MAKE EFFORTS FOR THE SOONEST DEVELOPMENT OF SEZs PAGE-8 (OPINION)

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.

Collected data shows the issuance of more than 52 million citizenship scrutiny cards through efforts of computer professionals and usage of software: Vice-Senior General

State Administration Council Vice-Chairman Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win chairs the meeting on the compilation of voter list for the coming election, in Nay Pyi Taw on 10 November 2022.

EFFORTS must be made for ensuring the accuracy of the population in regions and states under the leadership of chief ministers from regions and states, said Vice-Chairman of the State Administration Council Deputy Prime Minister Vice-Senior General Soe Win at the meeting on the compilation of voter list for forthcoming election at the SAC Chairman Office in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday afternoon.

Speaking on the occasion, the Vice-Senior General said that the primary wrongdoings in the 2020 election were lack of systematic citizenship scrutiny cards, incorrectness of the voter lists based on duplication of CSC and individual acts of holding many duplicated CSC, causing the wrong results. Hence, the data and accounts related to Naing-4 were strictly complied for the first phase so as to be correct voter lists. As such, the collected data showed the issuance of more than 52 million citizenship scrutiny cards through the efforts of computer professionals and the usage of the software. More than 1 million uncompleted CSCs were found with citizenship numbers. These measures were based on mistakes for many reasons in successive governments, and these may cause serious danger for the State and uncompleted problems for the e-Government process.

For the second phase, the Vice-Senior General said that when Form-66/6 was checked in software technology in verifying the CSCs in computerization, the data showed that more than 13 million of CSCs were issued. The verified household registration Form-66/6 showed dead persons, those who went abroad for good for various reasons and those who have accepted the citizenship of a foreign country. More than 22 million people without CSCs were shown in the household registrations. More than 14 million people above 18 were mentioned in Form-66/6 without CSC numbers. It can be seen that these data might be based on personal mistakes or weaknesses in the data compilation process. As such, aforesaid mistakes must be carefully verified on the ground in the third phase not to cause further mistakes. Efforts must be made for ensuring the accuracy of the population in regions and states under the leadership of chief ministers from regions and states. If so, the correct voter lists can be compiled for successfully holding the free and fair multiparty democratic general election. Only when the correct data can be compiled will it contribute to the e-ID system to be implemented in the future. It is necessary to carefully mention four categories of disabilities on the ground collection process related to Naing-4 and Form-66/6 measures.

The meeting participants discussed the compilation of voter lists for relevant sectors, and the Vice-Senior General gave the necessary instructions. Later, the meeting ended with the remark of the Vice-Senior General. — MNA

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61 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 10 November, total figure rises to 632,522

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 632,522 after 61 new cases were reported on 10 November 2022 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached 606,791, including 67 new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at 19,486 on Thursday with no new deaths reported from the pandemic.

According to the research, it is found that people who have been vaccinated do not suffer severely from the disease, need not to be hospitalized and unlikely to die. If they have received booster shot, the death rates can be reduced more.

As such, the people need to follow the new normal way in living with Covid. Hence, all the people above five have to fully receive Covid-19 vaccination inoculated by the Ministry of Health free of charge. Six months after the vaccination, they have to take booster jabs at relevant health centres and ward/village administration offices without fail.

Moreover, they have to wear masks while in closed chambers and public places. They need to often wash hands with soap and water or the hand gel containing alcohol (at least 60 per cent) for 20 seconds.

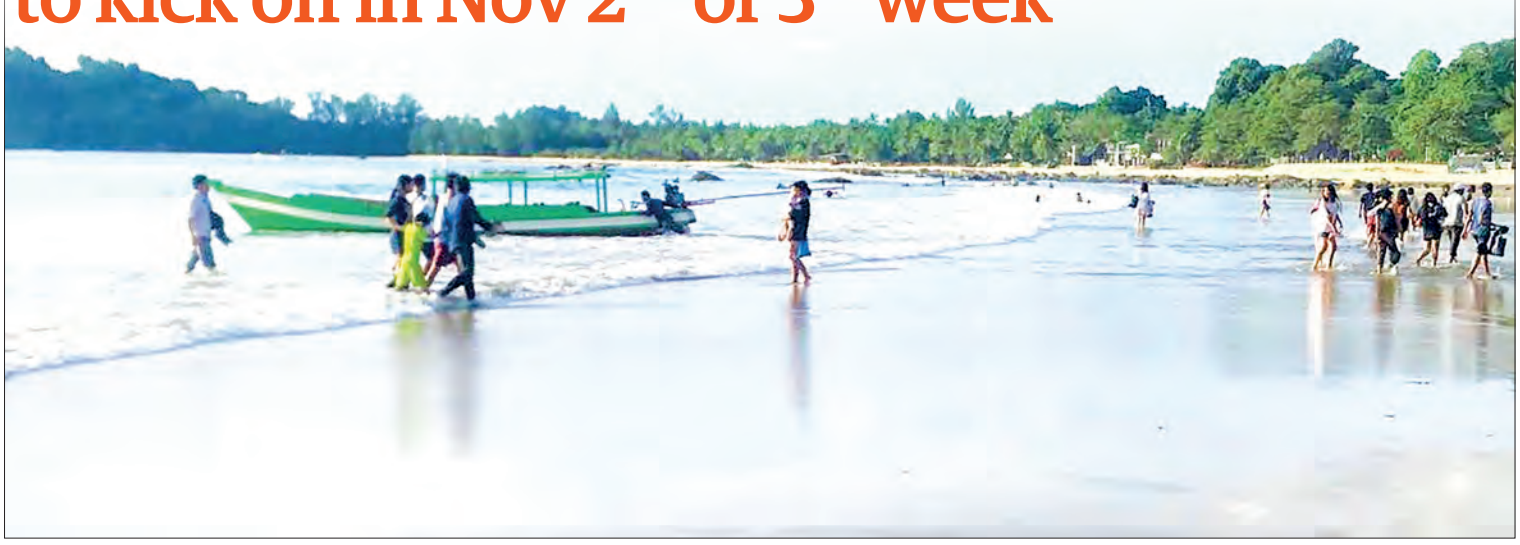
People need to follow the social distancing rule and avoid the crowds as much as possible. While not wearing masks, if they cough and sneeze, they need to cover mouth and noses with elbows in line with the personal hygienic ways.

Covid-19 information can be browsed on the internet page moh.gov.mm of the Ministry of Health.—MNA

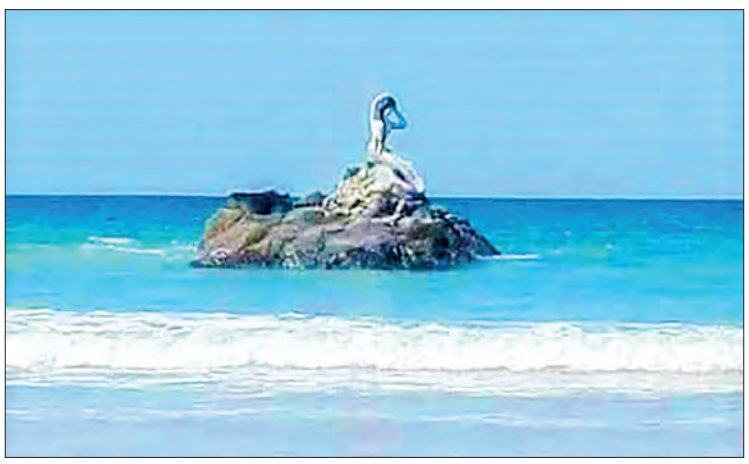
U Tin Maung Swe appointed as Ambassador of Myanmar to People's Republic of China

CHAIRMAN of the State Administration Council Prime Minister of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has appointed U Tin Maung Swe, Ambassador of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar to the People's Republic of China.—MNA

Cold Season Festival at Ngapali Beach slated to kick off in Nov 2nd or 3rd week



Beachgoers enjoy recreation at the Ngapali Beach. **PHOTOS : KANU**



NGAPALI Beach, with its white sand and crystal-clear water, is a popular spot for vacations among beach lovers and the Cold Season Festival at Ngapali Beach has been planned to be held in the second or third week of November on a grand scale like last year's event.

Creating jobs with sizable influx of visitors

On 14 November 2021, the first-ever Autumn Festival was held at Ngapali Beach and the visitors joyfully appreciated it. The airlines increased flight frequency for that destination. The home-grown visitors also increasingly arrived there by road transport. The hotels at Ngapali Beach were fully occupied and the beach was so crowded with visitors that some houses near the beach provided catering service to them. The highest number of visitors was recorded for the Thingyan Festival. After that, the visitors flocked to the beach during Thadingyut and Tazaungdaing festivals. The beach was packed with visitors from the Autumn Festival to Myanmar New Year Thingyan Festival. Therefore, Ngapali beach received a large number of visitors during the 2021 tourism season, allowing tourism-related businesses such as tour companies and hotels to thrive and creating jobs for the local community.

Grand scale opening ceremony

Last year, the Autumn Festival at Ngapali Beach was successfully held by the Rakhine State government and Directorate of Hotels and Tourism with musical performances and athletic events (beach volleyball, greasy pole contest, tug of war, sand art, mini-marathon and cycling event to mark the tourism season.

"I was so delighted to see the home-grown visitors enjoy the tourism season during the pandemic. This year, there is an interesting trip to Manaung Island beyond Ngapali Beach Resort. I welcome the local travellers going on vacation for peace and relaxation. The tourist arrivals at the beach dropped compared to the previous years, yet tourists are spotted at the beach. In the global tourism sector, it is an honour for us to have Ngapali as one of the unspoiled beaches. The festival is being planned to kick off in the second or third week of November," said U Tin Htut Aung, director of the Rakhine State Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

Welcoming the visitors with beach sports activities

Beach vacations can improve physical and mental health. That being so, tourists and home-grown visitors take vacations at the beach annually. The pandemic affected tourism patterns and international travel came to a stop. Myanmar's tourism sector was revived in 2021. During the tourism peak season, Ngapali Beach attracts tourists and local visitors with beach sports and fun events. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/GNLM

United strengths of all ethnic people needed to build a future developed Union State

THE State Administration Council's efforts in fulfilling the development of ethnic regions while serving the State responsibilities, the need for ethics to firmly grasp that opportunity to be fully utilized for regional development, prospects to shape a future developed Union State through united strengths of all ethnic people.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the peace talk with the peace delegations led by Chair of the Pa-O National Liberation Organization-PNLO Khun Thurein, Chair of the Lahu Democratic Union-LDU Kyar Solomon and Vice-Chair of the Arakan Liberation Party-ALP Saw Mra Razar Lin on 22 August 2022)

SPTT holds second-day meeting with NMSP delegation

The second and final day of the meeting between the State Peace Talks Team and the New Mon State Party is in progress yesterday.

THE State Peace Talks Team continued its second-day meeting with the New Mon State Party (NMSP) at the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Centre in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

State Administration Council Member Union Minister at the Government Office Chairman of the National Solidarity and Peacemaking Negotiation Committee-NSPNC Peace Talks Team Leader Lt-Gen Yar Pyae and members — SAC Member Lt-Gen Moe Myint Tun and NSPNC Secretary Lt-Gen Min Naung — and NMSP Vice-Chairman Nai Aung Min, Joint General Secretary of the NMSP Nai Win Hla and Central Executive Committee member Nai Banyar Lei attended the meeting.

At the second-day meeting, participants mutually discussed their attitudes on the stage-by-stage implementation of the post-2020 stage-wise procedures and implementations (Table 2). They also talked about regional development matters under the general discussion. Afterwards, both parties signed the agreements resulting from two days of negotiations.

Then, the NMSP Vice-Chairman and the Peace Talks Team Leader gave their concluding remarks. — MNA

Myanmar participates in 2nd BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture

MYANMAR is preparing to host the Regional Agricultural on Food Security in December.

During the second BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture (BAMM) of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) held in India via videoconferencing, Union Minister for Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation U Tin Htut Oo said Myanmar will host the Regional Agricultural on Food Security in December aiming to practically implement the decisions of State Leaders made at 4th BIMSTEC Summit regarding sustainable profits of agricultural produce and promotion of production rate.

MoALI Union Minister U Tin Htut Oo virtually attends the second BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture held in India.

The Union minister also served as Joint Chairperson of the 2nd BAMM and presented the implementation of decisions of the GAP Meeting organized by Myanmar, a common project of BIMSTEC encouraging private sector participation, especially in value chain management for agricultural products, the contract-farming system of Myanmar and efforts to adopt plant biotechnology, plant genetic technology and modern digital agricultural technology to develop the agricultural sector.

Moreover, the Ministers approved the report of the 2nd SOM-A, Action Plan for Strengthening BIMSTEC Agricultural Cooperation (2023-2027), MoU between the BIMSTEC Secretariat and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Joint Statement of the 2nd BAMM and set the time and date for the 3rd BAMM.

Director-General U Kyaw Swe Linn of the Planning Department co-chaired the Second Senior Official's Meeting on Agriculture (2nd SOM-A). The meeting reviewed the progress in the implementation of the 8th BIMSTEC Agricultural Cooperation Meeting report, the 9th Meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Agricultural Cooperation report, seven Common Projects, Action Plan for Strengthening BIMSTEC Agricultural Cooperation (2023-2027), MoU between the BIMSTEC Secretariat and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and fisheries and livestock sectors being supervised by BIMSTEC's Agricultural Ministers and Senior Officials.—MNA

Daily newspapers available online

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

Union Information Minister U Maung Maung Ohn joins the lunch along with the ministry's staff in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Union Information Minister attends lunch together with staff

UNION Minister for Information U Maung Maung Ohn met departmental officials of the Ministry of Information at a lunch hosted by the office of the Information Ministry in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

At the lunch, the Union minister said that staff were colleagues working together to achieve the goals of the ministry.

The Union minister recognized and respected the dutifulness and loyalty of all the staff serving the duties assigned to them with interest and happiness.

Afterwards, Union Minister U Maung Maung Ohn, Deputy Minister U Ye Tint, Permanent Secretary U Myo Myint Maung, heads of departments, officials and staff from the office of the Ministry of Information had lunch together.—MNA

MoALI Union Minister attends plenary meeting of ASEAN Economic Community Council, ASEAN Ministers of Energy, Transport, Agriculture and Forestry

A plenary meeting of ASEAN Economic Community Council Ministers and ASEAN Energy Ministers, Transport Ministers and Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry was hosted by Cambodia, the alternate chairman, on the afternoon of 9 November.

Union Minister U Tin Htut Oo of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation, Deputy Minister Dr Aung Gyi and the Myanmar delegation participated in the meeting virtually, along with the ASEAN Economic Community Council Ministers, the ASEAN Ministers on Energy, the ASEAN Transport Ministers and the ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry from 10 ASEAN member countries.

The initial activities and main activities to be carried out sector-wise in the strategy for reducing Carbon emissions in the ASEAN region, the inputs supported by the government including the use of natural fertilizers and soil improvement methods for the rehabilitation of small-scale farmers affected by COVID-19, the status of maintaining agricultural land for agricultural activities, the situations of enhancing 275,000 hectares of agricultural land with less than 10-per-cent canopy and the conditions under which Myanmar will be able to reduce 10.4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions from 2021 through 2030 were discussed at the meeting.

The online plenary meeting of ASEAN Economic Community Council Ministers and related meetings are in progress on 9 November.

It is reported that the announcement of the meeting was approved afterwards. — MNA

2022 ASEAN-ICT Forum on Child Online Protection held in Cambodia

Myanmar delegates take the group photo at the event.

THE 2022 ASEAN-ICT Forum on Child Online Protection was held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on 2 and 3 November.

Deputy Director-General Daw Khin May Nu of the Department of Social Welfare and a representative, representatives from the ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD) and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC), officials from UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, experts from universities, IT professionals in the region and the world and officials from technology companies attended the forum in person and online.

They discussed experiences of child online protection, child protection standards and plans, policies and procedures regarding Child Online Protection.

The 2022 ASEAN-ICT Forum on Child Online Protection provided them with an opportunity to learn about the negative effects of children's internet use, as well as protection programmes. By using the internet, they will receive benefits such as being able to protect children from abuse. — MNA

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

China's Opium Substitution Programme grants zero tariffs for rubber

MYANMAR'S rubber exporters will earn a handsome profit at present as China's Opium Substitution Programme grants zero tariffs for import of rubber, rubber entrepreneurs stated.

Earlier, transactions for rubber export were allowed to be made in US dollars. From 1 February 2022, Yuan can be used for a border settlement payment.

At present, the Chinese government grants some quota to rubber under the poppy substitution policy. About 3,000 Yuan tax was earlier imposed on a tonne of rubber.

If it is imported under the poppy substitution programme, a 50 per cent tax was reduced. At the moment, China lifted tariffs on rubber imports.

Rubber tapping is back to business and regular trade is seen at the rubber depots.

"Only the ribbed smoked sheet (RSS-3) and (RSS-5) are traded for now.

An undated picture shows a rubber farm in Mon State.

The price dipped in the last week of October. The prices were K1,200 per pound for RSS-3 and K1,180 per pound for RSS-5. Those traders who keep the rubber stocks in hand will thrive following China's tax exemption," Ko Hla Win, a rubber grower in Mon State, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

The value of Myanmar's rubber exports to China stood at $64.686 million (49,603.955 tonnes) in the 2018-2019 financial year, $55.913 million (41,939.175 tonnes) in the 2019-2020FY, $111.362 million (62,200.598 tonnes) in the 2020-2021FY, $7.11 million (4,196.85 tonnes) in the 2021-2022 mini-budget period and $6.016 million (3,670.75 tonnes) in the first half of the 2022-2023FY.

There are 504,988 acres of rubber plantations in Mon State, the biggest producer of rubber in Myanmar in the 2022-2023FY. – TWA/GNLM

MoU workers were seen at Kawthoung border on 17 October.

100 Myanmar migrant workers leave for Thailand under MoU

MYANMAR sent 100 migrant workers to Thailand under the MoU system through the Kawthoung border on 8 November.

They were sent to Kawthoung from Yangon airport by the overseas employment agency (Thailand) and to Thailand by boats via Kawthoung border.

The S.M.Z Co,Ltd , an overseas employment agency (Thailand) sent 40 men and 60 women to work in Thailand at Chicony Election (Thailand) Co,Ltd under 2-year contract. The Thai government announced that they will recruit between 400,000 and 800,000 workers from Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos this year and coming year.

Between May and October 2022, the overseas employment agencies serviced 57,059 migrant workers under MoU to Thailand via No (2) Myawady-Mae Sot Friendship Bridge and Kawthoung-Ranong waterway.

Kawthoung District labour office, Immigration and Population Department, Anti-human trafficking task force and relevant organizations made necessary inspections for workers.--TWA/GNLM

Gap narrows between locally produced peanut oil and imported palm oil

THE wholesale price of peanut oil stood at K9,000-9,500 per viss only following the decrease in peanut prices in early November, according to Monywa Commodity Centre.

Similarly, the wholesale price of imported palm oil in Yangon was K6,300 per viss so the gap between the locally produced peanut oil and the imported palm oils narrowed. There is only a price difference of K3,000 per viss, Ko Htay Win, a seller, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

On 20 August 2022, the peanut oil hit K13,000-15,000 while the palm oil was priced at K9,700 per viss, showing a large gap of K5,000 per viss. On 21 November, the gap widened to K6,000 when the palm oil price plunged to K6,000 per viss and the peanut oil price was K11,000-12,0000 per viss.

The prices of peanuts and sesame influence the prices of locally produced peanut and sesame oil. The palm oil price fluctuated between K6,000 and K9,500 per viss in the second half of 2022, Ko Phyo, a dealer who sends the goods to the regions outside Yangon, told the GNLM. The wholesale reference price of palm oil moved in the range between K3,500 and K5,800 per viss in the H2.

The wholesale reference price records a gap of K2,000 per viss, whereas the price movement of the wholesale price in Yangon markets was around K3,500 per viss.

The prices of peanuts for oil stood at K7,000 per viss in early September, K6,000 in late October and K5,500 on 5 November respectively.

The wholesale prices of edible oil fluctuated at K9,000-14,500 for peanut oil, K7,500-11,000 for sesame oil, and K7,000-13,000 for sunflower oil in the four months of H2 (mid-July to the third week of October). On 5 November, the prices stood at K9,000-9,500 for peanut oil and sesame oil, K12,000-13,000 for sunflower oil and K6,350 for palm oil.

The price of sesame seeds jumped from K6,000 to K9,000 per basket in the previous months. This month, the price declined to K8,000 per basket. Similarly, the price of sunflower seeds decreased from K155,000 to K145,000-150,000 per 27-viss.

A retail shop is seen displaying edible oil and peanut oil.

Palm oil usually freezes in the winter. Retailers sell them after sundry or heat treatment, the GNLM quoted Ko Kyaw, a seller as saying. Consumers mostly purchase healthy peanut oil over palm oil due to the narrow gap, he added.

At the end of November 2021, peanut oil was worth K5,500 and palm oil fetched over K4,500 per viss in the wholesale markets.

Consumers would like to change their behaviour yet the price gap forced them to buy palm oil instead, Daw Khaing Khaing, a housewife, shared her opinion with the GNLM. – TWA/GNLM

CRIME NEWS

Illegal timbers, feedstuffs, foodstuffs, auto parts and vehicles confiscated

Confiscated illegal commodities in different regions and states.

SUPERVISED by the Customs Department, an on-duty team conducted inspections at the Asia World Port Terminal container checkpoint.

On 8 November, officials captured K19,437,600 worth of motorbike parts that were different from those mentioned in the Import Declaration (ID). The action was taken under customs procedures.

On 9 November, officials nabbed 10,200 litres of cooking oil and 100 cartons of Lipo juice worth K32,550,000 from a Higer Bus (estimated value of K70 million) at the Thanlwin Bridge checkpoint in Mon State. The action was taken under customs procedures.

In addition, officials captured 2,300 kilogrammes of animal foods worth K2,898,000 without official documents at the Myawady (OSS) trade zone. The action was taken under customs procedures.

Similarly, a total of 24.9640 tonnes of illegal timber was captured in Minbya, Taungup and Kyaukphyu townships. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

Afterwards, a total of 1.2476 tonnes of illegal timber was confiscated in Zilon village of Myothit township. The action was taken under the Forest Law.

On 9 and 10 November, a combined team led by Region Forest Department seized a total of 72.7452 tonnes of illegal timber worth K28,355,276 in Toungoo and Nyaunglebin districts and action was taken under the Forest Law.

On 10 November, an inspection team confiscated 1,205 extra cartons of ice cream worth K15,183,000 from an Isuzu Freezer Box truck (estimated value of K50 million) heading from Myawady to Yangon and the action was taken under the customs procedures.

Therefore, 14 arrests (at an estimated value of K220,298,752) were made on three consecutive days from 8 to 10 November, according to the Anti-Illegal Trade Steering Committee. — MNA

Over 1.4 mln stimulant tablets seized in Pinlaung township of Shan State

OVER 1.4 million stimulant tablets worth over K700 million were confiscated in Pinlaung Township in Shan State, according to the Myanmar Police Force.

Acting on the tip-off, a combined team consisting of members of the Anti-Drug Police Force stopped and searched a Hino 12-wheel car driven by Zaw Min heading from Pinlaung to Tatkon on the Pinlaung-Tatkon Road near the Leinli suspension bridge in Pinlaung township of Shan State at 3 pm on 8 November. A total of 1.438 million stimulant tablets worth over K700 million were found in the car.

According to interrogation results, stimulant tablets were transported from Shan State (South) to Kayin State. Legal action is taken against him and the Myanmar Police Force is trying to expose those connected with him. – MNA

An offender is seen together with seized stimulant pills and a lorry.

Eight killed as vehicle overturns on Myawady-Kawkareik Asia Highway

A passenger car crashed due to a brake failure on the Myawady-Kawkareik Asia Highway near Tawnaw Waterfall and eight passengers were killed.

On the morning of 9 November, a vehicle leading from Myawady to Kawkareik had a brake failure and was unable to control speed, overturned over the roadblocks and dragged along the Tawnaw Waterfall, and crashed into a concrete plinth and a solar electricity pole.

A member of the Alinthit emergency rescue team said five men including the driver of the vehicle and three women died after getting severe injuries due to the accident.

There were originally seven people who died in the accident, but a woman's body was also found under the concrete plinth of the Tawnaw Waterfall sign, bringing the total number to eight.

The deceased were the residents of Bago Township and initial information is still in verification.

The car that overturned near Tawnaw Waterfall is lying on its back.

The Palephyu social relief group has taken the dead bodies to the Kawkareik Public Hospital.

On 10 November, the bodies will be sent to the relevant bereaved families in Bago. — TWA/GNLM

LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar imports over 75,000 tonnes of fertilizer worth $46.847 mln by sea in Oct

Fertilizers are seen being prepared to ship to the international market.

MYANMAR brought in over 75,000 tonnes of fertilizer worth US$46.847 million in seaborne trade in October.

Between 1 and 31 October, Myanmar imported over 25,000 tonnes of fertilizer from Oman, over 27,000 tonnes of fertilizer from China, over 8,500 from the UAE, over 5,200 from Viet Nam, over 3,800 from Thailand, over 2,700 from the Republic of Korea, over 30 from Malaysia, over 20 from Indonesia, over 15 from Spain and over five tonnes from India. The volume of fertilizer import is, however, down by over 35,000 tonnes compared with that of September.

Meanwhile, the country imported over 11,000 tonnes of fertilizer worth $4.281 million through a cross-border channel last month, with about over 3,700 tonnes from Thailand, over 1,100 from India and about 5,700 from China. China is the main supplier of fertilizer in border trade.

The prices of fertilizer moved in the range between K65,000-170,000 per 50-kg bag depending on the brand (Myanma Awba, Thai Grow How, Pale) and types of fertilizer in the second week of November. Despite operating fertilizer plants in Myanmar to produce bags of fertilizers, the country still needs such input for domestic consumption. —TWA/GNLM

Myanmar's kapok fibre attracts high demand from Bangladesh

The packaging of Myanmar's kapok fibre.

BANGLADESH made high demand for Myanmar's kapok fibre. Myanmar conveyed only five tonnes of kapok fibre to Bangladesh through the Maungtaw border in the first half of the current financial year 2022-2023, according to the news released by the Ministry of Commerce.

The export volume decreased compared to 8.5 tonnes recorded in the past six-month 2021-2022 mini-budget period.

Myanmar's export has been surpassing imports in the cross-border trade with Bangladesh.

The value of border trade between Myanmar has totalled US$17.569 million as of 10 October since April 2022, comprising exports worth $17.535 million and imports worth $0.034 million.

Myanmar's fishery export accounted for 65 per cent and dried groceries constituted 35 per cent in Myanmar's two border posts with Bangladesh; Sittway and Maungtaw border posts.

However, the border trade has come to a halt since September amid transport security concerns, according to the Maungtaw border post.

As a result of this, the trade volume via Sittway significantly increased.

Myanmar sent areca nut, rohu, coconut, jengkol, silver pomfret, anchovy, dried fish, broom, mushroom, ginger, onion, chickpea, dried plum, tamarind seed, footwear, lower garment (longyi), Thanaka, instant coffee mix, sunflower seed, kapok fibre and instant noodle to Bangladesh. Meanwhile, apparel, consumer goods, PVC pipes, plastic water storage tanks and hand-drawn pumps are imported into the country. – KK/GNLM

Importation of electric vehicles granted zero Customs tariff

ELECTRIC vehicles (EVs) will be entitled to be zero-Customs tariff status, according to the Ministry of Planning and Finance.

To increase the number of EV users and improve the related business, tariffs of Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) imported under Completely Built Up (CBU), Completely Knocked Down (CKD) and Semi-Knocked Down (SKD) in Customs Tariff of Myanmar 2022 were reduced to zero per cent in line with the decision of the Union Government. Types of BEVs include road tractors for semi-trailers, buses or motor vans for the transport of ten or more people including the driver, truck, motor vehicle for personal use, three-wheeled vehicles for the transport of persons, three-wheeled vehicles for the transport of goods, electric motorcycle, electric bicycle, ambulance, prison vans and hearses.

According to this directive, the imports of spare parts (for instance, charging station equipment and device) with the recommendation of the Ministry of Electric Power and the spare parts with the recommendation of the Department of Industry can be done between 2 November 2022 and 31 March 2023.

At present, Chinese electric vehicles are preparing to enter Myanmar's automobile market. On 10 October, Hozon Auto Company signed a strategic cooperation agreement with Grand Sirius Limited (GSE) for the electric vehicle market. According to the agreement, Hozon Auto will introduce the Neta U and Neta V brand to Myanmar's automobile market with the international standard for EVs. Hozon Auto has invested in Israel, Laos and Nepal.

Similarly, Dongfeng Motor Myanmar planned to import BYD branded EVs made in China at the end of 2022. They were given the go-ahead to import BYD-branded EVs.

They planned to import them by the end of the year and distribution is expected to commence in early 2023.

Five charging stations will be constructed on the Yangon-Mandalay expressway as a pilot project, the Ministry of Electric Power released a statement on 31 August.

They will be located at zero-mile (No 3 junction), 115th-mile Phyu bus terminal, the milepost 201/2 (the junction of Nay Pyi Taw), milepost 284/4 (Theegon bus terminal) and milepost 352/3 (Sakar Inn junction). Each charging station can charge 50 EVs. Efforts will be made for charging stations to charge up to 250 EVs, the MoEP stated. —NN/GNLM

Make efforts for the soonest development of SEZs

SPECIAL economic zones in Thilawa, Kyaukpyu and Dawei are being implemented to promote bilateral cooperation with economic partner countries emphasizing the interests of the motherland as well as bilateral relationships. Currently, Myanmar is operating Thilawa SEZ in cooperation with Japan, Kyaukpyu SEZ with China and Dawei SEZ with Thailand.

At present, Thilawa SEZ is the most successful in its operations as an idol among them. Relevant ministries are joining hands with each other to enable foreign investors to systematically put investments in the Thilawa SEZ, increase the number of new companies and amounts of their investments and smoothly operate businesses for current investors.

Only when SEZs gain development momentum will they help develop the State economy as well as rise the creation of job opportunities and living standards for the people. As such, strenuous efforts must be made for achieving success in the implementation of the special economic zones under the laws, rules and regulations. As such, both the government and the business people should strive for rapid improvement of special economic zones to see the fruits of efforts.

As Kyaukpyu SEZ is so close to the Belt & Road Project of China, it benefits both countries as well as helps develop the region. The deep seaport plays a key role in Kyaukpyu SEZ in addition to contributing to the interests of the local people and the State. Although Dawei SEZ has been implemented since 2008, it cannot show any remarkable progress. As such, arrangements will be made for further inviting new investors under international rules and regulations.

Among three economic objectives, the State Administration Council is implementing stability of the market economic system by inviting international investments for ensuring the economic growth of the entire ethnic national people. To be able to do so, it is necessary to systematically implement the SOPs of relevant ministries and to give proper services at the SEZs in accord with international procedures. If so, further foreign investment can be invited for economic development.

Developed and developing countries place an emphasis on the smooth process of trade in the special economic zones. After that, micro, small and medium-scale enterprises are upgraded to modernized industries. Gradually, these industries are collected as integrated zones so as to operate manufacturing as well as services.

Such a process will contribute much to the efforts of the government in the development undertakings of MSME industries. In Myanmar, MSME industries can generate jobs for local people as part of contributing to the enhancement of the livelihoods of the people.

Only when SEZs gain development momentum will they help develop the State economy as well as rise the creation of job opportunities and living standards for the people. As such, strenuous efforts must be made for achieving success in the implementation of the special economic zones under the laws, rules and regulations. As such, both the government and the business people should strive for rapid improvement of special economic zones to see the fruits of efforts.

Handy Tips for Picking and Choosing Books

By Hu Wo (Cuckoo's Song)

A number of readers take pleasure in reading solely their favourite writers' books one after another, which allows them to get hold of the writers' writing styles. **PHOTO : ILLUSTRATION: FREEPIK**

THERE is one thing that almost everybody can do without costing a fortune. This is nothing else but just reading. Truly, reading may not only be the first step towards learners' study on the subject matter but also be beloved by nearly all from every corner of the globe. It will often be seen that citizens in well-developed countries throughout the world usually make good use of their spare time reading. As we know, U Thant, an architect of global peace, once stated that a reading nationality gets advanced, and an advanced nationality likes to read as well. When reading is said as a big matter, non-living but essential things called books might never be missed out for sure. In the interest of people's convenience to obtain all-round knowledge, reading has been going through ages in concert with books for donkey's years. On the one hand, some in the new world take screen time to do reading, but on the other hand, most still have a great affection for a book read. Thus, a good question should arise as to how much effect in the world books exerts on reading.

Allegorically speaking, books are an island of treasure for any learner who takes up different major subjects. Doctors, engineers, teachers, or whoever specializes in the field of study must have books to hand at first by the time they pursue their studies. This is because those persons can manage to get facts and figures connected with their study fields from books at will; that comes easily to them. Doctor has got to read for their respective fields of study besides carrying out practicals and so has an engineer or a teacher. If the truth is known, books ought to be far beyond fixed prices – to be said better, books cannot but be priceless when they have even had real-life influences on people about the application of their theory and practice until today. `A hundred spoken words are the equal of the only one written word´(hnotetaya-satal-one), as a Myanmar saying goes. This saying seems to spotlight the very importance of books as regards their validity, reliability, and long-standingness over the written word. In addition, learners could bring books with them here and there for their liking, and the books would not cost a packet more than their absolute cost-worthy value too.

As far as I can see, most writers find it impossible to publish a book with ease because of this costing a bomb, even though they will be able to write the entire book out. The writers have to, consequently, rely on a possible publisher, or only if they do that by themselves must they think about whether to be quids in or come full circle in reference to sale prices before one book is distributed. Nevertheless, it is perhaps every writer's dream in which he wishes to issue his described pieces of writing as a book. The book is, figuratively speaking, similar to one year of a writer's expected lifetime. The more books the writer has left in the world of literature until his death, the better it is off for him. Even some writers' excellent works of literature are brought out many times, or more specifically, at least ten times, thanks to readers' demand. Writers frequently say that they do enjoy seeing their books put in apple-pie order on others' bookshelves. Furthermore, writers sometimes want to be given some literary award for a book of theirs. That is why they had to probably fall over themselves on all sides from afar in the past to win such an award.

Both young learners and advanced students are mostly readers, who have got reading fever as well as a passion for books. Strangely enough, most of the readers are from the middle class, and they cannot then afford a high or even reasonable price for books. As always, they should lead a frugal life so as to buy many books as best they can by taking spending money on food, drinks, and clothes. Readers are also those who take great care of books; they look at upside-down books that they will buy for certain in order to find out how neat and tidy they are, especially their covers and colours. For some readers who are inclined to adore pretty books, the book's front or back covers might be by far more important than their inside pages, even if the covers cannot decide the value of the books. Adult readers ache to collect and keep books systematically in their private libraries rather than on bookcases. Bookworms devote themselves to their reading, possibly with a bookmark. A book-lover may become a bookseller but probably not a lender or borrower of books. Nonetheless, they willingly get their beloved persons books for presents.

As my teacher U Hla Kyi said, starter readers are scared to death of a big book, yet they lose a small one too. For they incline to the view that big books may be of an advanced level, and such these books make readers aged a short-lived span of reading bored stiff merely at first glance. Small books appropriate to their literacy skills seem as easy as anything to read for beginner readers. The thickness, cover, and price of a book do not directly relate to whether it is good or bad, of course. More importantly, a reader will need to pick and choose books suitable for his reading skill. Some thick books eminently attract readers' attention till the end of the books as large as in size. Although small, some little books hold real literary value for readers. Maybe the cover of a book can tell its subject matter entry, maybe it cannot. What is more, it does not matter to readers how nice the book's cover is. Not every expensive book is grand in a very similar way. A number of readers take pleasure in reading solely their favourite writers' books one after another, which allows them to get hold of the writers' writing styles. Indeed, these readers do not necessarily take a liking to all of the only writer's books, I think.

Subsequently, it would be better for readers to read up on great books, for example, worldwide classics. If so, what the greatest books turn out to be the key question which is absolutely worth asking readers. The main traits of a great book are, to my knowledge, depending upon universal truths, following the colourful life of most folks from various parts of the world, creating interpersonal-intrapersonal peace globally, idealizing its written language as modelled writing for modern writers, and standing a best-seller through ages. Also, such books can turn a person's life situations from low to high, and even change the whole world towards a better condition. Accordingly, great works of literature – particularly novels, poems, and plays – are living but old; these works act long on modern literature somehow or other. Several readers and writers assume that literature is out of date, dead even. In actual fact, literature is an absolute must for all lovers of books. Unless a writer has read any literature yet, he will potentially lose face among their contemporaries that are famous in the field of literature. Certainly, literature is the writer's life in which his language in use is deeply influenced by the literature.

Books are either the apple of my eye or dead living friends of mine according to the statement `Books for All´. As a devotee of books, I cannot help buying at least one or two books whenever I arrive at bookshops. Seikku Cho Cho, Sarpaylawka, Innwa, and Yar Pyae from Hledan, Yangon, Myanmar, were the bookshops where I always used to go and buy books. Among inanimate objects of interest, the book first beckons most at my heartstrings as if a boy had seen his childhood sweetheart by chance. While I went to university, the university library was a bank of knowledge for me, where I could read rare books above and beyond free Wi-Fi use. I spent most of my own time in the library so I allowed myself the luxury of reading in full measure on weekdays as a university student to the core. Holding books in hand produces a sort of taste for university students which this taste says is looking good or taking pride in the university. Just by glancing at the book that a person is reading, good readers would be able to assess his educational level with their eyes shut. As the reading age is getting longer and longer, the fact that a reader will ably formulate his personal standards of picking and choosing books is a foregone conclusion.

■■■

Study investigates how immunotherapy affects COVID-19 outcomes

"The most important finding is that although those treated with immunotherapy alone did not have an effect on COVID-19 disease outcomes, those that had baseline immunosuppression and were treated with immunotherapy had worse outcomes with COVID-19," Wise-Draper said. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/AFP/FILE**

A new study performed by a University of Cincinnati researcher sheds more light on the relationship between COVID-19 severity and immunotherapy treatment for cancer patients.

Trisha Wise-Draper, MD, PhD, of the University of Cincinnati, is a co-corresponding author of the study that was released in JAMA Oncology on 3 November.

Prior to this study, there have been conflicting findings on how immunotherapy for cancer treatment affects COVID-19 outcomes, according to Wise-Draper. It was believed that immunotherapy would predispose cancer patients to worse COVID-19 disease since immunotherapy treatments impair and immunosuppress patients' immune systems.

The effects of immunotherapy and immunosuppression

"This research was focused on understanding the effects of immunotherapy and immunosuppression on cancer patients with COVID-19 and COVID-19 outcomes," said Wise-Draper, associate professor of medicine in the Division of Hematology/Oncology, section head for Medical Oncology in UC's College of Medicine, Head and Neck Centre of Excellence co-leader and a UC Health physician.

The COVID-19 and Cancer Consortium registry, a multi-institution registry of individuals with COVID-19 and a current or past invasive cancer diagnosis, provided the researchers with data on 12,046 patients.

The COVID-19 and cancer patient cohort with the most data available at this time was this one.

"We reviewed patients with cancer, those that had baseline immunosuppression and those that were treated with immunotherapy prior to getting COVID-19," Wise-Draper said.

In addition to death rates, Wise-Draper stated that the research team evaluated the severity of COVID-19 disease using metrics such as whether patients needed oxygen, were admitted to the hospital, or required intensive care unit therapy.

Baseline immunosuppression

"The most important finding is that although those treated with immunotherapy alone did not have an effect on COVID-19 disease outcomes, those that had baseline immunosuppression and were treated with immunotherapy had worse outcomes with COVID-19," Wise-Draper said.

Patients who had nonimmunotherapy therapies, such as chemotherapy, had COVID-19 outcomes that were poorer than those who received immunotherapy, albeit to a smaller extent.

These patients had baseline immunosuppression. It was discovered that those who had received COVID-19 immunizations had less severe COVID-19.

According to the findings, immunotherapy treatments are often safe for patients who do not already have immunosuppression to use, even when the pandemic is at its worst.

Source : ANI

ENVIRON WORLD

Delegates attend the opening ceremony of the 27th Conference of the Parties in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, on November 6, 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

Global South needs $2 trillion a year to tame, cope with climate

DEVELOPING and emerging countries — excluding China — need investments well beyond $2 trillion annually by 2030 if the world is to stop the global warming juggernaut and cope with its impacts, according to a UN-backed report released Tuesday.

A trillion dollars should come from rich countries, investors and multilateral development banks, said the analysis commissioned by Britain and Egypt, hosts respectively of the 2021 UN climate summit in Glasgow and this week's COP27 event in Sharm el-Sheikh.

The rest of the money — about $1.4 trillion — must originate domestically from private and public sources, said the report. Current investments in emerging and developing economies other than China stand at about $500 billion. —AFP

Smart farming tech offers sprout of hope in Greece

EYES glued to his mobile phone, farmer Sotiris Mournos pores over the latest microclimate and humidity data about his fields on the plain of Imathia in northern Greece.

The high-tech farming techniques he uses are making slow progress in Greece's tradition-bound and struggling agricultural sector, but growers like him see them as key to their future.

Mournos, 25, employs a Greek smart-farming app to boost production of his family's cotton fields and fruit trees.

Using real-time data recorded by a weather station, he can analyze and correlate the impact of weather conditions on his 10-hectare (nearly 25-acre) cotton plantation.

"We've managed to reduce the use of fertilizer and irrigation... (and thereby to) increase the financial return" of the farm, said Mournos, who gave up studying computer science at university to devote himself to the family holding in the town of Platy.

Measuring the humidity or the nitrogen level in the soil helps to curb the excessive use of fertilizers and saves water, he notes.

As in many other southern European countries, Greece's agricultural sector is chronically short of water and smart farming could help deal with that problem.

Boosting yields

The sector has also lost a major share of its available labour in recent decades, as young people snub farm work for better-paid jobs in services such as tourism.—AFP

A new generation of Greek farmers see high technology as key to their ailing sector. **PHOTO: AFP**

India at 75: Melting glaciers, heatwaves and climate crisis

Hindu faithful dream of trekking at least once in their lives to Gaumukh, where the waters of India's holiest river, the Ganges, emerge from a Himalayan glacier. **PHOTO: AFP**

FROM prime ministers and millionaires to labourers and ascetics, Hindu faithful dream of trekking at least once in their lives to Gaumukh, where the waters of India's holiest river, the Ganges, emerge from a Himalayan glacier.

But the ice at the end of the arduous journey is receding rapidly and portends an increasingly dry future for a country of 1.4 billion people facing existential challenges from climate change.

"It is quite astonishing, so quick and it is happening every day and every second," said Sheethal Vepur Ramamurthy, a researcher with Friedrich Schiller University in Jena, Germany.

"We can even see the glacier dripping," she told AFP at the site. "So, it is a harsh reality."

"Climate change definitely plays a role. Although people may deny it is happening in front of our eyes, we just have to witness it."

The Ganges flows for around 2,500 kilometres (1,550 miles) across India and is central to both Hindu identity — believers revere it as "mother Ganga" — and the survival of 500 million people who depend on its water for their daily farming, domestic and industrial needs.

Seventy-five years after independence, India has overtaken former colonizer Britain to become the world's fifth-largest economy. It is also the world's third-biggest carbon emitter and second-biggest coal user.

Now, it is experiencing increasingly frequent droughts, floods and water shortages. —AFP

Rare Canaanite inscription found on ivory comb in Israel

A rare inscription that sheds new light on the use of Canaanite language some 3,700 years ago has been discovered on an ivory comb in southern Israel, archaeologists said Wednesday.

The comb was found at the Tel Lachish site in 2017, but the letters were not noticed until earlier this year following further examination, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem said in a statement.

The artefact provides "direct evidence" of the use of the Canaanite alphabet in daily life, said Yosef Garfinkel, an archaeology professor at Hebrew University.

The 17 letters inscribed on the comb, which was used to remove lice, form seven words that translate to "May this tusk root out the lice of the hair and the beard," the statement said.

Canaanite language

"This is the first sentence ever found in the Canaanite language in Israel," Garfinkel noted, calling it "a landmark in the history of the human ability to write". —AFP

Indonesia revokes licences of drug firms over syrups linked to child deaths

INDONESIA'S food and drug agency on Wednesday revoked the licences of two chemical firms to distribute materials used in syrup medicines linked to a wave of child deaths caused by kidney failure or damage.

The move comes as the Southeast Asian country suffers a spike in cases of acute kidney injury that has killed nearly 200 children since the end of August, prompting an investigation and ban on the sale of some syrup medicines.

PT Mega Setia Agung Kimia and PT Tirta Buana Kemindo were barred from distributing raw pharmaceutical materials after two potentially harmful chemicals — diethylene glycol and ethylene glycol — were found in their supplies of propylene glycol, agency chief Penny Lukito told reporters.

The two chemical compounds are used in industrial products such as antifreeze and have been linked with recent cases of acute kidney injury.

Their distribution licences were revoked for "failing to comply with the requirements," Lukito said.

"They distribute products contaminated with ethylene glycol and diethylene glycol. They also did not conduct inspection to guarantee the quality of the solvents," said Lukito.

The food and drug agency (BPOM) also ordered the recall of syrup medicines from two other pharmaceutical companies — PT Samco Farma and PT Ciubros Farma — after tests revealed excessive amounts of those chemicals in their products. —AFP

Indonesian police have launched an investigation into three pharmaceutical firms after tests of their products revealed ethylene glycol 'beyond safe levels'. **PHOTO: CHAIDEER MAHYUDDIN AFP/ FILE**

Finland expands provision of COVID-19 booster shots

A passenger checks in at the Helsinki Airport, Finland, on 21 June 2021. **PHOTO: MATTI MATIKAINEN/XINHUA**

THE Finnish government said on Wednesday it has expanded the provision of state-funded COVID-19 booster vaccines and will let municipalities decide whether to offer booster shots to people of all ages.

The booster shots, voluntary and free of charge, can be recommended by a public or private healthcare institution, or a general practitioner, said Krista Kiuru, minister for basic services and family matters.

"The protective effect of all COVID-19 vaccines is good against serious coronavirus disease," she said at a press conference, adding that vaccinations can effectively reduce COVID-19-related morbidity and severe cases, prevent hospital overcrowding and avoid lockdowns.

According to Kiuru, the Finnish government will cover the cost of the vaccination and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (STM) will give detailed instructions on the vaccination practice later in the fall. —Xinhua

Hackers demand $10 mln for stolen Australian health records

HACKERS on Thursday demanded US$10 million to stop leaking highly sensitive records stolen from a major Australian healthcare company, as they uploaded yet more intimate details about customers.

Medibank, Australia's largest private health insurer, confirmed this week that hackers had accessed the information of 9.7 million current and former clients, including Prime Minister Anthony Albanese.

The hackers on Thursday uploaded a second batch of files to a dark web forum, with more sensitive details about hundreds of Medibank customers.

The first leaks appear to have been selected to cause maximum harm: targeting those who received treatment related to drug abuse, sexually transmitted infections or pregnancy terminations.

"Added one more file abortions.csv," the anonymous hackers wrote on the forum, before detailing their ransom threat.

"Society ask us about ransom, it's 10 million USD. We can make discount… $1 = 1 customer."

Medibank has repeatedly refused to pay the ransom.

'Profit and greed'

The Medibank hack — and an earlier data breach impacting nine million customers at telecom company Optus — has raised questions about Australia's ability to repel cyber criminals. —AFP

Marrakech film festival returns after Covid cancellations

THE Marrakech International Film Festival returns to the Moroccan tourist hub this month, with organizers hoping to woo star-struck fans after a two-year hiatus due to the coronavirus pandemic.

British actress Tilda Swinton is set to attend, with Italian director Paolo Sorrentino heading up the jury.

The festival, running from 11-19 November, features emerging directors from across the world who will "shape the cinema of tomorrow", according to Prince Moulay Rachid, who presides over the festival's foundation.

Sorrentino, whose film "The Great Beauty" won a foreign-language Oscar in 2014, is joined by French actor Tahar Rahim, Lebanese director Nadine Labaki and German-American actress Diane Kruger.

Fourteen feature films from across the world, including six by women, will be in the running for the festival's top prize, the Gold Star.

Artistic director Remi Bonhomme told AFP that the festival "brings together different cinematic worlds, through 76 films (representing) 33 countries covering all continents".

The opening film is "Pinocchio", a remake of Carlo Collodi's animated tale by Mexican director Guillermo del Toro. —AFP

Chinese director Zhai Yixiang (2L) and Saoudian director Abdulmohsen Aldhabaan (R) hold the Jury Price awards during the closing ceremony of the 18th edition of the Marrakech International Film Festival on 7 December 2019, in Marrakech. **PHOTO: FADEL SENNA/AFP/FILE**

ECONOMY
WORLD

Turbulence ahead: Airline on the block in Sri Lanka reforms

DOZENS of state-owned Sri Lankan companies employing tens of thousands of people could be restructured or closed as part of an IMF bailout of the bankrupt country, with the country's airline top of the list for reform.

With nearly 6,000 staff, SriLankan Airlines is the biggest and most expensive of the cash-haemorrhaging, sclerotic companies that have drained the budget and compounded the worst financial crisis in national history.

According to treasury figures, the carrier was losing $4.50 for every dollar it earned at the start of this year. It has not turned a profit since 2008, when its chief executive was sacked for offending the country's then-leader.

"Even those who have never stepped into a Sri Lankan aircraft are paying to subsidise the airline," government spokesman Manusha Nanayakkara told reporters this month.

With almost 6,000 employees, SriLankan Airlines is the biggest of the island nation's money-losing state firms. **PHOTO: AFP**

"We can't continue like this."

Sri Lanka defaulted on its $51 billion foreign debt in April and is now neck-deep in the arduous process of renegotiating its obligations with creditors.

Its 22 million people suffered through months of food and fuel shortages, and at the peak of the crisis, a furious mob stormed government buildings and chased Sri Lanka's former president into exile.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has given preliminary approval to a $2.9 billion bailout, and the government hopes to be able to access the first tranche by the end of the year.

Terms of the deal have yet to be released, but IMF cash is usually conditional on painful reforms, such as tax hikes, removing consumer subsidies, and privatizing or closing underperforming state firms. —AFP

EU economy reaches "turning point": official

THE European Union's (EU) economy has reached a turning point, with forces that were driving growth having "largely faded away", European Commission Executive Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis said on Tuesday in Brussels. The first half of the year saw surprisingly strong growth, but "the outlook for economic growth now looks significantly weaker than in the Commission's summer forecast, while inflation will stay higher for longer," Dombrovskis said.

Annual inflation in the eurozone reached a record 10.7 per cent in October. In the third quarter, seasonally adjusted gross domestic product (GDP) increased by 0.2 per cent compared to the previous quarter in both the euro area and the EU, according to Eurostat.

Dombrovskis said that in a difficult geopolitical context, the EU must urgently accelerate its transition towards cleaner energy and away from fossil fuels -- particularly those from Russia.—Xinhua

The European Union's transition to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 is a big challenge. Solar panels are installed on the roof of the Hermitage Amsterdam, the Netherlands. **PHOTO: ROBIN UTRECHT/AFP**

Türkiye revises tourism targets amid strong activity

AS tourist inflows beat consensus, Türkiye has revised its annual tourism targets upward, counting on the industry to deliver 44 billion US dollars in revenues to keep the economy growing.

The uptick came in light of better-than-expected outcomes in tourist arrivals, said Minister of Culture and Tourism Mehmet Ersoy last week, adding tourism activity is strong in October.

He estimated that by the end of 2022, the annual tourist numbers will be close to the booming pre-pandemic level of 2019 when Türkiye had welcomed 51.7 million foreign visitors.

Official statistics showed that foreign tourist arrivals in the January-September period rose by 98 per cent year-on-year to 40.25 million.

The tourism revenues in the third quarter leaped by 27 per cent, showed statistics released by the Turkish Statistical Institute in late October.

This is the second revision the ministry made amid the strong rebound in tourism activity. In July, Ersoy announced that the annual targets were to be raised from 42 million to 47 million in tourist numbers, while revenues from 34 billion dollars to 37 billion dollars.

"With winter visitors, new targets are likely to be reached," Tuna Erman, a travel agent from Antalya, Türkiye's tourism hub on the Mediterranean, told Xinhua.

Erman said there is a significant increase in demand from northern European countries like Germany, the Netherlands, and Britain, adding that the trend is in part driven by the incentive of a Turkish lira that devalued nearly 30 per cent this year. —Xinhua

Moldova facing dark winter as energy crisis bites

Keeping the lights on: electricians work on power lines near Balti, Moldova. **PHOTO: AFP**

A silence hangs over Ion Ignat's normally noisy factory in Chetrosu, Moldova, with his 50 workers fretting about their future.

"Normally, all the machines are running. Now all is dead silent," said the owner of the plant that makes bricks and concrete products about a half an hour's drive from the capital Chisinau.

The 60-year-old decided to halt production early last month for the first time since 1992 when spiralling energy prices made it too expensive to fire the kilns and run the machinery.

Ignat hopes to restart production soon if oil and gas prices fall.

In the meantime like many others in this impoverished nation nestled between Romania and Ukraine, he is preparing for a hard winter.

Faced with being starved of the Russian gas it has depended on for decades, the coming months will be crucial for this country of 2.6 million people with a Soviet past and European ambitions.

European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen will visit later this week to discuss how the bloc can help Moldova, which became an EU candidate in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. —AFP

Tata Motors extends losses on chip woes, weak exports

India's Tata Motors announced a seventh consecutive quarter of losses Wednesday as chip shortages and weak demand in export markets hurt sales. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

INDIA'S Tata Motors announced a seventh consecutive quarter of losses Wednesday as chip shortages and weak demand in export markets hurt sales.

Net losses at the Mumbai-headquartered automaker narrowed to 9.45 billion rupees ($116 million) in the July-to-September quarter, compared to a loss of 44.42 billion rupees in the same period last year.

But revenue from operations rose nearly 30 per cent year-on-year to 796.11 billion rupees, as wholesale demand improved despite continued supply chain bottlenecks, such as semiconductor chip shortages.

"Demand continues to remain strong," the company said in a stock exchange filing, but warned it remained vulnerable to "global uncertainties".

Covid-19 lockdowns in China have also hurt sales this year.

But Tata Motors said "improving chip supply and cooling commodity prices" will aid business recovery in the quarters ahead.

Revenues at British subsidiary Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) rose 35.9 per cent to £5.26 billion ($6 billion) in the quarter as production of new Range Rover models improved, but it still lost £173 million.

"Demand for our most profitable and desired vehicles remains strong," JLR chief Thierry Bollore said in a statement. —AFP

FTX collapse gives crypto sector 'another black eye'

EVEN for a sector regularly rocked by bankruptcies, the collapse of FTX — a cryptocurrency platform worth $32 billion at the beginning of the year -- came as a shock.

FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried had cultivated friends in Washington and basked in glowing tributes when he stepped in to rescue other ailing crypto companies earlier in the year.

Yet, all it took for his firm to unravel was a report on a specialist website raising doubts about FTX's accounts, followed by a few tweets from his big rival Changpeng Zhao, boss of Binance.

Just days later, Zhao -- who had feuded for weeks on Twitter with Bankman-Fried -- announced on Tuesday he had signed a letter of intent to buy FTX after the firm asked him for help owing to a "major liquidity crisis".

Bitcoin fell in the process to its lowest level in two years. —AFP

Italy to inject another 400 mln euros into airline

THE Italian government on Tuesday approved injecting another 400 million euros ($400 million) into state-owned ITA Airways as efforts to sell off the airline stall.

The funds will be available to the airline by the end of the month after the economy ministry approved the injection.

The airline was created last year out of the ashes of Alitalia, which accumulated more than 11 billion euros in losses in the two decades before being shut down.

The European Union approved Italy continuing to support an airline, but insisted upon a new, smaller company and limited public funding.

The previous government under prime minister Mario Draghi launched an effort to sell off a majority of the airline, and in August accepted an offer by US investment fund Certares, Delta Air Lines and Air France-KLM over a proposal by Germany's Lufthansa and shipping group MSC.

But with little progress in negotiations with the Certares consortium, new Economy Minister Giancarlo Giorgetti at the end of October did not renew the exclusivity of talks with ITA, putting Lufthansa and shipping group MSC back in the running. —AFP

Nintendo unveils 2nd official store in Osaka before Friday's opening

Photo taken on 10 Nov 2022, shows in-store retail displays at Nintendo Co.'s second official Japan store a day before its grand opening in Osaka's Umeda area. **PHOTO: KYODO**

NINTENDO Co. on Thursday unveiled its second official store in Osaka ahead of its opening Friday, offering over 2,000 items of iconic game-themed merchandise on an 800-square-metre area in a major department store.

Run directly by the company, Nintendo OSAKA is located on the 13th floor of Daimaru department store in the major commercial district of Umeda and is the second official store after its Tokyo shop opened in 2019.

The company invited members of the media and customers selected by lottery to the store where visitors can play Super Mario, Splatoon and other games and purchase original goods not offered elsewhere.

"We want to increase communication with our customers" through the official shops, Nintendo President Shuntaro Furukawa said.

Osaka resident

Kaori Sugimoto, a 35-year-old Osaka resident selected to visit the new store on the pre-opening day, said, "I'm so glad that they opened a store in Osaka. It's amazing they have so many colorful stuffed toys." —Kyodo

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB244A)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB244A)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **11-11-2022** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

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

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

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S MEDITERRANEAN SHIPPING COMPANY S.A

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

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Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V TC SYMPHONY VOY.NO. (69E)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **11-11-2022** 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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GLOBAL AFFAIRS

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

King Charles narrowly avoids being hit by eggs

KING Charles III and his wife Queen Consort Camilla narrowly avoided being hit with eggs thrown at them during a visit to northern England on Wednesday, British media footage showed.

The 73-year-old monarch and Camilla, 75, appeared to be targeted with three eggs which landed near them during a walkabout in York, before they were ushered away by minders.

A man was heard shouting "this country was built on the blood of slaves" and "not my king" before he was detained by several police officers as the incident occurred, the footage showed.

The protester also booed the royal couple before he appeared to lob the eggs at them, according to reporters at the scene. —AFP

Macron ends France's Africa mission, ponders new strategy

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron on Wednesday announced that France was ending its Barkhane anti-jihadist mission in Africa after over a decade, saying a new strategy would be worked out with African partners.

The declaration came in a wide-ranging speech reviewing France's strategy where the president also underlined the importance of its nuclear deterrent, as well as relations with Germany and the United Kingdom despite recent tensions.

Macron laid out his strategic defence priorities for France in Europe and Africa in the coming years, not least in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and a growing international assertiveness of China.

This file photo taken on 15 January 2013, shows French troops from the "Licorne" operation based in Abidjan (Ivory Coast) arriving at the 101st military airbase near Bamako to reinforce the "Serval" operations, before their deployment in the north of Mali. **PHOTO: ERIC FEFERBERG /AFP/FILE**

"I have decided, in coordination with our partners, to make official today the end of the Barkhane operation," Macron said in the keynote speech on military policy to top generals and diplomats aboard a helicopter carrier Mediterranean naval base at Toulon. —AFP

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Putin will not go to G20 summit in Bali

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin will not attend the G20 leaders' summit on the Indonesian resort island of Bali next week, Moscow's embassy in Indonesia told AFP on Thursday.

"I can confirm that (foreign minister) Sergei Lavrov will lead the Russian delegation to the G20. President Putin's programme is still being worked out, he could participate virtually," said Yulia Tomskaya, the embassy's chief of protocol.

US President Joe Biden, who has called Putin a "war criminal" and who will be attending the summit, previously said he had no intention of meeting Putin in Bali if he went.

A woman walks past a logo of the G20 Summit, in Jakarta on 8 November 2022. **PHOTO: AFP**

The decision, which follows months of speculation, comes as Moscow is suffering losses in its Ukraine campaign and as the Kremlin tries to shield itself from Western condemnation at the 15-16 November summit. —AFP

Ukraine sees no signs of Russia's withdrawal from Kherson

UKRAINIAN Presidential Advisor Mykhailo Podolyak said Wednesday that Kyiv sees no signs that Russia's troops are withdrawing from the southern city of Kherson.

"We see no signs that Russia is leaving Kherson without a fight," Podolyak tweeted.

A part of the Russian military group is preserved in the city, and additional reserves are charged to the Kherson region, Podolyak said.

Earlier in the day, the Ukrainian government-run Ukrinform news agency reported that Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu ordered Russian troops to withdraw from the right bank of the Dnipro River, where Kherson is located, and regroup to another bank. —Xinhua

Iran calls for Ukraine dialogue as it hosts Russia security chief

IRAN'S top security official Ali Shamkhani called for dialogue to end the war in Ukraine during a meeting Wednesday in Tehran with his Russian counterpart Nikolai Patrushev.

"Iran supports any initiative leading to a ceasefire and peace between Russia and Ukraine based on dialogue," Shamkhani was quoted as saying by the official news agency IRNA. The Islamic republic was "ready to play a role in ending the war", the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council added. The statement comes after Kyiv and its Western allies accused Russia in recent weeks of using Iranian-made drones to carry out attacks in Ukraine. Tehran denies the allegations.

Russia's Security Council said the two officials "discussed in detail bilateral cooperation in the field of law enforcement, including public security and the fight against terrorism and extremism". —AFP

Iranian soldiers stand next to Iranian Shahab-3 and Kheibar missiles during a rally marking Jerusalem day in Tehran, on 29 April. **PHOTO: AFP**

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Iran cities strike in solidarity with 'Bloody Friday' dead

CITIES in western Iran went on strike Wednesday in solidarity with mourners marking 40 days since security forces killed dozens in a crackdown on protests in the country's strife-torn southeast, rights groups said.

Security forces opened fire on protests that erupted on 30 September after weekly prayers in Zahedan, capital of the restive province of Sistan-Baluchistan on Iran's border with Pakistan.

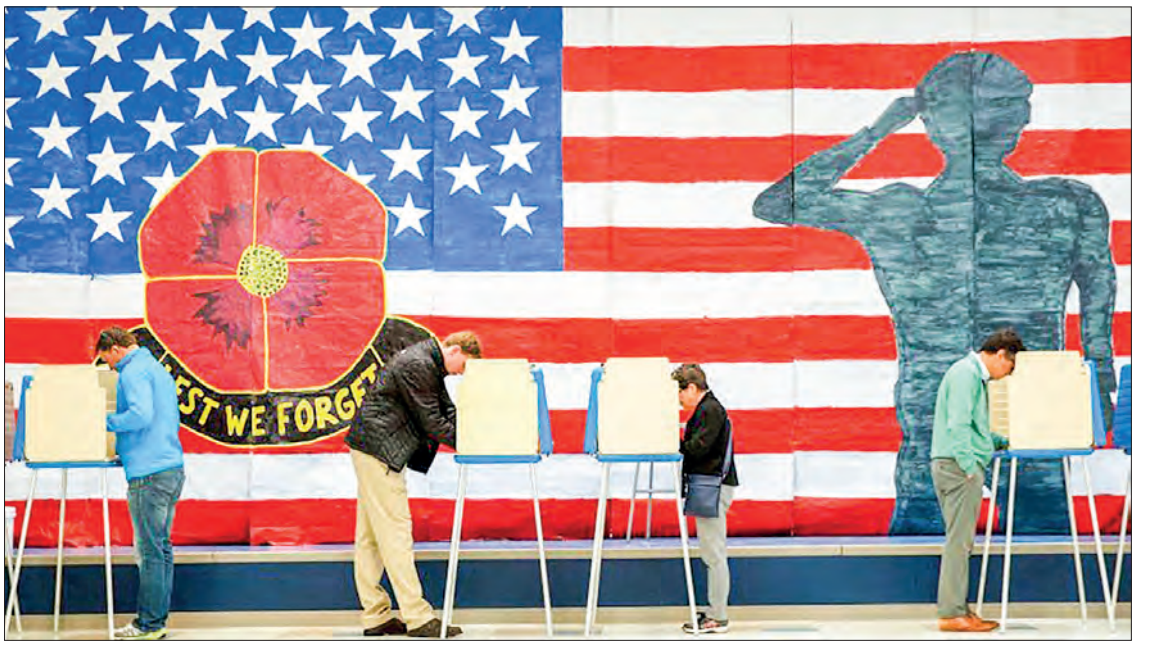
It came two weeks after demonstrations broke out across Iran over the death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian of Kurdish origin, following her arrest in Tehran for allegedly flouting the country's strict hijab dress rules for women.

The crackdown on nationwide protests since her death has killed at least 304 people, including 41 children and 24 women, says the Oslo-based group Iran Human Rights (IHR).

Activists were seen distributing fliers calling for protests in all cities Wednesday for the 40-day mourning ceremony of Zahedan's "Bloody Friday", in a video shared by the 1500tasvir social media channel. —AFP

Iranians wave their country's national flag at a rally outside the former US embassy in Tehran. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Biden calls for Republican cooperation amid tight US midterm races



Voters cast their ballots at Robious Elementary School during the US midterm election in Midlothian, Virginia, on 8 November 2022. **PHOTO: RYAN M. KELLY / AFP**

DEMOCRATIC President Joe Biden on Wednesday called on Republicans to work together to advance domestic and foreign policy goals, including providing support to Ukraine to help repel Russia's invasion, amid increasingly tight midterm elections.

The results of Tuesday's races were not clear enough to project who will control Congress from January. Republicans were viewed as closer to retaking the House of Representatives, while Democrats have shown surprising strength and scored a win in a race deemed crucial to holding the Senate.

Speaking at a post-election press conference, Biden hailed his party's performance, saying "a giant red wave" of sweeping Republican victories, as suggested by some pundits, "didn't happen".

But with a looming divided government apparently in mind, the president said, "I'm prepared to work with my Republican colleagues. The American people have made clear, I think, that they expect Republicans to be prepared to work with me as well."

"In the area of foreign policy, I hope we'll continue this bipartisan approach of confronting Russia's aggression in Ukraine," he added. —Kyodo

Taliban ban women from parks and funfairs in Afghan capital

THE Taliban have banned Afghan women from entering the capital's public parks and funfairs, just months after ordering access to be segregated by gender.

The new rule, introduced this week, further squeezes women out of an ever-shrinking public space that already sees them banned from travelling without a male escort and forced to wear a hijab or burqa whenever out of the home.

Schools for teenage girls have also been shut for over a year across most of the country.

"For the past 15 months, we tried our best to arrange and sort it out -- and even specified the days," said Mohammad Akif Sadeq Mohajir, spokesman for the Ministry for the Prevention of Vice and Promotion of Virtue.

Taliban guards stand in the Habibullah Zazai Park on the outskirts of Kabul. **PHOTO: AFP**

"But still, in some places — in fact, we must say in many places — the rules were violated," he told AFP late Wednesday.

"There was mixing (of men and women), hijab was not observed, that's why the decision has been taken for now."

The news was met with dismay by women and park operators — who invested heavily in developing the facilities. —AFP

Indian celebrity jeweller loses UK extradition appeal

A fugitive Indian jeweller on Wednesday lost an appeal against extradition to his homeland where he is accused of defrauding one of the country's largest banks of $1.8 billion.

Nirav Modi had been allowed to appeal against the original extradition ruling on mental health grounds and his right not to face inhuman treatment.

But in a ruling on Wednesday, two UK judges said they were "not satisfied that Mr Modi's mental condition and the risk of suicide are such that it would be either unjust or oppressive to extradite him".

Modi, dubbed a jeweller to the stars thanks to celebrity customers in Hollywood and India's Hindi-language movie industry Bollywood, lost his legal bid to avoid extradition from the UK in February 2021.

He fled India in February 2018 after being accused of having played a central role in defrauding Punjab National Bank, one of India's largest state-backed lenders, of $1.8 billion (1.5 billion euros).

Modi is also accused of witness intimidation and destroying evidence.

Lower court judge Sam Goozee ruled that there was enough evidence to suggest there was a criminal case against Modi in India, and handed the final decision to the government.

The then interior minister Priti Patel approved the request two months later in April 2021 although Modi was then given permission to appeal the decision in August of the same year. —AFP

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Biden calls for Republican cooperation amid tight US midterm races

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SPORT

Brunei team players celebrate the victory after qualifying for the 2022 AFF Cup tournament. **PHOTO: AFF**

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.

AFF Cup complete list of competition teams including Myanmar come out

ALL the teams that will compete in the 2022 AFF Cup tournament, including team Myanmar have come out completely.

The final stage of the tournament will be divided into two groups of five teams, and nine teams will be allowed to play directly, and for the remaining place, the Brunei team and Timorese team played in the qualifiers.

The qualifiers were held in two rounds on 5 and 8 November, with Brunei winning the first round by six goals to two, and Timorese winning by one goal to nil in the second round.

However, the Brunei team won the two rounds with six goals to three goals and qualified.

The Brunei team was allowed to compete again after more than 20 years since they were allowed to compete in the final stage of the tournament in 1996.

Brunei, who won the qualifiers, will fall into Group A together with defending champion Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Cambodia.

Myanmar team is placed in Group B along with Viet Nam, Malaysia, Singapore, and Laos. The tourney will be held from 20 December 2022 to 16 January 2023. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Myanmar U-22 team to prepare for next year's international competitions

THE Myanmar U-22 team will take time for training and prepare for the international competitions to be held next year.

Bulgarian national Popov, who is the head coach of the Myanmar U-22 team, released the preliminary list of 60 players selected for international tournaments, and preparations will be made for each tournament.

The roster released by head coach Popov includes 50 under-22 players and 10 over-age players and was pre-selected because the over-age players will be allowed to use in the 32nd SEA Games and Asian Games.

Next year, the Myanmar U-22 team will compete in the ASEAN U-22 Championship, the 32nd Cambodian SEA Games, the 2024 Asian Cup U-23 qualifiers and the Asian Games.

The Myanmar U-22 team is scheduled to start training in early December and will compete in international friendly matches whenever a tournament is about to compete.

The Myanmar Football Federation has continued to assign Popov as the head coach of the Myanmar U-22 team and will compete in many competitions in 2023.

Popov has been assigned as the head coach of the Myanmar U-22 team since 2019 and has had the opportunity to handle the SEA Games three times in a row.

As the Myanmar team was eliminated from the group stage in the last Viet Nam SEA Games, they must try to win a medal in the next SEA Games, as well as make a comeback to qualify for the U-23 Asian Cup. — Ko Nyi Lay/GNLM

Myanmar team players (white) are seen in the previous SEA Games men's football competition in Viet Nam. **PHOTO: SEA GAMES 2021**

South Korea coach Bento confirms Son will be in World Cup squad

The injured Son Heung-min will be a part of South Korea's national team in the Qatar World Cup says coach Paulo Bento. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

SOUTH Korea's coach Paulo Bento said Thursday that the injured Son Heung-min would "of course" be selected in his World Cup squad—but could not say whether his captain would be fit for the country's first match in Qatar.

The Tottenham forward had successful surgery to repair an eye socket fracture suffered in the 2-1 Champions League win over Marseille nine days ago.

Son wrote on his Instagram page Wednesday that playing in the World Cup was his childhood dream and that he "can't wait to represent our beautiful country".

Bento dismissed concerns about Son missing the World Cup, with South Korea's first Group H game against Uruguay on 24 November just two weeks away. "Of course he's going to be selected," Bento told reporters.

But he said Son should be given enough time to "recover as well as possible". "About other aspects, we should check and we should analyze day-by-day," said Bento. "Let him come. We have time to make the right decisions, and the best decisions for all of us," Bento said.

Bento said it was understandable that Son, who also played in the 2018 World Cup in Russia, would be eager to get back in action as soon as possible.—AFP