 26% of overall export values in H2 of mini-budget period

Female workers are pictured sewing garments at one CMP workplace.

MYANMAR'S garment exports in the second three months of the 2021-2022 mini-budget period (October-March) accounted for over 26 per cent of overall export earnings, according to the announcement of the Ministry of Planning and Finance.

During the first half of the mini-budget period, Myanmar generated US$1.055 billion from garment exports. The income in the second half of the six month mini-budget period amounted to $1.174 billion.

The values of Myanmar's garment export in the six months of the 2021-2022 mini-budget period (October-March) were $302.9 million in October, $337.9 million in November, $414.3 million in December, $410.3 million in January, $360.6 million in February and $403.8 million in March, totalling $2.229 billion.

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Green gram exports perform best among pulses

MYANMAR'S green gram exports in the past five months of the 2022-2023 financial year accumulated approximately 300,000 tonnes, which is recorded as the highest volume out of 700,000 tonnes of various pulses exports.

Myanmar shipped 210,000 tonnes of green grams to external markets in the past five months by sea while about 93,000 tonnes of green grams were shipped to neighbouring countries via cross-border trade, according to the official statistics released by the Ministry of Commerce.

On 12 September 2022, the prices of various pulses stood at over K 2,030,000 per tonne of black gram (Fair Average Quality/RC), K2,340,000 per tonne of black gram (Special Quality/RC) and K2,095,000 per tonne of pigeon pea (red gram) RC in Yangon markets.

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Message from MoHA Union Minister Lt-Gen Soe Htut, Chairman of the Central Body for Suppression of Trafficking in Persons 10th Myanmar Anti-Trafficking in Persons Day

13 September 2022

1. The issue of trafficking in persons is a modern form of slavery which can be regarded as inhumane exploitation. Trafficking in persons occurs on a global scale and the impacts of trafficking in persons strike more in the developing nations. In modern times, trafficking in persons is an issue linked to transnational crimes. Though the international community puts its utmost efforts to address the issue, it recognizes that the number of trafficking in persons-related cases remains high.
2. Myanmar defined anti-trafficking in persons as a national priority in 1997 by adopting three strategies and four plans. Myanmar joined the United Nations as a member state on 19 April 1948 and signed the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) along with its two Protocols namely Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children and Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air on 30 March 2004.
3. In addition, Myanmar is a member of the Cooperative Project against Trafficking in Persons of the Six Greater Mekong Sub-Region (Six GMS Nations) and bilateral Memoranda of Understanding against Trafficking in Persons with China, Thailand, Laos and India were signed to further strengthen the cooperative mechanisms in combatting trafficking in persons. Moreover, within the framework of the Bali Process and the Bay of Bengal Initiative on Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), which was established in 1997, Myanmar, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal have been cooperating since 2004 in order to combat transnational organized crimes including trafficking in persons.
4. Regarding regional cooperation, ASEAN member states including Myanmar developed the ASEAN Convention on Trafficking in Persons for the prevention of trafficking in persons on 21 November 2015. Furthermore, the SOMTC working group on trafficking in persons and the ASEAN Heads of Specialist Units working group on trafficking in persons were formed to strengthen regional cooperation in addressing the issue. Additionally, Bohol TIP Work Plan (2017-2020) has been developed for its implementation in cooperation with ASEAN Sectoral Bodies/ Organs- SBOs.
5. Nowadays, the cases of trafficking in persons are increasing in different countries and inflict greater risks among vulnerable communities. According to the 2021 TIP Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the impact of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nature of trafficking in persons and on the number of victims in the last two years is undeniable. It is observed that the traffickers committed trafficking in persons by taking advantage of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, economic downturn and increased amount of time spent online by adults and children. Therefore, it is stressed in the report the need to further enhance our capacity and efforts on prevention measures.
6. Moreover, the report also mentioned the increase in the number of victims of sexual exploitation and forced labour on a global scale due to the crises that occurred in the last nine months, the mounted cases of recruitment by traffickers utilizing technologies such as internet users worldwide increase due to advanced technologies and COVID-19 pandemic and lastly, the call on the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2020 which fell on 30 July 2020 to effectively apply technology in preventing trafficking in persons.
7. In Myanmar, the key factor that contributes to trafficking in persons is the rise in the search for job opportunities. There seems an especially strong connection with the demand vacuum of other countries since domestic trafficking comprises only 19.68 % while international trafficking does 80.32 per cent. Fifty per cent of victims comprise women and children. Different forms of trafficking in persons include persuading young girls by brokers for forced marriage, surrogacy, sexual exploitation, labour exploitation on fishing vessels and rafts, forced labour by debt on vulnerable people and selling people by using social media, etc.
8. Regarding the awareness raising on the risks of trafficking in persons, the measures such as providing training, broadcasting stories and songs on trafficking in persons, erecting billboards, distributing pamphlets, sending SMSs via mobile operators, and adding as a subject in the curriculum of basic education, etc. are conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Information. The 24-hour Hotlines for receiving complaints on trafficking in persons are installed in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay and Muse in order to rescue the victims and investigate the traffickers in a timely manner. Moreover, the migrant resource centres are opened with the aim to raise awareness and provide information on trafficking in persons for the migrant workers and their family members.
9. In the victim-support sector, "National Standard Operating Procedures on Return/ Repatriation, Reintegration and Rehabilitation of victims of trafficking in persons" was published and introduced to the Central Body for Suppression of trafficking in persons and other relevant departments. The training courses on the use of the SOP to enhance the coordination among the practitioners and to timely fulfil the rights and needs of victims timely were provided. The victims of trafficking in persons were supported for their travel expenses, medical expenses and food expenses during the trial period. Support for the victims for their rehabilitation and reunion with their families has also been continuing. A separate fund was set in order to support victims. Besides, the basic needs of the victims are provided for while they are in the temporary shelters in Myawady, Muse, Kawthoung, Mandalay and Yangon and in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, COVID-19 preventive measures including taking COVID-19 tests and providing personal protective equipment along with the psychological support have been making available.
10. The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Law (2005) was amended in order to address the modern forms of trafficking in persons and the amended law was enacted as the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons Law on 16 June 2022. In the amended Law, additional punishments and charges for the traffickers who use the internet and technology were included so that cases of trafficking in persons by using the internet and IT could also be addressed. In Session 6 of the new Law, there is not only witness protection but also victim protection. The amended law further includes a provision for witness protection in Session 6 while the old one includes a session only for victim protection.
11. Taking advantage of advanced information technology by the perpetrators of trafficking in persons poses a challenge for prevention. UNODC also called for making use of technology in the prevention of trafficking in persons. The following measures must be implemented as prevention of trafficking in persons will be contributed by the development of human resources, economic development, improved knowledge, and capacity to effectively implement policies and strategies and the achievement of technology:
    (a) To enhance cooperation among the relevant ministries, Nay Pyi Taw Council, Regional/State governments, civil society organizations and the local population in a coordinated manner for the prevention of trafficking in persons through the national economic development plans;
    (b) To conduct research and studies on combating trafficking in persons during and after the post-COVID-19 pandemic and apply the findings practically;
    (c) To explore effective ways to respond and investigate the cases based on the victims' experience by using the technology;
    (d) To strengthen the cooperation with trafficking in person suppression organizations from neighbouring countries and collaborate with them in countering transnational trafficking in person cases, and to improve the use of online technology.
12. In accordance with the motto of the 10th ceremony of Myanmar's Anti-trafficking in Persons Day 2022 "Strengthen the role of technology in combatting trafficking in persons", cooperation among the relevant ministries should be continued to advance technologies in the exchange of information and investigation with the support of the people. In this way, it is firmly believed that the tireless efforts of Myanmar will greatly contribute to combatting trafficking in persons in the country and beyond.

Panglong Spirit

OUR country gained independence through the Panglong Agreement with Union spirit. The essence of the Panglong Agreement is the Panglong Spirit, which is also called the Union Spirit. The Union Spirit is based on building a future Union rooted in democracy and federalism. Therefore, holding meetings with ethnic armed organizations must be based on the Union Spirit to be able to discuss the actual requirements of the regions and the country.

(The excerpt from the speech delivered by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on the Occasion of the Eighteen Months of the Assumption of State Duties by the State Administration Council on 1 August 2022)

Union Industry Minister inspects factories in Kyaukse Township

UNION Minister Dr Charlie Than of the Ministry of Industry inspected the Kyaukse Plastic Factory that halted its production line at the Kyaukse Industrial Zone in Mandalay Region on 11 September.

During the inspection, the Union minister said that the cooperation between MoI factories and private sectors can bring the improvement in manufacturing of local products which leads to lessening foreign currency use and fulfilling the need of domestic requirements including job opportunities for residents.

The Kyaukse Plastic Factory was built in 2001 and manufacturing activities began in 2004. The factory produces cement bags (with and without paper).

Afterwards, the Union minister observed the production of hospital beds and other supplies at the Home Utility Factory (Minsu) for timely production and delivery to hospitals that will be opened in expanded districts. He then exhorted responsible personnel to follow the established quality management systems, exercise close supervision on unit labour cost, and take measures for the complete fabrication of raw materials and accessories according to the procedures.

The Home Utility Factory (Minsu) manufactures a variety of household stainless steel items, various hospital furniture, accessories for the surgery room, steel pipes and plastic materials. Those products are being displayed at the ministry's product showrooms and produced according to the preference of the Ministry/Organization and private entrepreneurs. — MNA

MoI Union Minister Dr Charlie Than views round the Home Utility Factory (Minsu) in Mandalay Region.

MoC Union Minister inspects road, bridge construction sites in Kayin State

THE construction of A1 Side and A2 Side of Attaran Bridge and Bored Pile of Gyaing (Zathapyin) Bridge, parts of a series of the construction of the East-West Economic Corridor, are being conducted and training courses are also provided to the fresher engineers.

Union Minister for Construction U Shwe Lay, accompanied by Kayin State Chief Minister U Saw Myint Oo and other officials, inspected the Attaran Bridge, Gyaing (Zathapyin), Gyaing (Kawkareik) Bridge, roads, bridges and regional development activities in Kayin State on 11 September.

MoC Union Minister U Shwe Lay inspects the construction site of the new bridge.

On arrival at the new Attaran Bridge construction site, the Union Minister talked about the deployment of newly appointed engineers in three groups to three bridges along that route, Bago River Crossing Bridge No (3) and Dala Bridge in Yangon for technical experiences and the needs to complete the operations in time without affecting the environment.

Then, the Union minister inspected the strength of the old Gyaing (Zathapyin) Bridge, Bored Pile construction of a new bridge, Eindu-Kawkareik road upgrading works, approach road to Gyaing (Kawkareik), connection of deck of main bridge and suspension using new technology together with the state transport minister and other officials.

At noon, the Union minister and the Kayin State Chief Minister also checked the Hpa-an detour construction, a roundabout construction site at the junction of the detour to be connected to the Hpa-an-Aphyaunk-Mawlamyine road and Thanlwin Bridge (Hpa-an) and left the necessary instructions.

Then, the Union minister met with the departmental staff under the ministry in Hpa-an Township and stressed the needs to serve the duties for the development of the state, district and township, follow the civil service rules and regulations and be free from party politics.

Finally, the Union minister inspected the strength of Thanlwin Bridge (Hpa-an) and upgrade works on the Hpa-an-Thaton road section. — MNA

Daily newspapers available online

FOR those who would like to read the Myanma Alinn, the Kyemon and the Global New Light of Myanmar, published daily by the Ministry of Information, please visit www.moi.gov.mm/mal, www.moi.gov.mm/km, www.moi.gov.mm/nlm and www.gnlm.com.mm/e-paper.

News and Periodicals Enterprise

Those wishing to enter the legal fold can contact respective townships' Red Cross Society, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, Social Welfare Office and social welfare organizations authorized by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement in addition to reception centres in border areas, Tatmadaw units and police stations

THE Information Team of the State Administration Council has released statements inviting CDM staff, students and youths, who are in border areas and ethnic armed groups, they can contact the nearest reception centres in border areas, Tatmadaw units and police stations if they want to enter the legal fold and the government will guarantee their lives following the rules and regulations.

In order to prevent the unnecessary loss of human resources, the State Administration Council has publicly invited the basic education staff who are absent from duty to resume their duties and those who take part in armed resistance under various names of groups, including PDFs. Meanwhile, 3,156 education workers, who were absent from their duties, another 1,009 people, who want to withdraw the cases that were opened against them, and 231 PDF members have contacted and returned to the legal fold. Then, they were given back to their parents systematically and the numbers of people who enter the legal fold and those who wish to are rising. Therefore, the government is making efforts to accept more numbers of those people.

The government opens reception centres in border areas for those who would like to return to the legal fold. Moreover, those wishing to return home can contact respective townships' Red Cross Society, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, Social Welfare Office and social welfare organizations authorized by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. It is guaranteed that they will be able to lead their daily lives peacefully.

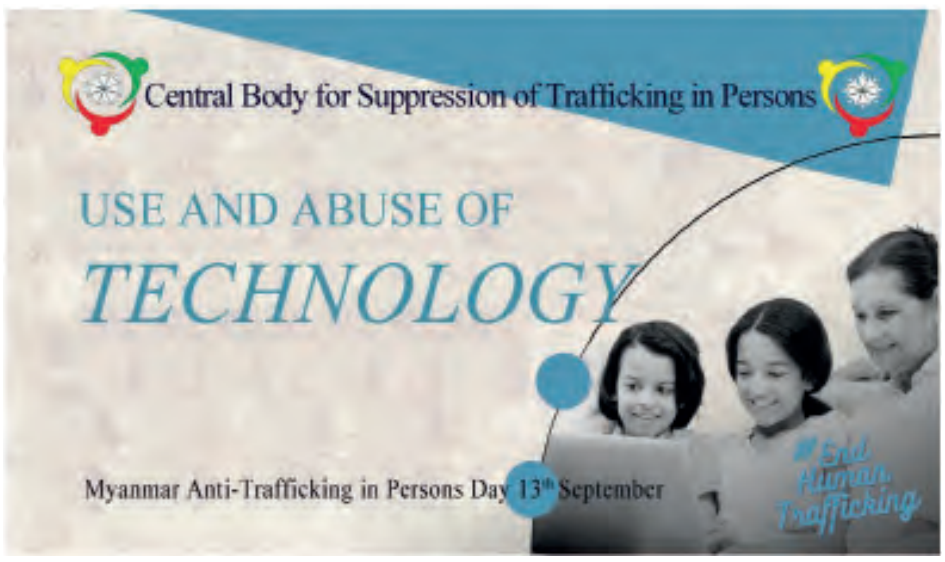
Information Team
State Administration Council

MoL Union Minister receives IOM Chief of Mission

UNION Minister Dr Pwint San of the Ministry of Labour met Mr Dragan Aleksoski, Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration-IOM at the ministry's meeting hall at 10 am on 12 September.

Both parties discussed cooperation between the Ministry of Labour and IOM, the management of the international labour migration on the drafting and implementation of the five-year national action plan for 2013-2017, the ongoing progress of the five-year plan for 2018-2022, the suspended work due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the remaining work programmes to be implemented, the creation of employment opportunities in areas with high migration rates and raising awareness on dissemination of skills and knowledge for entrepreneurship activities. — MNA

The IOM Chief of Mission calls on MoL Union Minister Dr Pwint San in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.



2022 Anti-Trafficking in Persons Days' Objectives

* To mobilize the participation of all citizens in combatting human trafficking as a national duty;
* To have the public instilled with awareness about and knowledge of trafficking in persons;
* To protect and care trafficked victims with empathy; and
* To strengthen cooperation and coordination among all counter trafficking stakeholders government agencies, civil society organizations, UN agencies, international organizations and general public.

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

Green gram exports perform best among pulses

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The green gram prices move in the range of K2,665 and K3,500 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) depending on the varieties, according to the daily price data. The price of green gram from the central Myanmar region stood at K1.8 million per tonne. The FOB prices of pulses are $790-810 per tonne of black grams (FAQ), $810-830 per tonne of pigeon pea (red gram) and $730-750 per tonne of newly harvested green grams from the central Myanmar region respectively.

This month, India, the main buyer of Myanmar green gram, suspended purchase. Moreover, Chinese demand for green gram also declined. Consequently, the price of green gram is priced at K1.8 million per tonne only when the prices of black gram and pigeon pea peaked at over K2 million. The price of green gram was estimated at K145,000-160,000 per three-basket bag (56.25 visses) in Mandalay market on 12 September, according to Mandalay commodity market's data.

There were 9.63 million acres of various pulses plantations across Myanmar in the 2020-2021 Financial Year, with an estimated production of 24.16 million baskets. Also, 1.75 million tonnes of pulses valued at $1.324 billion were shipped to foreign markets then.

Rice is the staple food of Myanmar. Pules are grown for domestic consumption and exports. Other beans including kidney bean, red Phaseolus, blue Phaseolus, black gram, pigeon pea, green gram, black-eyed beans and butter bean are primarily cultivated for the potential export market.

Green gram is commonly found in lower Myanmar regions, especially in Kayan and Thongwa areas after monsoon paddy is harvested. It constitutes the second-largest plantation in Myanmar. Green gram is cultivated as a monsoon crop with the use of irrigation networks in the tropical central Myanmar area. Green gram is utilized in making bean sprouts and rice vermicelli in domestic markets. It is also used in bean soup, the Global New Light of Myanmar quoted Ko Kyaw Myint, a green gram seller from the Bayintnaung Wholesale Market, as saying.

As per official data of 2016-2017FY, the monsoon and winter green gram acreage totalled three million, with an estimated yield of 48 million baskets (1.59 million tonnes).

Green gram is does not rely solely on India's market, like black gram and pigeon pea. It has penetrated world countries to a certain extent, according to the Yangon bean market. – TWA/GNLM

Onion prices stay strong before monsoon onions flood market

Onions are seen prepared to send them to different warehouses.

PRIOR to the harvest of monsoon onions, the prices of onions continue an upward spiral in domestic markets. Like an incident in 2009, the prices of onions spiked in early September 2022. Three months remain for onions to enter the market. The price hit a new record of K3,850 per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes), Yangon traders said.

Meanwhile, the consumers have to buy the onions at over K4,000 per viss in the retail market, Ma Thin Thin, a housewife from Mayangon Township, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

Traders gave reasons for the price hike due to the onion market collapse in 2020 and 2021 with the onion price of below K1,000 and the low inventory. The local onion prices are higher than the ones in external markets.

Myanmar has been conveying onions to Vietnam through Thailand's border area, resulting in a price rise on low inventory, market observers pointed out.

As a result of this, the prices are likely to remain on upward trends before the harvest of monsoon onions. Traders from other regions and states speculated on the possible onion price rise that it will go higher than the current price of K3,850 per viss, said Ko Aung, a buyer from Bayintnaung Wholesale Market relayed this message.

Onion traders who kept the stocks in their hands in 2020 and 2021 suffered losses when the price plunged into K1,000 per viss. Furthermore, winter onion prices plummeted in those years compared to the prices of the previous years. It is said that the growers did not reap any profit and some growers faced extreme losses.

The onion prices touched the highest in September 2019 and 2022. Newly harvested onions were priced at approximately K800 per viss in summer in those two years when the traders stockpiled them in the warehouse, the market data showed.

The traders who keep the stocks in their hands elaborated on the potential price hike before the new harvest season owing to the low stocks.

Consequently, the consumers are expecting a fair market price in the coming months amid the inflation pressure.

Onion export should have been stopped when onion imports from foreign markets were not wanted. If onion exports do not cease for profits, the consumers are calling for the fair market competition of onions like the free market of locally produced onion and potato against the imported ones in Yangon markets.

A market observer told the GNLM that the interest of those stakeholders involved in the onion supply chain should not pose a burden on the consumers with the rocketing price. — TWA/GNLM

CMP constitutes 26% of overall export values in H2 of mini-budget period

FROM PAGE-1

Although some labour-intensive enterprises faced financial hardship amid the COVID-19 negative impacts and the political changes, the industry is now returning to normal after the COVID-19 vaccination programme for the workers, as per the HIS Markit's September report.

In a bid to boost factory productivity with a healthy workforce in the garment industry, Mobile Medical Check to garment workers took place in Yangon and Nay Pyi Taw, supported by UNICEF Myanmar.

Myanmar's manufacturing sector is largely concentrated in garments and textiles produced on the Cutting, Making, and Packaging basis, and it contributes to the country's GDP to a certain extent.

Myanmar shipped CMP garments to markets in Japan and Europe, along with the Republic of Korea, China, and the US in the previous years. — TWA, KK/GNLM

The photo shows a garment manufacturing process at a workplace.

MR resumes Kyangin-Hinthada-Pathein up/down trains

MYANMA Railways went into service again the Kyangin-Hinthada-Pathein section with No 182 down train in Kyangin township of Ayeyawady Region at 6 am on 11 September.

Similarly, No 181 up train began operating the Pathein-Hinthada-Kyangin railway at 6 am from the Pathein Station.

Under the supervision of the MoTC head office, No 182 down train will be operated for the convenience of travellers and smooth delivery of goods.

The No 182 down train will depart from the Kyangin Station at 6 am and arrive at the Hinthada Station at 10:11 am proceeding to Pathein at 10:21 am.

On the Pathein-Hinthada-Kyangin section, the No 181 up train will leave the Pathein Station at 6 am and reach the Hinthada Station at 12:12 pm and the Kyangin Station at 4:25 pm. There are six ordinary-class carriages, two upper-class carriages, one freight carriage and one guard carriage on the train. —TWA/GNLM

About 8,000 passengers board express buses of two Yangon-based highway bus terminals every day

THE two Yangon-based highway bus terminals – Aung Mingala and Dagon-Ayeya highway bus stations are carrying about 8,000 passengers per day in the second week of September.

The number of passengers has decreased than due to the detection of the COVID-19 Omicron subvariant. In September, about 120 bus lines of the Aung Mingala Highway Bus Terminal operate over 300 express buses while over 50 bus lines of the Dagon-Ayeya Highway Bus Terminal more than 180 express buses.

The Yangon Region Transport Committee (YRTC) also inspects the highway express bus lines and passengers at the bus terminals to ensure the wearing of face masks to meet the COVID-19 health rules and conducts health education programmes for passengers in downtown Yangon. The YRTC also released statements to bus lines of highway bus terminals not to increase highway bus fares in the Thadingyut holidays.

There are 366 highway bus lines – 233 lines at the Aung Mingala Highway Bus Terminal and 133 lines at the Dagon-Ayeya Highway Bus Terminal. Currently, over 170 lines of both bus terminals are running about 490 express buses for 8,000 passengers daily. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/ GNLM

Express buses are seen at the Aung Mingala Highway Bus Terminal. **PHOTO: KANU**

Smart Village projects under implementation in 42 villages

SMART Village projects are being implemented in three villages per region/state totalling 42 villages. Myanmar's 70-per-cent population live in rural areas. When the villages are developed, the livelihoods of the residents will be uplifted.

The project aims to raise the standard of residents by developing village infrastructure, uplift the rural economy by providing financial services and technology, create ideal villages that are friendly to the environment and pleasant to live and bring about sustainable development by increasing the capacities of village associations and villagers.

The projects are carried out with the 2022-2023 financial year funds in six major sectors. In addition, in the financial year 2023-2024, funds have been allocated and activities will continue to be implemented according to the Rural Development Department.

Officials inspected Wunpho village in Myeik Township of Taninthayi Region, which is included in the Smart Village projects, on 4 September.

Officials discussed with locals to develop as per the characteristics of the standard village during the project including the main road and lanes, basic infrastructures, education of the village, healthcare, agricultural and social development activities.

There are 64,000 villages in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and regions/states. It is also reported that modern standard villages that are currently being undertaken for the development of all villages nationwide have been set to become role models. — TWA/ GNLM

204 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 12 September, total figure rises to 617,056

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 617,056 after 204 new cases were reported on 12 September 2022 according to the Ministry of Health. Among these confirmed cases, 594,339 have been discharged from hospitals. Death toll still stands at 19,442 without more casualties.

Among the positive cases during the period from 28 January to 7 September 2022, 80 per cent of infected persons have not received vaccination, 15.9 per cent received once vaccination, four per cent fully vaccinated and 0.1 per cent booster dose.—MNA

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, restricted chemicals, foodstuffs, consumer goods, electronics and vehicles confiscated

Seized items in Mandalay Region.

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

Officials from the Myanmar Police Force X-ray Station (Nyaungkhashay) under the instructions of the Bago Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force conducted inspections at the Nyaungkhashay junction in Waw township on 7 and 8 September.

They nabbed 8,250 kilogrammes of restricted chemicals – Ammonium Nitrate –hidden with rubber firewood sticks from a vehicle and seized 74,350 kilogrammes of Ammonium Nitrate in the Yangon Central Railway Station totalling 826,000 kilogrammes of Ammonium Nitrate worth K123,900,000, according to the investigation. The action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

On 9 September, K6,659,100 worth of computer accessories that exceeded the Import Declaration (ID) was captured at the container checkpoint of the Asia World Port Terminal. The action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

Afterwards, on 10 September, an on-duty team of the Bago Township Customs Department conducted inspections under the Bago Region Anti-Illegal Trade Task Force. They confiscated K6,288,000 worth of edible oil and juice without official documents from a Mitsubishi Canter car (approximately K20 million) heading from Thaton to Yangon near the Shwethanlwin Tollgate in Phayagyi. The action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

In addition, an inspection team seized K81,358,000 worth of foodstuffs and consumer goods without official documents from two vehicles (approximately K19.5 million) near the Htonbo junction on the Yangon-Mandalay Highway. The action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

The Mayanchaung permanent checkpoint impounded foodstuffs worth K2,646,000 that were not declared in the Import Declaration (ID) from a 12-wheel truck (approximately K40 million) and the action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

On 12 September, a combined inspection team of the Kengtung Township Customs Department made inspections and confiscated 165 jarrycans of edible oil (made in Thailand) without official documents from a Nissan Vanette car (approximately K18 million) heading from Tachilek to Kengtung. The action was taken under the Customs Procedures.

Similarly, a total of 0.6952 tonnes of illegal timbers worth K48,664 were captured in the Saikaung forest reserve in Natmauk township of Magway district.

Therefore, 21 arrests (approximately K331,599,764) were made on 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 September, according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee. — MNA

LOCAL BUSINESS

Gold price, dollar remain elevated despite regulatory influence on markets

ALTHOUGH the government has been regulating the markets, pure gold prices have stayed high in the domestic market and Kyat continues depreciating against the US dollar in the local forex market.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation announced the sales of gold coins weighing one tical, 0.5 tical and 0.25 tical through state-run media on 2 September. The gold coins can be available every day except for office holidays.

Additionally, the CBM announced on 31 August that it will provide more than US$200 million through the foreign exchange market according to the decision made by the Foreign Exchange Supervisory Committee in order to ease the commodity inflation triggered by fuel price rise.

Gold jewellery is pictured at one gold outlet in Yangon.

Nonetheless, the reference price set by YGEA is around K2 million per tical (0.578 ounce or 0.016 kilogramme) yet the gold price climbs up to over K3 million per tical in the market.

Likewise, the CBM's reference exchange rate against a US dollar is set at K2,100, while a dollar is valued at K3,500 in the unofficial market.

To stabilize the exchange rate, the CBM set the currency trading band at 0.3 per cent for the Kyat to fluctuate between these two specified upper and lower exchange rates for transactions, selling or buying, according to a directive issued by the CBM on 10 August 2022.

Authorized dealers, money changers or nonbank financial institutions are obliged to maintain the exchange rate within the 0.3 per cent trading band for any forms of transactions and foreign remittances. Therefore, all financial institutions including banks and informal money exchanges set a dollar value at K2,100 for buying and K2,106 for selling.

Despite the trading band, the dollar transaction was made with the buying price of K3,400 and the selling price of K3,500 on 12 September.

Last August, a dollar value hit an all-time high of over K4,500 in the grey market and consequently, the pure gold reached a record high of K3.7 million per tical in history.

Consequently, authorities sold dollars at its auction market for the sectors in need, to control the soaring dollar and the outflow of foreign capital.

A total of $443.8 million were sold at an auction rate in 2021 as well.

Last 28 September 2021, a dollar value hit a peak of over K3,000 in the black market, pushing the pure gold up to K2.22 million per tical. — NN/GNLM

Palm oil wholesale reference price sinks to K4,730 per viss

The domestic consumption of edible oil is estimated at one million tonnes per year. The local cooking oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes.

THE wholesale reference rate of palm oil in the Yangon market fell again to K4,730 per viss, according to the Supervisory Committee on edible oil import and distribution.

The Supervisory Committee on edible oil import and distribution under the Ministry of Commerce has been closely observing the FOB prices in Malaysia and Indonesia including transport costs, tariffs and banking services, and issuing the wholesale market reference rate for edible oil on a weekly basis.

The reference rate of palm oil in the Yangon market for a week from 12 to 18 September is set at K4,730 per viss, whereas the reference price for a week ending 11 September was set high at K5,220 per viss. The figures this week showed a decrease of about K490 per viss compared to that of last week.

Nevertheless, the current market price is way much higher than the reference price.

If those retailers and wholesalers are found overcharging, storing inventory intentionally and attempting unscrupulous action to manipulate the market, they will face legal action under the Special Goods Tax Law, MoC released a statement.

The Ministry of Commerce is striving for consumers not to worry over the supply of edible oil. The ministry is also trying to secure edible oil sufficiency, supervise the market to offer reasonable prices to consumers and maintain price stability.

At present, mobile market trucks operated by oil importing companies, in coordination with Myanmar Edible Oil Dealers' Association, were back to business in some townships on 17 July in order to offer palm oil at a subsidized rate. They sell palm oil at K4,900 per viss to consumers directly. However, there are limited sources of supply although they directly sell the palm oil at a reference rate depending on the volume quota.

The domestic consumption of edible oil is estimated at one million tonnes per year. The local cooking oil production is just about 400,000 tonnes. To meet the oil sufficiency in the domestic market, about 700,000 tonnes of cooking oil are yearly imported through Malaysia and Indonesia. — NN/GNLM

MIC nods 35 foreign projects worth $1.2 bln in 5 months

THE Myanmar Investment Commission gave green light to 35 foreign projects from six countries in the past five months (April-August) of the current financial year 2022-2023. The country attracted the capital of US$1.23 billion, including expansion of capital by existing enterprises, according to the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

Those enterprises are engaged in agriculture, manufacturing, power, real estate and service sectors respectively.

Singapore is the top source of FDI this year, with 10 Singapore-listed enterprises pumping FDI of US$1.089 billion into Myanmar. Hong Kong SAR stands as the second largest investor this FY with an estimated capital over $70.239 million drawn by seven projects. China is ranked third in the investment line-up with more than $56.7 million from 15 projects.

One enterprise each from Belize, Japan and China (Taipei) also made investments in the past five months respectively. The existing enterprises from China (Taipei), China, Hong Kong SAR, the Republic of Korea, India and Thailand also increased investments.

Myanmar drew FDI al of $647 million in the 2021-2022 mini-budget period (October to March), DICA's statistics indicated.

The Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations has been inviting responsible businesses to benefit the country.

Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC) ensures to approve the responsible businesses by assessing environmental and social impacts. The commission is working together with the relevant departments to screen the projects as well.

From 1 February 2021, Thilawa SEZ has recorded capital expansions of $100 million from one new enterprise and the existing enterprises so far. The majority of them are put investments into cement and pharmaceutical manufacturing.—KK/GNLM

OPINION

Build a safe and sound society free from trafficking in persons

HUMAN trafficking is an unacceptable serious human rights violation in the community and a big challenge all countries around the world are facing. People, especially from less developed countries, often fall victim to human trafficking while migrating to developed countries for seeking employment opportunities.

Governmental and non-governmental organizations including the Anti-human Trafficking Police Force under the Myanmar Police Force through collaborative efforts are combatting human trafficking in persons in all forms to be able to save the trafficked victims at home and abroad.

> The victims of trafficking in persons should be treated with respect and dignity and it is firmly believed that the tireless efforts of Myanmar will greatly contribute to combatting the cases of trafficking in persons in the country so as to build a safe and sound society.

The government marks the Myanmar Anti-Trafficking in Persons Day which falls on 13 September every year since 2013. The Central Body for Suppression of Trafficking in Persons adopted the objectives of 2022 Myanmar Anti-Trafficking in Persons Day with the theme Use and Abuse of Technology: To mobilize the participation of all citizens in combatting human trafficking as a national duty; To have the public instilled with awareness about and knowledge of trafficking in persons; To protect and care trafficked victims with empathy; and To strengthen cooperation and coordination among all counter-trafficking stakeholders government agencies, civil society organizations, UN agencies, international organizations and the general public.

Five major human trafficking cases in Myanmar have forced marriages, forced prostitution, forced labour, trafficking of children and debt bondage. Hence, the five-year Anti-Trafficking in Persons Projects were developed to reduce the cases of trafficking in persons locally or transnationally and to identify the new forms of trafficking in persons. As such, all the people need to join hands with the government, NGOs and INGOs in fighting the human traffickers to save the victims from the plights.

Every year thousands of men, women and children are trafficked in various forms and more than half of them are from the Asia-Pacific region. Most of the cases of trafficking in persons are based on poverty and a lack of awareness of the rights of humans. As such, Myanmar promotes different educational activities such as broadcasting educational movies and songs on TV channels in collaboration with media organizations, distributing pamphlets, setting up billboards, sending SMS via mobile phone operators and incorporating the subject into the basic education curriculum in order to raise public awareness on the risks of trafficking in persons.

The victims of trafficking in persons should be treated with respect and dignity and it is firmly believed that the tireless efforts of Myanmar will greatly contribute to combatting the cases of trafficking in persons in the country so as to build a safe and sound society.

ARTICLE

Don't forget the root cause or motivation in alleviating poverty

By Aung Kyaw Thant

A poor child seen at a landfill looking forward with hope.

POVERTY, the root cause of triggering various kinds of crimes, evil acts and malpractices including briberies and corruption, never benefits society. Since time immemorial, poverty has been brutally manipulating human society without sympathy for all living beings. Hence, all the global peoples are seeking the best way and mean for fighting against poverty as much as they can but they cannot totally conquer poverty till today. It is because poverty is penetrating the weakness of all measures to make trouble for society.

Search for the root cause of cases

Everybody needs to search for the root cause of a case which may be transferred into or automatically converted to the effect. The aforesaid crimes, evil acts and malpractices including briberies and corruption never automatically come out or break out in society. Anyone enjoying the fruits of wealth will not intentionally commit criminal cases which are a danger to their lives and lifetime. If possible, they wish to stay away from crimes and malpractices because everybody needs to have credited lives with prestige and integrity. So, it is undeniable that everybody wishes to avoid crimes as well as wishes to enjoy the good effects of life.

Actually, the life of humans happens randomly. Somebody misses the good fortune but some persons, fortunately, win the victories of life. Some people derail from their life procedures as expected whereas somebody is able to march towards their goals in a smooth process. How wonderful it is!

Hence, it is necessary to search for the root cause in occurring the unwanted events and wanted events as well as acceptable and unacceptable events. Finally, it can be seen that a circle of occurrence would specifically direct poverty as the basic root cause for happening various effects such as crimes, malpractices and evil acts. Hence, relevant authorities should not solve the problems of society by just overviewing the nature of society but they have to deeply seek the root cause of these events. Every event is based on some motivations. Actually, these motivations pave the way of happening the events in consequence. That is why all crimes and all events cannot be checked at first without scrutinizing the motivations.

The correct way of solving problems

Practically, daily problems of society such as various requirements of utensils and raw materials to make meals in kitchens, shortages of water and food supplies, high prices of commodities, rising bus and ferry fares, rising prices of electric meter bills, municipal tax and so on can be identified as the minor problems of human life. If the authorities provide cash assistance for needy persons so as to solve the above-mentioned problems, it will be derailed from the correct way to successfully solve these problems.

For example, solving problems can be identified as cutting the branches of the tree but it is not an act to remove the tree. To be able to take all the branches, it is necessary to dig out the roots of the tree. If so, the main stem including branches can be removed. So also, not only relevant authorities but the people need to alleviate poverty as the main enemy of society. It is noticeable that whenever poverty reigns in society, people will never escape from the impacts and side effects of poverty for a long time.

Process poverty alleviation consists of many priorities

In alleviating poverty, everybody needs to take care of work procedures for solving the problems. The process of poverty alleviation consists of many priorities. The first priority is to create jobs for those who are difficulty earning income. In fact, every family must be run with the use of incomes which can be earned by working. Only when job opportunities can be created will people especially needy persons have a chance to seek the appropriate jobs for their life. Similarly, it is necessary to provide capital for farmers to operate cultivation and livestock farms. Giving subsidies is not really helpful for their life. Cash assistance or loans and techniques to be applied in cultivation and livestock farms are really assistance for them.

Everybody values the incomes they actually earned. Likewise, assistance for farmers and workers must not be free. It is necessary to put thought into their minds that the cash assistance must be paid back at a time. If so, it will be an encouragement for them to work hard for earning income by spending cash assistance. So they must have thought no one is free. Hence, they will have a chance to show off their brilliant skills in the workplace while trying to earn income.

Important roles of school education and general knowledge

On the other hand, one more important thing for poverty alleviation is to learn education. It has two portions: learning school education and pursuing general knowledge in society. Both types of education are the most important. It is because education or knowledge can change the life of someone. Everybody needs to energetically try learning the school education. Likewise, they have to seek various items of knowledge in society with vigorous efforts. To have that knowledge and skills, they have to spend money and might on their efforts. As such, it is necessary to actually encourage the learning process of all without any exhortation. Only when someone has the capacity of knowledge and school education will they be capable of rationality in making the decision of how to do, what to do and when to do it. As such, they will have a successful work process in their respective professions. Hence, the point of priority is to encourage the needy persons to learn school education and accumulate general knowledge so as to attain the high skill of critical thinking. Consequently, they will have a higher level of knowledge for managing and operating their livelihoods. If so, they will have certain victories.

If so, the persons with the capability of critical thinking, and rationality having monetary and technical assistance based on school education and general knowledge will be capable of successfully tackling the poverty eradication measures. Hence, everybody can understand that it should not prioritize solving social problems and criminal cases but it can be done in the short-term plan whereas it is necessary to implement the long-term plan for seeking the motivation as well as root causes of any problems. Only when poverty can be alleviated can all the people escape from the social problems and unacceptable criminal cases. As such, poverty can be dubbed as a switch to control the problems of human life. Somebody who is able to switch off poverty will overcome the challenges of life. Otherwise, they will face failure in life.

Avoid selfishness but forge a charitable spirit

Significantly, both the government and the people should avoid the act of selfishness but culture the charitable spirit so as to give a helping hand to others without turning a blind eye to the persons facing suffering in all measures. In fact, nobody stands alone in society. The government cannot stand alone in the nation without people. Likewise, the people cannot stand alone without the government. As such, both sides need to march towards the goal of the nation together by giving a helping hand to each other and joining hands in solving all problems of the nation on a daily basis. But, they should not forget the motivation of any causes and root causes of all events in fighting poverty.

In summary, assistance and encouragement are playing a key role to convert the life of someone into an amazing life to be free from poverty but they themselves have to try hard to secure achievement in social problems. The government needs to take responsibility for assisting the people in overcoming the challenges of poverty and encouraging them to rebuild their lives whenever they fall down. Likewise, the people who face suffering based on poverty in their lives should never give these problems up and rebuild their lives again and again with a strong spirit. ■

New malaria vaccine results raise hopes of mass rollout

A booster dose of a new malaria vaccine maintains a high level of protection against the disease, researchers said Thursday, expressing hopes the cheap jab could be produced on a massive scale in a matter of years.

The international research team suggested the vaccine, developed by Britain's Oxford University, could represent a turning point in the fight against the mosquito-borne parasitic disease, which killed 627,000 people — mostly African children — in 2020 alone.

Last year a different vaccine produced by British pharmaceutical giant GSK became the first to be recommended for widespread use against malaria by the World Health Organization, and has now been administered to more than a million children in Africa.

However research has found that the effectiveness of GSK's vaccine is around 60 per cent, and significantly wanes over time even with a booster dose.

Oxford's R21/Matrix-M vaccine meanwhile was found to be 77 per cent effective at preventing malaria in research published last year — the first time the WHO's roadmap goal of 75 per cent had been met.

'Fantastic'

For the research, 450 children aged five to 17 months in Burkina Faso — where malaria accounts for around 22 per cent of all deaths — were given three doses in 2019.

They were split into three groups, two receiving different doses of the Matrix-M adjuvant, a vaccine ingredient patented by Novavax also used in the US biotech firm's Covid jab. The third control group received a rabies vaccine.

Ahead of the 2020 rainy season — when malaria cases surge — 409 children returned to get a booster shot.

For the group that received the higher dose of adjuvant, the booster rose the protection level to 80 per cent, according to the results of a phase 2b trial published in The Lancet Infectious Diseases journal on Thursday. The lower dose had 70 per cent efficacy.

And crucially, the booster returned antibody levels to a similar level seen after the first round of doses, the study said.

The study's lead investigator Halidou Tinto of the Burkina Faso health research institute IRSS said, "It is fantastic to see such high efficacy again after a single booster dose."

Tinto, who was involved in trialling both malaria vaccines, said GSK's vaccine had an optimal efficacy of around 60 per cent. "So I can confirm that R21 is doing much better," he told a press conference.

70% reduction in deaths?

Oxford vaccinologist and study co-author Adrian Hill said the vaccine meant "We really could be looking at a very substantial reduction in that horrendous burden of malaria, deaths and disease in the coming years, certainly by 2030."

A 70 per cent reduction in deaths from malaria could be feasible in that time, he said, partly because of the vast number of vaccine doses that could be quickly produced.

Oxford has partnered with the world's largest vaccine manufacturer, the Serum Institute of India.

The institute is "willing and able to manufacture 200 million doses a year starting next year," Hill said.

The six to 10 million doses that GSK can produce a year is "not enough for 40 million children who need four doses in the first year," Hill added.

And the Oxford vaccine would likely cost a few US dollars a dose, less than half the $9 for GSK's version, he said.

The challenge of getting those doses into arms would require more funding, he added.

Results from a phase three trial involving 4,800 participants across four countries are expected later this year, which could potentially lead to approval.

Azra Ghani, an epidemiologist at Imperial College London not involved in the research, welcomed the results, saying it was "particularly encouraging" the booster dose restored protective antibodies.

SOURCE : AFP

ENVIRON WORLD

The green king: Charles the environmentalist

Britain's Prince Charles (C) walks with Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, inspect a bonsai tree during their visit to the National Arboretum's bonsai collection in Canberra on 11 November 2015. **PHOTO: POOL/ JASON REED/ AFP /FILE**

BRITAIN'S new King Charles III is a dedicated environmentalist with a protracted historical past of campaigning for higher conservation, natural farming and tackling local weather change, which is prone to sit properly with extra eco-acutely aware youthful Britons.

Interspersed between images of official conferences and different royal duties, his Instagram account as Prince of Wales usually featured photos displaying him furthering environmental causes in Britain and past.

They included planting timber, displaying off natural fruit and greens from his Clarence House residence and vibrant flowers rising in the backyard at his beloved Highgrove House in Gloucestershire, western England.

One photograph even captured Charles — who has now handed the prince of Wales title to his son and inheritor William — on a go to bo threatened mangrove swamps in St Vincent and Grenadines in the Caribbean.

When Britain hosted the COP26 local weather summit in Scotland final yr, he gave the opening speech, urging world leaders seated in entrance of him to redouble their efforts to confront international warming and warning: "Time has quite literally run out."

Since his first large public speech on the topic in 1970, Charles has "been raising awareness about all aspects of the environment for a very long time," stated Bob Ward, of the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment. —AFP

Artificially cooling water to decrease hurricanes ineffective, finds study

Hurricane or tropical storm warnings are in effect for much of the coast of Mexico's Baja California Peninsula, including Cabo San Lucas on 7 September. **PHOTO: DANIEL SLIM AFP/FILE**

ACCORDING to a recent study, the benefits would be insignificant even if we had the infinite ability to artificially cool the oceans to the point where they would become weaker hurricanes.

The Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric and Earth Science at the University of Miami (UM) conducted the study, which demonstrated that using intervention technology to weaken a hurricane before it reaches landfall is a very ineffective way to lessen the effects of disasters.

According to James Hlywiak, the study's primary author and alumnus of the UM Rosenstiel School, "the main finding from our study is that huge amounts of artificially cooled water would be needed for only a slight drop in storm intensity before impact".

Additionally, a marginally reduced intensity doesn't necessarily suggest that the risk of inland damage and safety issues will also be reduced. —ANI

IOC approves Olympic Forest Network to address climate change

THE International Olympic Committee (IOC) Executive Board (EB) on Friday approved the creation of an Olympic Forest Network to step up the fight against climate change.

The project, inspired by the IOC's Olympic Forest project set to plant around 590,000 native trees in Mali and Senegal, is an initiative driven by National Olympic Committees to create forest network in their own countries and regions.

Beyond planting new trees, the project also includes protection or restoration of existing forests, wildlife corridors and coastal watersheds and ecosystems, as well as regenerative agriculture.

"As the Olympic Movement, we want to contribute to the fight against climate change within our area of influence.

With the new initiative we are recognizing local Olympic Movement projects delivered according to best practices that contribute to this goal," said Marie Sallois, IOC Director for Corporate and Sustainable Development. —AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

Voice-operated smartphones target Africa's illiterate

VOICE-OPERATED smartphones are aiming at a vast yet widely overlooked market in sub-Saharan Africa – the tens of millions of people who face huge challenges in life because they cannot read or write.

In Ivory Coast, a so-called "Superphone" using a vocal assistant that responds to commands in a local language is being pitched to the large segment of the population– as many as 40 per cent – who are illiterate.

Developed and assembled locally, the phone is designed to make everyday tasks more accessible, from understanding a document and checking a bank balance to communicating with government agencies.

"I've just bought this phone for my parents back home in the village, who don't know how to read or write," said Floride Jogbe, a young woman who was impressed by adverts on social media. She believed the 60,000 CFA francs ($92) she forked out was money well spent. –AFP

Mosquito Fire in California spreads to almost 30,000 acres

THE explosive Mosquito Fire burning in the foothills east of Sacramento, capital city of the western US state of California, grew to 29,585 acres (119.7 square kilometres) Friday noon, some 60 hours after it was first reported on Tuesday evening.

"Today the Mosquito Fire showed extreme fire behaviour and growth, more than quadrupling in size," the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) said in its latest briefing, adding that aircraft continued to have difficulty accurately mapping the fire's perimeter due to heavy smoke.

The blaze has continued to erupt in size, up from 13,700 acres (55.4 square kilometres) reported Thursday evening and 6,900 acres (27.9 square kilometres) Thursday morning.

Some 1,700 personnel were assigned to the huge wildfire as of Thursday evening, according to Cal Fire. The Forest Service said more than 260 bulldozers are working on the scene. –Xinhua

HEALTH/PANDEMIC
WORLD

Japan to balance easing border controls with COVID countermeasures

THE Japanese government said Monday it must strike a balance between opening up to foreign travellers while keeping the coronavirus pandemic in check, as it looks to revive the world's third-largest economy which has been hard hit by the absence of tourists. Japan has faced criticism at home and abroad for failing to keep pace with other Group of Seven nations in opening borders as well as requiring those who do visit to obtain visas and wear masks at all times during their trip.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno told a press conference Monday that the government will consider how to alleviate COVID-19 restrictions, while "maintaining a balance between preventing the spread of infection and (promoting) social and economic activities." Matsuno's remarks came a day after Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Seiji Kihara said in a television appearance that the government is reviewing its border control policy of keeping daily entries below 50,000 and will remove it in the not-so-distant future.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's government will simultaneously relax other regulations including the visa requirement, Kihara added. Matsuno said the government will continue to make appropriate decisions based on the infection situation both at home and abroad as well as the needs of travellers and border steps implemented by other major economies.

Last Wednesday, Japan increased its daily entry cap on arrivals from 20,000 to 50,000. Also, incoming travellers who have been vaccinated at least three times do not need to take coronavirus tests within 72 hours of departure and show proof they are not infected. —Kyodo

International-flight passengers arrive at Haneda airport in Tokyo on 7 September 2022. Japan, whose tourism sector has been reeling in the face of strict COVID-19 border controls imposed for more than two years, increased its daily entry cap on arrivals from 20,000 to 50,000 the same day. **PHOTO : KYODO**

Japan OKs distribution of Omicron booster shots from this month

A local resident receives a booster shoot of the Moderna coronavirus vaccine against Covid-19 at a mass vaccination centre operated by Japanese Self-Defence Force in Tokyo on 31 January 2022. **PHOTO : EUGENE HOSHIKO / POOL / AFP**

JAPAN'S health ministry on Monday approved the production and sale of vaccines against the Omicron variant of the coronavirus, with the government to send the shots to local municipalities from 19 September.

The additional inoculation, believed to be effective against the BA.5 subvariant of COVID-19 now prevalent in Japan, will initially be targeted toward the elderly and medical workers.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has said he plans to expand from mid-October eligibility for the additional shots for everyone over the age of 12 who has received at least two vaccine doses.

The policy is part of wider preparations to provide over 1 million shots per day between October and November to curb the spread of infections during the winter period.

Currently, a booster shot can only be administered a minimum five months after the last vaccine dose. But as a panel of experts suggested that the interval period should be shortened, the health ministry will reach a conclusion by the end of October on whether to cut the time between vaccinations.

The Omicron boosters have properties derived from the BA.1 subvariant, as well as the original strain that spread early in the pandemic.

US pharmaceutical firms Pfizer Inc and Moderna Inc had each applied to the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare to produce and sell their Omicron vaccines tailored for the highly transmissible variant.

Following the approval, Pzifer will supply 28 million shots to those aged 12 and over, while Moderna will provide two million doses for people over the age of 18.

According to health ministry documents, the boosters contain a higher amount of neutralizing antibodies that suppress the movement of the BA.1 subvariant in the body compared with the vaccine for the original virus and are also believed to be effective against BA.5 and other subvariants that could develop in the future.

Japan reported 52,918 new virus cases on Monday, roughly 15,000 fewer than the figure from the week before, reflecting a downtrend in new infections.

The Tokyo metropolitan government reported 5,654 new cases on Monday, while infections in neighbouring Kanagawa and Saitama prefectures numbered 4,476 and 3,689, respectively.

New COVID-19 deaths reached 145 nationally. —Kyodo

HIV, TB, malaria fight saves 50 million lives over 20 years: Global Fund

THE fight against HIV, tuberculosis and malaria has saved 50 million lives over the past 20 years, the Global Fund said Monday, appealing for $18 billion to save millions more.

"We have made tremendous progress," the global partnership created in 2002 to battle the three deadly diseases said in its annual report, with their death rates halved since then.

"But our fight is not over," it cautioned, pointing to a range of colliding crises, including climate change, conflicts and the Covid-19 pandemic, that "threaten to knock us backward".

The Global Fund will next week hold a replenishment conference in New York, where it aims to raise at least $18 billion in funds to cover its programmes from 2024 through 2026.

The fund, which brings together governments, multi-lateral agencies, bilateral partners, civil society groups, people affected by the diseases and the private sector, estimates that financing would help cut HIV, TB and malaria deaths by nearly two-thirds and save 20 million lives.

Last year, the Global Fund warned that the pandemic in particular was having a "devastating" impact on efforts to root out HIV, tuberculosis and malaria, leading to declining results across the board for the first time in the fund's history.

But it said Monday that the massive resources it had pumped to counter the downturn had paid off and "recovery is underway". Since March 2020, the Global Fund said it had invested more than $4.4 billion to fight the pandemic and mitigate its impact on its programmes.

'Back on track'

Fund chief Peter Sands stressed that "although most countries that fight HIV, TB and malaria have started to recover from the ravages of Covid-19, we need to accelerate our efforts if we are to fully recover lost ground and get back on track towards ending these diseases by 2030." He insisted that the 50 million lives saved over two decades was "proof that global commitment and community leadership can force the world's deadliest infectious diseases into retreat."

The Global Fund, which provides nearly a third of all international financing to battle HIV, said that the number of people who received life-saving antiretroviral therapy last year rose to 23.3 million, up from 21.9 per cent a year earlier. —AFP

ECONOMY
WORLD

This video grab from footage taken on 16 October 2021 shows coal to be loaded on trucks near Gants Mod port at the Chinese border with Gashuun Sukhait, in Umnugovi province, in Mongolia. **PHOTO : AFP**

Mongolia completes rail crossing with China to boost coal exports

MONGOLIA has launched a rail line that could help boost coal exports to China to 50 million tonnes a year, the country's president said, ending a decade-long wait for the crossing.

A ceremony to mark the launch of the rail service between the Tavan Tolgoi coal field and Gashuun Sukhait on the Chinese border was held on Friday.

Mongolian President Ukhnaa Khurelsukh was among the dignitaries in attendance, according to his website.

Heavily dependent on mining, Mongolia has long sought cheaper and more efficient ways to export its minerals abroad and has a national strategy to expand its rail network connections with Russia and China.

Mining makes up a quarter of the country's gross domestic product.

China has stepped up its investment in coal in the face of extreme weather, an economic slowdown and a global fuel crisis.

The 233-kilometre (145-mile) Tavan Tolgoi rail line has the capacity to export between 30 million and 50 million tonnes of coal to China annually, according to Tavantolgoi Railway LLC, the state agency that built the line.

In 2020 the North Asian country exported 28.6 million tonnes of coal. Last year, exports fell to 15.9 million tonnes.

The railway is also expected to lower the cost to transport coal to $8 per tonne, compared to $32 per tonne when coal is delivered by truck, according to the railway authority.

Tavan Tolgoi is rich in coking coal, an essential ingredient in the steel-making process.

For years coal has been transported in trucks to China, a process that has led to long queues at the border and frequent accidents.

Mongolian governments have attempted to build a railway from Tavan Tolgoi to the Gashuun Sukhait border for more than a decade.

Tavantolgoi LLC was formed in 2018 to complete the project. Ulaanbaatar-based Bodi International served as the general contractor. The Gashuun Sukhait-Gantsmod border crossing is now the second Mongolia-China border point with a rail crossing, with the other at Zamyn-Uud-Erlian.

Progress Rail, a division of Caterpillar, agreed to supply 16 locomotives to support operations for the railway project.

The new locomotives are designed to fit the 1,520 mm gauge used in Mongolia, Russia, and other former Soviet republics.

Mongolia's current 1,900 km rail network was almost entirely constructed during the 20th century with help from the Soviet Union.

It consists mainly of the Trans-Mongolia line between Russia and China, and a spur line to the city of Erdenet. —AFP

Queen's funeral set to knock UK economy after rebound

THE UK's recession-threatened economy rebounded in July, data showed Monday, but is set to receive a further hit from a public holiday marking next week's funeral of Queen Elizabeth II.

British gross domestic product expanded 0.2 per cent after a drop of 0.6 per cent in June, the Office for National Statistics said in a statement.

June's big decline had been attributed partly to an extra public holiday for the queen's Platinum Jubilee marking 70 years on the throne before her passing last week. Another public holiday is scheduled next Monday for the queen's state funeral.

"The feeble 0.2-per-cent bounce back in July was driven by weak GDP in June due in part to the loss of working days from the Jubilee long weekend," noted Yael Selfin, chief economist at KPMG UK.

"More concerning, July's GDP remains below the level seen in May, pointing to an overall contraction over the first two months of summer."

Britain usually has only one public holiday in early summer but the amount was doubled for the Jubilee.

Time off work for millions of Britons next Monday means the economy will have had two more public holidays than usual in 2022.

The Bank of England (BoE) expects the UK economy to enter recession before the end of the year on decades-high inflation fuelled by surging energy and food bills.

"Looking ahead, the extra public holiday for the queen's funeral on 19 September has the potential to be more damaging for the economy than the extra day off for the Jubilee in June," Samuel Tombs, chief UK economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics, said following Monday's data. —AFP

Pedestrians walk past a portrait of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II in London on 11 September 2022. **PHOTO : AFP**

Germany faces recession as energy crisis bites: think-tank

GERMANY will fall into recession next year, a leading think-tank warned Monday, with Europe's biggest economy facing soaring inflation as Russia slashes energy supplies.

The Ifo institute expects the German economy to shrink 0.3 per cent in 2023 — slashing its forecast by four percentage points from a previous prediction in June.

Inflation is expected to hit 8.1 per cent this year and 9.3 per cent next year, it said.

"We are heading into a winter recession," said Timo Wollmershaeuser, Ifo's head of forecasts.

"The cuts in gas supplies from Russia over the summer and the drastic price increases they triggered are wreaking havoc on the economic recovery following the coronavirus." Real household incomes and purchasing power will drop sharply, the think-tank warned.

There is likely to be a "return to normal" in 2024 with 1.8 per cent growth and 2.5 per cent inflation, Wollmershaeuser said.

At the start of September, Russian energy giant Gazprom halted gas deliveries to Europe via the key Nord Stream 1 pipeline saying it would be under repair for an unspecified period.

The shutdown accentuates an energy crisis in Germany, long reliant on Russian gas, and across Europe, with Moscow accused of using energy as a weapon amid tensions over the Ukraine war.

German inflation hit 7.9 per cent in August, and earlier this month the government unveiled a new multi-billion-euro relief package to help households cope with soaring prices. Last week, the European Central Bank hiked interest rates by a record 75 basis points as its seeks to battle sky-high inflation across the eurozone and said more increases were to come. —AFP

Azerbaijan says Europe gas exports up by 30% this year

ENERGY-RICH Azerbaijan on Monday said its gas exports to Europe will increase by 30 per cent this year, as the European Union tries to decrease its dependance on Russian gas amid Moscow's offensive in Ukraine.

Europe, which is heavily dependent on Russian supplies, has accused Moscow of using energy as a geopolitical weapon.

On Monday, Azerbaijan's Energy Minister Parviz Shahbazov said that over the eight months of this year Baku "supplied to Europe 7.3 billion cubic metres of natural gas".

"The overall volume of (gas) supplies to Europe in 2022 will amount to 12 billion cubic metres" — a 31-per-cent increase compared to 2021, he said on Twitter. He also reported a nearly 10-percent increase in natural gas production, which reached 30.6 billion cubic metres in January-August 2022. On Wednesday, EU chief Ursula von der Leyen proposed that member states agree a price cap on gas imported from Russia.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has vowed to cut off any countries imposing price caps on oil and gas exports.

In July, the EU and Baku agreed to double gas imports from Azerbaijan over the next few years.

The agreement also provides for the expansion of the Southern Gas Corridor running through Azerbaijan, Georgia, Türkiye, and Greece — "to 20 billion cubic metres per year in a few years."—AFP

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V SINAR SOLO VOY.NO. (971N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V SINAR SOLO VOY.NO. (971N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **13-9-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **MIP** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

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Asian and European markets rally, euro surges

A man looks at an electronic share price board showing numbers on the Tokyo Stock Exchange (L) and a foreign exchange board showing the Japanese yen's rate against the US dollar (R) in Tokyo on 8 September 2022. **PHOTO : AFP**

ASIAN and European markets rallied on Monday, building on the momentum of gains in the United States and elsewhere at the end of last week, as investors price in the expectation of further interest rate hikes aimed at taming inflation.

The euro surged in early trading, a day after German central bank chief Joachim Nagel signalled that the European Central Bank (ECB) would probably continue raising its key rate.

The European single currency rocketed more than 1.4 per cent against the dollar and 1.6 per cent versus the yen. The ECB raised the key rate by a historic 75 basis points last week, and markets expect a similar-sized hike at an October meeting. Nagel predicted inflation in Europe might peak at more than 10 per cent in December.

London, Paris and Frankfurt all opened higher on Monday, with bourses in Japan, Australia, Singapore, Taiwan, Jakarta, Malaysia and Thailand also rising.

Markets in Hong Kong, China and South Korea were closed for a public holiday.

This week, investors worldwide will be closely watching US inflation data for August, due to be released on Tuesday, with the consumer price index (CPI) expected to ease slightly to eight per cent — still well above the Fed's two-per-cent target.

Traders expect the Fed to impose another large rate hike next week, after two 75-basis-point increases already.

"A downside surprise in US CPI is likely more of a concern and that could see the dollar weakening further," Charu Chanana, a strategist at Saxo Capital Markets, told Bloomberg Television.

Clifford Bennett, chief economist at ACY Securities, said he expected stocks to "continue to drift higher" ahead of Tuesday's US CPI data.

"(US CPI) may well see further improvement as petrol prices have continued to pull back," he said.

"Other components are still likely to be pointing higher, but fuel prices could well dominate this CPI number."

Oil began the week flat, as investors weigh the possibility of global demand weakening as growth slows and China's harsh zero-Covid policy continues to sap economic activity.

On Monday, new data showed British GDP expanded by 0.2 per cent in July, according to the Office for National Statistics.

Concerns remain, however, about the overall health of the UK economy.

"July's GDP remains below the level seen in May, pointing to an overall contraction over the first two months of summer," said Yael Selfin, chief economist at KPMG UK. —AFP

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Pabedan Township, Yangon, Myanmar
Dated: 13 September 2022

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Britain's King Charles III and Britain's Camilla, Queen Consort attend the presentation of Addresses by both Houses of Parliament in Westminster Hall, inside the Palace of Westminster, central London on 12 September 2022, following the death of Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September. **PHOTO : DAN KITWOOD / POOL / AFP**

Charles III addresses parliament as mourners gather to see queen's coffin

KING Charles III made his first address to the British parliament on Monday before heading to Scotland, where crowds of mourners massed for a chance to pay their respects before Queen Elizabeth II's coffin.

"I cannot help but feel the weight of history which surrounds us," the 73-year-old king told lawmakers at Westminster Hall in London, where he received parliament's formal condolences.

He vowed to follow the "example of selfless duty" set by his "darling late mother", who died last Thursday aged 96 after a record-breaking 70 years on the throne.

Charles then headed to Edinburgh, where he will walk in procession with other senior royals behind his mother's coffin from the Palace of Holyroodhouse, where it rested overnight, to St Giles' Cathedral.

On Monday evening, the monarch will lead a family vigil at the 12-century cathedral. The public will also be able to pay their respects there before the coffin is flown to London ahead of the funeral on 19 September.

Prince Harry — Charles' younger son, who renounced royal duties in 2020 and moved to the United States — paid tribute to his grandmother, his "guiding compass".

"You are already sorely missed," the 37-year-old Harry said in his first public statement since the queen's death. He added that he and his American wife Meghan "now honour my father in his new role".

Thousands of people, many in tears, had packed the streets of the Scottish capital on Sunday to see the hearse carrying the queen's oak coffin arrive from the Balmoral estate in the Scottish Highlands where she died.

It was a taste of the crowds expected in London when the late monarch lies in state at Westminster Hall. Her coffin will be there for four days from Wednesday, with reports suggesting there could be queues of up to 20 hours for people wishing to pay their respects. —AFP

Germany 'regrets' Iran failure to agree to nuclear deal

GERMAN Chancellor Olaf Scholz said Monday that Iran has failed to agree to proposals from European countries on reviving a deal on restricting its nuclear programme, warning this would put any accord out of reach "in the near future".

His comments came as Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid visited Germany in his latest diplomatic effort to persuade Western powers to ditch the agreement with the Jewish state's arch nemesis Tehran.

Israel has long opposed a revival of the 2015 accord, which has been moribund since then US president Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew in 2018 and reimposed biting sanctions on Tehran.

Momentum that built towards a restored agreement last month has slowed, with the three European nations party to the agreement — Germany, France and Britain — expressing doubts about Iran's sincerity over the weekend.

Speaking alongside the Israeli leader in Berlin, Scholz said he regretted that Iran "has not yet given a positive response to proposals" from the Europeans. "There is now actually no reason for Iran not to agree to these proposals. But we have to note that this is not the case, and will not happen certainly in the near future." —AFP

Sri Lankan 'white elephant' Chinese tower to open

A huge green and purple communications tower in Sri Lanka financed with Chinese debt that has become a symbol of the ousted Rajapaksa clan's closeness to Beijing will finally open this week, its operator said Monday.

The 350-metre (1,155-feet) Lotus Tower — visible from all over Colombo and built for an estimated $113 million — has been plagued by corruption claims since construction began in 2012 under former president Mahinda Rajapaksa.

It is one of several "white elephant" projects built with Chinese loans under Rajapaksa, elder brother of Gotabaya Rajapaksa who was ousted from the presidency in July after months of protests over Sri Lanka's dire economic crisis. The state-owned Colombo Lotus Tower Management Company said they had decided to open its observation deck to visitors from Thursday and earn ticket sales to minimize losses. —AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Russia says striking east Ukraine, 'no prospects' for talks

RUSSIA said Monday its forces were striking parts of the eastern Kharkiv region retaken by Ukraine, vowing to continue its military action in the country.

It also said it saw no opening for talks with Kyiv, ruling out negotiations.

The defence ministry in its daily briefing said Russian air, rocket and artillery forces were "delivering precision strikes on units and reserves of the Ukrainian armed forces", including in the urban hubs of Kupiansk and Izyum. Over the weekend, Ukraine claimed sweeping successes against Russian forces in the south and the east, including the cities of Izyum, Kupiansk and Balakliya.

Ukrainian armed forces said Monday they had recaptured more than 20 settlements in the past 24 hours amid a large counter-offensive.

Russia said Saturday it was pulling back troops from the Kharkiv region as part of a decision to "regroup" its forces. The Kremlin said its military action in Ukraine would continue despite any setbacks.

"The special military operation continues and will continue until the objectives that were originally set are achieved," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. —AFP

A bike rider cycles in the street in Balakliya, Kharkiv region, on 10 September, 2022, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Moscow's announcement alongside Kyiv's claim to have entered the town of Kupiansk are the most significant shifts in battlefield dynamics after months of fighting in eastern Ukraine that has been dominated by Moscow. **PHOTO : JUAN BARRETO / AFP**

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

China's Xi to visit Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan this week

China's President Xi Jinping votes during the closing session of the National People's Congress (NPC) at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on 11 March 2022. **PHOTO : AFP**

CHINA'S President Xi Jinping will make state visits to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan this week, Beijing said Monday — his first trip abroad since the early days of the coronavirus pandemic.

Xi will attend a leaders' summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in the Uzbek city of Samarkand and "pay state visits to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan" at the invitation of Presidents Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and Shavkat Mirziyoyev from Wednesday to Friday, the foreign ministry said in a statement.

The SCO is made up of China, Russia, India, Pakistan, as well as four central Asian countries -- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

It will be holding its next summit on 15 and 16 September in the Uzbek city of Samarkand, a stop on the ancient Silk Road.

Russia had already announced last week that Xi will meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the summit, as Moscow seeks to bolster ties with Beijing after being slapped with unprecedented Western sanctions over its invasion of Ukraine.

Beijing has not condemned Moscow's interventions in Ukraine and provided diplomatic cover by blasting Western sanctions and arms sales to Kyiv.

Putin and Xi last met in early February in Beijing ahead of the Winter Olympic Games, days before the Russian president sent troops into Ukraine.

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi will also take part in the summit in Samarkand, the Indian government said on Sunday, without saying whether Modi would hold bilateral talks with Putin or Xi. —AFP

Okinawa Gov Denny Tamaki (C) speaks to reporters in Naha on 12 September 2022, a day after winning a second four-year-term in the prefecture's gubernatorial election. **PHOTO : KYODO**

Kishida vows to relocate US base in Okinawa despite local backlash

PRIME Minister Fumio Kishida on Monday recommitted to taking the necessary steps to relocate a key US base within Okinawa despite vocal opponent Denny Tamaki a day earlier winning a second term as governor of Japan's southernmost prefecture.

Kishida has expressed readiness to gain an understanding from local people of the importance of relocating the transfer of US Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, a senior ruling party lawmaker, who held talks with the premier, told reporters.

Liberal Democratic Party election chief Hiroshi Moriyama also quoted Kishida as saying his government will continue to move ahead with the relocation plan -- an agreement made by Tokyo and Washington in 1996.

Earlier in the day, Tamaki reiterated his campaign pledge to stop the construction of a new US military facility in Okinawa, underscoring the deep rift between the central government and the prefecture over the plan.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno told a press conference that the relocation plan is the "only solution" to alleviate the burden on Okinawa, which hosts the bulk of US bases in Japan, adding the central government will not budge on its position.

Opposition-backed Tamaki, meanwhile, told reporters a day after winning his second four-year term, "It is an undeniable fact that I was elected by the people who oppose" the relocation plan, meaning the "Okinawans' true feelings have not changed".

Tamaki scored more than half of the votes cast in Sunday's gubernatorial election, beating rival former Ginowan Mayor Atsushi Sakima, who was supported by the ruling coalition of Kishida's LDP and its junior partner Komeito. —Kyodo

50 million people stuck in 'modern slavery': UN

FIFTY million people around the world are trapped in forced labour or forced marriage, the UN said Monday, warning that their ranks had swelled dramatically in recent years.

The United Nations had set a goal to eradicate all forms of modern slavery by 2030, but instead the number of people caught up in forced labour or forced marriage ballooned by 10 million between 2016 and 2021, according to a new report.

The study, by the UN's agencies for labour and migration along with the Walk Free Foundation, found that at the end of last year, 28 million people were in forced labour, while 22 million were living in a marriage they had been forced into.

That means nearly one out of every 150 people in the world are caught up in modern forms of slavery, the report said.

"It is shocking that the situation of modern slavery is not improving," Guy Ryder, head of the International Labour Organization (ILO), said in a statement. "Nothing can justify the persistence of this fundamental abuse of human rights."

'Life sentence'

The Covid-19 pandemic, which worsened conditions and swelled debt levels for many workers, has heightened the risk, the report found.

Coupled with the effects of climate change and armed conflicts, it has contributed to "unprecedented disruption to employment and education, increases in extreme poverty and forced and unsafe migration", compounding the threat, it said.

It is a long-term problem, the report cautioned, with estimates indicating entrapment in forced labour can last years and forced marriage is often "a life sentence".

Women and children are by far the most vulnerable.

Children account for one out of five people in forced labour, with more than half of them stuck in commercial sexual exploitation, the report said.

Migrant workers are meanwhile more than three times more likely to be in forced labour than non-migrant adult workers, it showed.

"This report underscores the urgency of ensuring that all migration is safe, orderly, and regular," Antonio Vitorino, head of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), said in the statement.

Modern slavery is present in basically every country in the world, with more than half of cases of forced labour and a quarter of forced marriages in upper-middle income or high-income countries. The report found that the number of people — mainly women and girls — stuck in forced marriages had risen by a full 6.6 million since the last global estimates in 2016. —AFP

SPORT

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

China's Xi to visit Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan this week

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A GFA player (white) tries to manage the ball against the opponent during the Week 11 match of the Myanmar National League at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon on 12 September 2022. **PHOTO: MNL**

ISPE beat GFA 3-1 in MNL Week 11

THE ISPE FC made a sweet victory over GFA FC 3-1 in the Week 11 match of the Myanmar National League played at Thuwunna Stadium in Yangon yesterday. ISPE showed their epic performance from the start but GFA relied on their counter-attack plus massive defence.

With the speedy play, Khin Kyaw Win of ISPE broke the deadlock with his beautiful score at 23-minute mark.

After receiving the icebreaker, ISPE tried to make more goals but GFA was smart at the middle and defence line to clear their opponents' creation.

However, GFA made an equalizer at 31 minutes and the goal was scored by Maung Maung Soe.

The first half ended by 1-1.

GFA attempted to make more goals in the second half with the frequent attacks but ISPE made no mistakes.

The second or winning goal for ISPE was scored by Aye Chan Thar at 86 minutes.

Next, the third goal for ISPE was scored again by Khin Kyaw at 90 minutes. With the two late goals, ISPE celebrated their victory at the final whistle. — 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.

New age Alcaraz wins US Open and becomes youngest world number one

SPANISH teenager Carlos Alcaraz claimed his maiden Grand Slam title at the US Open on Sunday, becoming the youngest man to ascend to the world number one ranking and cementing his status as the poster boy of tennis' new wave. The 19-year-old dragged his weary body to a 6-4, 2-6, 7-6 (7/1), 6-3 victory over Norway's Casper Ruud in the final.

Alcaraz, the first teenager to claim the top ranking, is the youngest Grand Slam men's champion since his idol Rafael Nadal at the 2005 French Open.

On a day of landmarks, he is also the youngest champion in New York since Pete Sampras in 1990.

"Right now I'm enjoying the moment. I'm enjoying having the trophy in my hands. But, of course, I'm hungry for more," said Alcaraz.

"I want to be in the top for many, many weeks and hopefully many years. I'm going to work hard again after this week, this amazing two weeks. I'm going to fight for more of this."

Spain's Carlos Alcaraz (L) and Norway's Casper Ruud pose with their trophies following their 2022 US Open Tennis tournament men's singles final match at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Centre in New York, on 11 September 2022. **PHOTO : AFP**

Despite being at the vanguard of tennis's modern era, his performance on Sunday also contained elements of a bygone age — he won 15 points off 21 serve-and-volley attempts.

It was a gruelling tournament for Alcaraz.

On Sunday, he claimed the record for most time spent on court at a single Grand Slam, passing the 23 hours and 21 minutes it took Kevin Anderson to finish runner-up at Wimbledon in 2018.

Most of his 23 hours and 40 minutes were taken up by the more than 13 hours it took him to play three successive five-setters to reach the final. —AFP

Arsenal's Europa League clash with PSV postponed due to police shortage

ARSENAL'S Europa League clash with PSV Eindhoven on Thursday has been postponed due to a lack of police resources in the wake of Queen Elizabeth II's death last week.

A huge police operation is required in London this week with the queen to lie in state between Wednesday and her funeral on Monday, 19 September. "The UEFA Europa League tie between Arsenal FC and PSV Eindhoven, originally to be played on Thursday 15 September, has been postponed with a new date to be communicated in due course," UEFA said in a statement on Monday.

"This is due to the severe limitations on police resources and organizational issues related to the ongoing events surrounding the national mourning for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II."

All football matches in England and Scotland were postponed over the weekend following the death of the queen on Thursday.

Arsenal's Premier League visit to Brentford on Sunday is also in doubt due to the strain on police resources.

The Gunners face a fixture pile-up in a campaign already set to be interrupted by a first ever winter World Cup.

Outside the upcoming international break, Mikel Arteta's men are due to play every midweek before the World Cup break begins on 13 November.

The group stages of UEFA's club competitions are due to finish on 3 November with the draws for the knockout stages on 7 November. — AFP