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.

The essence of anti-corruption is to protect the interests of the people and to shape the society without corruption: Senior General

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the event to mark International Anti-Corruption Day at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-I in Nay Pyi Taw on 9 December 2022.

THE public service personnel are building trust between the government and the people, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the ceremony to mark the International Anti-Corruption Day at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-I in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General said that Myanmar signed the United Nations Convention Against Corruption in 2005 and became the 165th member country in 2012. Then, Myanmar cooperates with other signatories' countries by following the adopted provisions and ethics.

The 9th of December was designated as the International Anti-Corruption Day, and convention member countries celebrate the commemorative day across the world whereas Myanmar marks the day as of 2017.

The State Administration Council is striving for initiating peace and stability in the State, ensuring national solidarity and building the Union based on democracy and federalism in accord with the political, economic and social objectives during its tenure in line with the Constitution (2008).

It is important to decline the corruption cases which may harm the development of the nation and peace and stability. Corruption can cause malpractices and destruct the morale and

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Nay Pyi Taw to celebrate 74th International Human Rights Day

THE UN General Assembly passed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 1948. Myanmar was one of the countries that voted in favour of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Myanmar has been celebrating International Human Rights Day annually as it is celebrated in various countries around the world.

The 74th International Human Rights Day ceremony will be convened at Jade Hall of the MICC-I in Nay Pyi Taw at 9 am on 10 December. — MNA/MKKS

21st Myanmar Traditional Medicine Symposium held in Nay Pyi Taw

The 21st Myanmar Traditional Medicine Symposium is in progress yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw.

THE 21st Myanmar Traditional Medicine Practitioners Conference and Myanmar Traditional Medicine Symposium were held at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-II in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

The Sub-Committee Chairman Director-General of the Traditional Medicine Department Dr Su Su Dwe served as patron of the opening ceremony of the Myanmar Traditional Medicine Symposium and members of the Advisory Board on Traditional Medicine Sayagyi U Wa Tun, Rector (retired) Prof Dr San San Nwe of the University of Pharmacy acted as panellists. The patron delivered an opening speech and took commemorative photos.

During the Symposium, Rector (retired) of the University of Pharmacy Prof Dr San San Nwe acted as a patron and members of the Advisory Board on Traditional Medicine Sayagyi U Wa Tun and Deputy Director-General U Than Nyunt of the Traditional Medicine Department served as panellists.

Then, Kachin State representatives Daw Kyi Htay, retired Lecturer/Head of Anatomy Faculty Dr Nwet Win, Kayin State representative Dr Thi Thi Htike, Yangon Region representative U Thein Zaw and Shan State representative U Min Han read out their papers respectively.

At noon, Myanmar Traditional Medicine Council Patron U Myint Lwin chaired the second session and Advisory Board on Traditional Medicine Member U Aung Myat Kyaw and University of Traditional Medicine Rector Prof Dr Thein Zaw Lin acted as panellists.

Then, representatives from Myitkyina of Kachin State, Yangon Region and Rakhine State also read out their papers and the attendees exchanged views on the papers.

Sub-Committee Chairman Director-General of the Traditional Medicine Department Dr Su Su Dwe led the closing ceremony and gave certificates of honour to the participants of the two events. She concluded the ceremonies after saying words of thanks. — MNA/KTZH

19 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 9 December, total figure rises to 633,400

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 633,400 after 19 new cases were reported on 9 December 2022 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached 607,932, including 20 new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged to 19,488 on 9-12-2022 with no new death 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

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The people are urged to receive vaccination of Covid-19 without fail as full-time vaccination of Covid-19 and receiving booster shots can effectively mitigate infection of the virus, severe suffering from the disease and increasing of death rate based on the disease.

It is beneficial for restoring peace of the nation and development of all regions

UNDERSTANDING the armed conflicts and disagreements which cannot shape development of the nation, and plans to restore peace for undertaking development tasks, plans to discuss shaping the peace progress beneficial for restoring peace of the nation and development of all regions,

(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)

The essence of anti-corruption is to protect the interests of the people and to shape the society without corruption: Senior General

FROM PAGE-1

morality of the people. Hence, the government enacted the Anti-Corruption Law on 7 August 2013 to take severe action against the offenders. This law has been amended four times to take action against offenders in all forms of corruption.

The Senior General said the government is emphasizing the emergence of a clean government and good governance, improvement of capacity to take prestige and responsibility in administration, and not to harm the society, citizen rights and interests.

As one who breaks existing laws, rules and regulations and procedures can be designed to cause corruption cases causing the monetary loss, materials and assets of the State, all need to take care of doing things in line with the existing laws, rules and regulations and procedures. If one finds complex facts to the existing laws, rules and regulations and procedures, it is necessary to seek remarks from relevant Union-level departments and organizations and seek guidance from the superior organizations.

Investigation alone is not enough for declining of corruption. It is necessary to emphasize the emergence of a culture which does not totally accept corruption and malpractices and raise public awareness and preventive measures against corruption in time.

State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing views round documentary photos on anti-corruption movements at the event yesterday.

The essence of anti-corruption is to protect the interests of the people and to shape society without corruption. The public service personnel are building trust between the government and the people. The anti-corruption procedures are important in shaping good governance. Corruption may cause the derailment of public service personnel from their acts of obedience, righteousness and abiding by ethics. If they follow the prescribed rules and regulations, procedures and ethics, the administration system which wins the trust of the people will emerge to develop the nation.

The government is implementing the anti-corruption strategic project (2022-2025). The State Administration Council sets objectives to ensure the prosperity of the State and the sufficiency of food. Uplifting the internal economy will contribute to the improvement of people's lives, especially the encouragement of local production.

The edutainment programmes are being implemented at basic education schools to propagate the principles of a corruption-free society. It aims to emerge righteous citizens with good morality in the future.

Chief Justice of the Union U Htun Htun Oo explained the correct, fair and responsible judicial sector without bias and the emergence of corruption-free judicial affairs and Chairman of the Anti-Corruption Commission U Than Swe, duties and functions of the commission and future tasks.

The Senior General watched a video clip to mark International Anti-Corruption Day and viewed round documentary photos on anti-corruption movements. — MNA

Daily newspapers available online

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

2nd coord meeting of Diamond Jubilee Independence Day Reception and Dinner Organizing Work Committee held

THE second coordination meeting for the successful holding of the Diamond Jubilee Independence Day Reception and Dinner was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday.

The meeting was attended by Chairman of the Work Committee for the Diamond Jubilee Independence Day Reception and Dinner Union Minister of Foreign Affairs U Wunna Maung Lwin and work committee members, Chairpersons of working groups and officials from relevant departments.

At the meeting, the Union minister gave an opening speech and stressed to the Diamond Jubilee Independence Day Central Committee to seek approval of the activities to be carried out by the work committee for the successful holding of the Diamond Jubilee Independence Day Reception and Dinner.

Activities were to be coordinated with other work committees; and recommendations were discussed by the Union minister, based on the explanations given by those who attended the meeting.

Next, the Union minister gave his closing speech and concluded the meeting. — MNA/KZL

MIFER Union Minister receives acting UN Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator to Myanmar

UNION Minister for Investment and Foreign Economic Relations Dr Kan Zaw met Mr Ramanathan Balakrishnan, acting UN Resident Coordinator/ Humanitarian Coordinator to Myanmar and party at the ministry's meeting hall at 1 pm yesterday.

They exchanged views on cooperation between relevant ministries and UN agencies, residency matters of foreign employees from UN agencies and further cooperation of UN agencies regarding national programmes.

Officials from Ministry of MIFER also attended the meeting. — MNA/CT

Union Minister Dr Kan Zaw receives the acting UN Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator.

Officials visit Russian-Myanmar joint project implementation sites

RUSSIA-MYANMAR joint projects are implemented in order to generate power from all the available energy sources for the adequate distribution of power throughout the country and carry out domestic and foreign investments since the supply of electricity plays a key role in the development of the country.

According to the plan of action, representatives of the Ministry of Electric Power and Rosatom visited the project sites in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area yesterday.

A delegation from the Russian State Atomic Energy Corporation Rosatom, currently in Myanmar, along with official of the Design and Graphics Division of the Hydropower Implementation Department, the Ministry of Electric Power, and officials from the Exploration Division and the Geological Division observed the ground condition of the Paunglaung Dam near Zeeyine Village, and Ngatesu Village of Thitaw Village-tract, Zeyathiri Township and observed rocky mechanics related to land and thermal energy projects, availability of water, conditions of earthquakes and faults, transport links, natural environment and social life.

They also studied the water inflow to the dam, location of the dam and the height of the embankment, and observed the effect of land selection on the location of the project.

In addition, they observed a potential small hydropower project site in order to continue using the water produced by the Paunglaung Hydropower Plant.

In the afternoon, the Union minister met officials and discussed the results of measurements compiled by them in order to conduct detailed seismic measurement activities based on observations.

They also discussed in detail the conditions for the implementation of small-scale hydropower projects, earthquake and fault conditions of the target project areas. Plans were made to form a group of experts for continued cooperation. — MNA/KZL

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MoRAC installs bronze plaque at Taw Win Thante school building in Mandalay

THE ceremony of the bronze plaque installation on the historic Taw Win Thante school building in Aungmyaythazan Township of Aungmyaythazan District of Mandalay Region was held at BEHS 10 Taw Win Thante school compound yesterday.

First, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Ko Ko said the school is now over 100 years and was donated by Dr Mark in 1869. King Mindon made Princes including Prince Thibaw learn Latin, English, Geography, Maths and History at the school. The ministry also makes efforts for inclusion on world heritage and world heritage record lists. Moreover, it conserves the ancient heritage of the country under the law and bylaws.

He also instructed personnel concerned to conserve the over 100-year-old school building in its original structure and artwork.

Then, Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Maung Ko said the ministry designated 33 colonial-era buildings in Mandalay Region as ancient buildings under Section 34 (b) of the Preservation and Protection of Ancient Buildings Law on 8 April and the school is one of these buildings. He then urged the attendees to cooperate with the department concerned, regional government and organizations to ensure the structural stability of ancient heritage.

Union Minister U Ko Ko and Mandalay Region Chief Minister U Maung Ko press the button to inaugurate the bronze plaque.

Afterwards, the Union minister and the chief minister pressed the electric button to unveil the bronze plaque and viewed round the displayed booths of the Yadanabon era and the Diocesan photo gallery at the school. — MNA/KTZH

CBM Governor attends Bank of China Scholarship Award Ceremony, meets TBAM delegation

The Bank of China Scholarship Award Ceremony is in progress at Lotte Hotel in Yangon.

THE Bank of China Scholarship Award Ceremony was organized by Bank of China (Hong Kong) Yangon Branch and China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA) at Lotte Hotel in Yangon yesterday.

During the event, Central Bank of Myanmar Governor Daw Than Than Swe, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Chen Hai, the Commerce Attaché, officials from the Ministry of Education, Yangon University and Bank of China (Hong Kong) Yangon Branch.

First, the CBM governor expressed thanks to the Bank of China for support in the education, social and economic sectors in addition to the banking sector of the country. She also said such cooperation between the two governments is an effective support to ensure Myanmar's long-time friendship with China and will create a win-win situation.

She then concluded the event after the awarding procedures.

At noon, the CBM governor received a delegation led by President Mr Nuttaphong Visitkitchan of the Thai Business Association of Myanmar (TBAM) at the CBM office (Yangon) and discussed investment of Thais in Myanmar and the use of Thai Baht and Myanmar Kyat for border trade.

The payment officer of the Bank of Thailand, the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Commerce and the joint secretary of the Central Committee on Ensuring Smooth Flow of Trade and Goods joined the meeting online. — MNA/KTZH

Public Notice

1. The Anti-Corruption Commission has established corruption prevention units within ministries to effectively curb corruption.
2. The ACC used SMS on the mobile phone to ask the public who seek services at an office of the department of the relevant ministries via Short Code No "1111" for feedbacks, including the Public Feedback Programme-PFP.
3. According to the PFP, the right replies of the citizens via Short Code No "1111" will provide the quality of services of each department and the requirements for corruption prevention to be fixed.
4. Therefore, the public should make a reply to the questions of the ACC and corruption prevention units of the ministries via SMS at Short Code No "1111" and such doing is a supportive measure for PFP, and the people are urged to cooperate in the operations.

Anti-Corruption Commission
Answer "1111" to fight against corruption
Answer "1111" to improve services
Let's work together to eliminate corruption towards prosperity

MoH delegation attends Asia-Pacific Osteoporosis Conference

A delegation led by Professor Dr Tet Tun Chit of the Ministry of Health departed Yangon for Singapore by flight yesterday morning to attend the Asia-Pacific Osteoporosis Conference which will be conducted on 10 December.

The Asia Pacific Consortium on Osteoporosis (APCO) comprises experts developing solutions to improve osteoporosis management and fracture prevention. Professor Dr Tet Tun Chit acts as a member of the health profession in the consortium since 2019. As a Myanmar representative, he will consult with international experts at the conference. — MNA/CT

Myanmar delegates are seen before leaving for Singapore.

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Myanmar Consumer Protection Commission holds coordination meeting 1/2022

Union Minister U Aung Naing Oo chairs the coordination meeting 1/2022 yesterday.

THE work coordination meeting 1/2022 of the Myanmar Consumer Protection Commission was held yesterday at the Ministry of Commerce and Union Minister U Aung Naing Oo of the Ministry of Commerce, in his capacity as the commission chair, gave the opening remark.

First, the commission chair said although eight consumer rights are provided under the Consumer Protection Law the consumer rights and their scope are advanced and becoming broader in line with the changing era. However, consumers have responsibilities as the majority of consumers lack knowledge about the rights and responsibilities of consumers. The commission prioritizes awareness activities among consumers, he highlighted.

The consumer protection committees were formed in Nay Pyi Taw Council Area, regions and states under the law. Respective committees need to make efforts in order to protect consumers as they have a closer relationship with consumers, the Union minister added.

"We are implementing consumer protection in line with the ASEAN Consumer Protection Committee. Besides, Myanmar takes an alternate chairmanship in 2022. Members are urged to put forward the measures that should be undertaken for the benefit of consumers," he stressed.

Then, the commission secretary director-general of the Department of Consumer Affairs discussed and the commission chair, vice-chairs and members made meeting resolutions. — MNA/GNLM

Myanmar MIFER delegation attends 25th Ministerial Conference of Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS)

A Myanmar delegation led by Deputy Minister Dr Wah Wah Maung of the Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations participated in the 25th Ministerial Conference of Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) at Luang Prabang in Laos.

On the morning of 8 December, the ministers and the deputy ministers had an informal meeting regarding the formation of the GMS Trade and Investment Working Group and the establishment of the GMS Knowledge Network.

In the afternoon, the 25th Ministerial Conference of Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) was held under the theme "Accelerating Economic Recovery to Expand 30 Years of GMS Achievements Toward Inclusive and Sustainable Development". Delegation leaders from GMS member countries and the Vice-President of the Asian Development Bank gave remarks at the opening ceremony.

Reports of the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), Development Partners' Meeting (DPM) and Business Council Meeting were presented at the 25th GMS Ministerial Conference. The ministers confirmed the new investment framework in the region 2023-2025, the outcome framework for the GMS Strategy Framework 2030, the GMS Gender Strategy and initial actions on GMS digital business collaboration, and published the Joint Ministerial Statement.

The meetings will be hosted by Mr Khamjane Vongphosy, Minister of Planning and Investment, Laos and co-chaired by Chairman Mr Armat M Sasika of East Asian, Southeast Asian and the Pacific under the Asian Development Bank.

Myanmar MIFER delegates take the documentary photo at the event in Laos.

The 25th Ministerial Conference of Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) was attended by a total of around 150 participants — the ministers, the deputy ministers, state-level coordinators and senior officials of the GMS countries, representatives from Asian Development Bank, development partners and private sector representatives. — MNA/CT

MR to extend Yangon-Mawlamyine-Yangon Night Express Train on 11 Dec

ON 11 December 2022, the Yangon-Mawlamyine-Yangon night express train will be operated daily, according to the Myanma Railways.

The No 81 Up train will leave for Mawlamyine at 8 pm from Yangon railway station on 11 December 2022 and arrive in Mawlamyine at 5:45 am the following day. Similarly, the No 82 Down train will depart for Yangon at 8 pm from Mawlamyine railway station on 12 December 2022 and reach Yangon at 5:55 am on 13 December. The extended train will run every day.

On the way, Up and Down trains will only halt at Paung, Thaton, Bago and Toegyaunggale stations. They will take nine hours from Yangon to Mawlamyine. Tickets are priced at K7,050 for the upper class and K3,550 for the ordinary class.

"Train carriages are clean and tidy because of the pneumatic suspension system, and they were also equipped with CCTVs for the security of passengers. The train has seven carriages for the ordinary class, five carriages for the upper class and one breakdown carriage," explained a responsible person from Myanma Railways No 8 Division (transport/regional office) Mawlamyine. — Than Min Aung (MNA)/GNLM

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Myanmar ships 5,260 tonnes of rice directly from Pathein Port to Bangladesh in 2nd batch

ACCORDING to the Government-to-Government pact between Myanmar and Bangladesh, Bangladesh has been purchasing Myanmar's white rice. The country has shipped rice directly from Pathein Industrial City since 2 November 2022. Between 1 and 8 December, 5,260 tonnes of rice were loaded onto the two ships in the second batch and the MCL-12 ship carrying 2,650 tonnes of rice departed in the morning of 8 December 2022 from the Ayeyawady International Industrial Port AIIP in Pathein Industrial City, Ayeyawady Region to Bangladesh.

The MCL-12 ship is pictured at Ayeyawady International Industrial Port in Pathein. **PHOTO : KANU**

Earlier, Myanmar conveyed rice to Bangladesh through Yangon Port and Thilawa terminals. In the first batch from 2 to 22 November 2022, 10,565 tonnes of Aemahta rice (five-per-cent broken) were shipped by four ships directly from Pathein city to Bangladesh. The country delivered 2,610 tonnes of rice by MCL-19 ship on 1 December and 2,650 tonnes of rice by the MCL-12 ship on 8 December in the second batch, totalling 5,260 tonnes. On 7 December, the MCL-18 ship arrived at the Ayeyawady International Industrial Port and further exports are to be undertaken.

Myanmar's white rice direct delivery from Ayeyawady Region to Bangladesh accumulated 15,825 tonnes, with 10,565 tonnes in the first batch and 5,260 in the second batch.

"The main export item from Pathein Port is rice. If Bangladesh buys corn in addition to rice, there is an adequate supply of corn in the region. Myanmar has indicated readiness to export corn depending on the market demand. The rice shipment for the second batch has finished. We plan to export agricultural products from Ayeyawady Region to foreign trading partners. For the initial stage, efforts are being made to complete the rice shipment first," said U Tun Tun, deputy director of the Ayeyawady Region Consumers Affairs Department.

Earlier, the second batch of rice shipment was slated for the second week of December. However, Myanmar managed to ship the rice in the first week to Bangladesh as rice outputs from Ayeyawady Region increased. All the stakeholders involved in a supply chain including the Ayeyawady Region Government, departments concerned and private businessmen are being exerted to meet the rice demand of Bangladesh to ship them directly from the region. The direct rice shipment from Ayeyawady Region, Myanmar's rice bowl, to the foreign markets brings about economic opportunities for rice millers, farmers and traders and employment opportunities for local communities.—Nyein Thu (MNA)/EMM

Fuel oil prices sank following MOPS prices

THE price of Octane 92 slipped to K1,830 per litre tracking the plunge in the price index set by Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS), according to the fuel oil market.

The prices of fuel oil have gradually decreased since the end of November. On 1 December, the prices stood at K1,965 per litre for Octane 92, K2,040 for Octane 95, K2,380 for diesel and K2,455 for premium diesel. On 9 December, the prices extended their decline to K1,830 per litre for Octane 92, K1,925 for Octane 95, K2,125 for diesel and K2,200 for premium diesel. The figures indicated a drop of K110-255 per litre within ten days.

The domestic fuel prices are following the decline in the price index set by Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS), the pricing basis for many refined products in Southeast Asia, according to the Supervisory Committee on Oil Import, Storage and Distribution of Fuel Oil.

Following the MOPS price index, the prices peaked at K2,605 per litre for Octane 92, K2,670 for Octane 95, K3,245 for diesel and K3,330 for premium diesel in late August.

The committee is steering the oil sector effectively not to have a shortage of oil in the domestic market and ensure price stability for energy consumers.

The committee is issuing the daily reference rate for oil to offer a reasonable price to energy consumers. The reference rate is set on the MOPS' price assessment, shipping cost, profit margin, premium insurance and other general costs.

The rates for regions and states other than Yangon are evaluated after adding the transportation cost and the retail reference rates daily cover on the state-run newspapers and are posted on the media and official website and Facebook page of the department on a daily basis starting from 4 May.

The committee is inspecting the fuel stations whether they are overcharging or not. The authorities are taking action against those retailers of fuel stations under the Petroleum and Petroleum Products Law 2017 if they are found overcharging rather than the set reference rate.

As per the statement, 90 per cent of fuel oil in Myanmar is imported, while the remaining 10 per cent is produced locally. The domestic fuel price is highly correlated with international prices. The State is steering the market to mitigate the loss between the importers, sellers and energy consumers. Consequently, the government is trying to distribute the oil at a reasonable price compared to those of regional countries.

Some countries levied higher tax rates and hiked oil prices than Myanmar. However, Malaysia's oil sector receives government subsidies and the prices are about 60 per cent cheaper than that of Myanmar. Every country lays down different patterns of policy to fix the oil prices. Myanmar also levies only a lower tax rate on fuel oil and strives for energy consumers to buy the oil at a cheaper rate. — NN/EMM

The prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 9 December 2022

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K1,830
Octane 95	K1,925
Diesel	K2,125
Premium Diesel	K2,200

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,111,000 per tical
High-purity gold in the gold market	K2,670,000 per tical

Dollar Price

A US dollar set by the Central Bank of Myanmar	K2,100
A US dollar in the forex market	K2,815 to K2,835

The above prices may change from time to time.

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OPINION

Choose the best way leading to perpetual peace

THE Lord Buddha preached that it is the most difficult thing to control the mind of the human. As one can control its mind comprehensively, it can be called 'Samadhi'. It is designed to conquer the mind.

The movement of the mind is the most wonderful thing. It is difficult to control and restrict the mind but those who can control their minds as they like possess the willpower which can shape anything as they expect. Practically, the persons having the willpower may derail from the correct truth to reach the perpetual peace which can help escape from the Samsara.

> As such, everybody needs to notice the value of mind and willpower, and they have to choose the best option for their ways leading to their goals. Their options will shape their futures and their futures will shape their Samsara without fail.

"Nibbana" is a goal for all Buddhists to enjoy the essence of perpetual peace in which physical and mental structures thoroughly come to an end. In truth, even those who take meditation may not reach such a step. The persons who have been building themselves with thirty varieties of Parami which is a word of Pali defined as the noblest practices which focus on serving the interests of others with wonderful donations and sacrifices related to even lives and limbs.

Whatever it may be, nobody should be disappointed in serving the interests to accumulate the advantages of Parami. Everybody needs to step up inch by inch during the Samsara as they all lead to their own lives. Today's efforts are a good result for tomorrow. So, today's efforts for accumulating advantages of Parami would be root causes for the future. So, these will contribute to them along the route to the Nibbana.

Importantly, everybody who exercises the practices of good deeds leading to the Nibbana needs to forge goodwill. There are two ways to win willpower. One of the two is taking meditation to build the Samadhi and another one is to forge goodwill. In this regard, those who walk on the path of exercising the good will need to disperse loving-kindness and compassion to all living beings at any time.

If so, everybody can know the importance of the mind to control it and others. Mainly, they have to control their minds not to reach the inappropriate ways which lead to the opposition of Nibbana. Consequently, those who lead to the opposition of good deeds would never escape from the devil Samsara.

As such, everybody needs to notice the value of mind and willpower, and they have to choose the best option for their ways leading to their goals. Their options will shape their futures and their futures will shape their Samsara without fail.

■

ARTICLE

The Burma Circle of the Geological Survey of India and their Contributions to the Geology of Myanmar

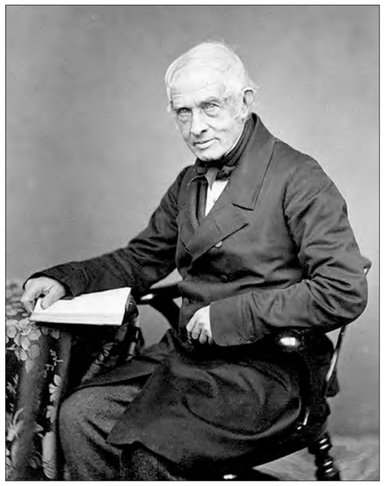
By THAN HTUN (GEOSCIENCE MYANMAR)

Episode:2

Of all the senior GSI geologists who contributed to the Geology of Myanmar during the colonial period, I have described Thomas Oldham and his significant contribution in a concise account in episode 1.

Before I proceed to present other distinguished geologists, I may not forgo or rather an ignorance of the record of scholar John Crawfurd first British resident at the court of Ava in 1827, at the conclusion of the first Anglo-Burmese War and at a time of great difficulty in relations with Burma (Myanmar). He later published an important account of the kingdom, Journal of an Embassy to the Court of Ava (1829). His record consists of tremendous information on natural resources, geology, palaeontology, botany, agriculture, and the political and social status of Myanmar.

JOHN CRAWFURD (1783-1868)



John Crawfurd: Source: Wikipedia

John Crawfurd was born on Islay, in Argyll, Scotland, the son of Samuel Crawfurd, a physician, and Margaret Campbell; and was educated at the school in Bowmore. He followed in his father's footsteps in the study of medicine and completed his medical course at the University of Edinburgh in 1803, at the age of 20. Crawfurd joined the East India Company, as a Company surgeon, and was posted to India's Northwestern Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh), working in the area around Delhi and Agra from 1803–1808. He saw service in the campaigns of Baron Lake.

Civil Commissioner Crawfurd was sent on another envoy mission to Burma in 1826, by Hastings's successor Lord Amherst, in the aftermath of the First Anglo-Burmese War. It was to be his last political service for the Company. The party included Adoniram Judson as interpreter and Nathaniel Wallich as a botanist. Crawfurd's journey to Ava up the River Irrawaddy was by paddle steamer, the Diana: it had been hired by the East India Company for the war, where it had seen action and travelled 400 miles up the Irawadi. There were five local boats, and soldiers making up a party of over 50.

From Rangoon to Ava

September 1, 1826, John Crawfurd on the part of the British Government commenced his journey from Rangoon to Ava. On the journey along the Irawadi River, he visited almost all the towns situated on both banks and recorded all historical, geological, geographical, botanical, and agricultural information he observed. The principal towns he visited were Donabew (Danubyu), Henzada, Myan-aong (Myanaung), Prome (Pyay), Tharet (Thayet), Meeaday (Myede), halfway between Ava and Rangoon, Wetmasut, Pugan (Bagan), Pa-k'hok-ko (Pakhokku), Junction of the KyenDwen (Chindwin) River with the Irawadi and he arrived at Ava (Inwa) at noon on September 30. Crawfurd at the court found Bagyidaw temporizing despite a weak position with the British forces in Arakan and Tenasserim. The king conceded only a trade agreement, in return for a delay in indemnity payments; and sent his own mission to Calcutta.

Donabew (Danubyu)

September 6, he arrived at Donabew (Danubyu) where Bandula was killed by a shell of British mortars. Crawfurd mentioned that Bandula, at the time of his death, was about forty years of age. Mr Judson, who had seen him, described him to me as a man of striking features and a handsome person. He had a remarkable character for a Burmese courtier: he was said to be honest, and his military reputation was higher than that of any of the Burmese chiefs. He was a strict disciplinarian and celebrated amongst the Burmans for what, among all military virtues, they incomparably the highest value upon,- skill in stratagem. His military fame was acquired in the conquest of Assam, and latterly by the advantages, he gained over the native troops on the Arracan frontier.

Wetmasut

At Wetmasut, Crawfurd mentioned that we examined the rock, and found it, as before sandstone. About two miles before reaching Re-nan-k'hyaung (Yenangyoung), Dr Wallich, Dr Stewart, and Lieutenant Coxe landed, and walked along the narrow beach until close to the village, and succeeded in procuring some interesting and remarkable specimens of petrifactions. Some of these resembled stalactites and were only incrustations of sand, of the form of the substance which composed the matrix, being of a soft and loose texture (sandstones were first termed "Fossil Wood Group" by Theobald on account of the enormous quantities of fossil wood so plentifully dispersed through them. But later this term was discarded in favour of the Irrawaddy Series or "the "Irrawaddian" (H. L. Chhibber, 1934). By far the greater number consisted of masses of wood of considerable size, impregnated with chert, or hornstone. In these, not only the external form but the appearance of the fibre and buck, are often accurately preserved. All these petrified wood were more or less impregnated with iron. The most curious petrification, however, which we met was obtained by Dr Wallich - a fossil bone, which, from its appearance, we judged at the time to be the lower part of the femur, or thigh bone, of an elephant. The cells of the bone, like the fibre in the wood, were accurately preserved.

The expedition fortuitously was delayed on the return journey for repairs. Crawfurd collected significant fossils, north of Magwe on the left bank of the river, in seven chests. Back in London, William Clift identified a new species of mastodon (more accurately Stegolophodon) from them; Hugh Falconer also worked on the collection. The finds, of fossil bones and wood, were discussed further in a paper by William Buckland, giving details; and they brought Crawfurd the friendship of Roderick Murchison, Foreign Secretary of the Geological Society. There were also collected 18,000 botanical specimens, many of which went to the Calcutta Botanic Garden.

The type specimen for fossil Stegolophodon latidens (Jaw of an ancient elephant) Collected by John Crawfurd near Yenangyoung in Burma: Source William Clift

William Buckland, Professor of Mineralogy and Geology at the University of London reported Crawfurd's fossil wood and fossil animals collected along the Irawadi River from Ava to Prome and read on April 18th, 1828 as follows:

The evidence that Mr Crawfurd has imported is derived from no less than seven large chests full of fossil wood and fossil bones, and of specimens of the strata that are found along the course of the Irrawadi, from its mouth near Rangoon up to Ava, being a distance of nearly five hundred miles.

The large portion of the fossil wood is beautifully silicified and displays most delicately the structure of the fibres of the living plants: in other specimens of it, this structure is more obscure, though sufficient to show that the trees in which it exists were dicotyledonous. This obscurity arises from the fact of most of these dicotyledonous plants are impregnated with carbonate of lime, whilst all the monocotyledonous stems are silicified, as are also a few of the dicotyledonous: in this latter also the vegetable structure is more distinct than in the calcareous fossils, and in some of them it much resembles that of the tamarind wood. These plants were found most abundantly in the same region with the fossil bones, but occur also along nearly the whole course of the Irawadi from Ava to Prome.

They were principally collected from a tract of country extending over a square of more than twenty miles on the east bank of Irawadi, near the town of Wetmasut, about halfway between Ava and Prome, between Lat.20˚ and 21˚N. The occurrence of bones was most abundant in a small space near the centre of this district, occupying about one-third of the above-named area, the surface of which is composed chiefly of barren sand hills mixed with gravel; beneath these are strata containing shells and lignite, through which they sink wells about two hundred feet to collect petroleum.

Judging from the proportion of bones in the collection made by Mr Crawfurd, the most abundant fossil animal in the valley of the Irawadi is the mastodon, then the crocodile and tortoise, and lastly the rhinoceros and deer. Of the hippopotamus, parts only of two jaws have been yet identified; and of the tapir and hog, one fragment only of a lower jaw. The state of preservation of all these bones from Ava is remarkably perfect, from the circumstance of their being almost entirely penetrated with hydrate of iron, to a degree that has converted many of them to a rich mass of iron ore, and has given them a hardness which caused them, at first, to be considered as silicified; and they have been erroneously so described in some printed notices on the subject in the Calcutta Gazette, 21 March 1827, and other publications.

It is in fact to the strength and indestructibility resulting from the mineral impregnation above mentioned, that we owe the discovery of these remains on the shores of the Irawadi. An accident that delay for some days the steam-boat in which Mr Crawfurd was descending this river, allowed him to land, accompanied by Dr Wallich, and to investigate the structure of the country for some miles on the N.E. of Wetmasut. The accident arose from the shallowness of the water when the stream-boat was descending, which, fortunately for geology, caused it to run aground near the wells of petroleum, where the left bank of the river presents a cliff of several miles in length, generally perpendicular, and not exceeding eighty feet in height. At the bottom of this cliff the strand was dry, and on it were found specimens of petrified wood and bones, that had probably fallen from the cliff in the course of its decay; but no bone was discovered in the cliff itself by Mr Crawfurd and Dr Wallich: nor were they more fortunate in several places where they dug in search of bones in the adjacent district. This district is composed of sand hills that are very sterile and is intersected by deep ravines: among the sand are beds of gravel often cemented to a breccia by iron carbonate of lime; and scattered over its surface at distant and irregular intervals, were found many fragments of bones and mineralized wood, in some instances lying entirely loose upon the sand, in other cases half-buried in it, with their upper portions projecting, naked, and exposed to the air; they appeared to have been left in this condition, in consequence of the matrix of sand and gravel that once covered them undergoing daily removal by the weathering processes.

Petroleum Wells

John Crawfurd narrated " at three in the afternoon, our whole party proceed to the celebrated Petroleum Wells. The wells occupy altogether a space of about sixteen square miles. The surface gave no indication that we could detect the existence of petroleum. On the spot which we reached, there were eight or ten wells, and we examined one of the best. The shaft was of a square form and its dimensions were about four feet to the side. It was formed by sinking a frame of wood, composed of beams of the Mimosa catechu, which affords a durable timber. The depth of the wells is around two hundred feet. In the narrative of one of the predecessors, Captain Cox, the number of well is given as high as 520, and the average daily production of each well is reckoned at 300 viss, which makes the whole annual produce 56,940,000."

Sakyin Hill

On 29 October, Dr Wallich and I walk the morning to the village of Kyauk-Sit, (stone-cutters,) situated about three miles to the northwest of Sagaing. This is the place at which the marble images of Gautama (Buddha) are manufactured for the whole kingdom. The range of hills close at hand, although composed of marble, does not afford any fit for statuary, and the material is brought from a place called Sakyin (near Maraya), where there is an entire hill of pure white marble: this is ten miles distant from the eastern bank of the Irrawadi, and forty miles above Ava. Sometimes we were told that the quarries were fifty miles distant from Ava, but no one could tell the name of the place.

The statuary marble used by the Burmese is a primitive limestone; it is large-grained and highly crystalized; its colour is snow-white, with a semi-translucency, and it is capable of receiving a high polish; it is devoid of fissures and free from streaks and all discolouration. We examined several quarries from which limestone is extracted for burning. As far as we could determine, every part of the range is a marble. At the foot, and close to the river, the rock contains, embedded, hornblende and serpentine. The quarries towards the top of the ridge exhibit nothing but white marble, in a high state of crystallization, and with few extraneous ingredients. The quantity manufactured is very great, chiefly for the construction of temples. With these, the hills are crowded to an inconceivable extent (Crawfurd, 1826).

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

FDA Myanmar notifies four cosmetics inclusive of restricted chemicals

၁။	NOVO / Noble Eye Shadow (SHINING Dream)	Made in P.R.C	Lead (+)	
၂။	AnyLady – 3 Colors Blusher	Bolei Cosmetics Co., Ltd. Made in P.R.C	Rhodamine B(+), Lead (+)	
၃။	Comfor Beauty (Matte Lipstick)	Made in P.R.C	Rhodamine B (+)	
၄။	ANYLADY (Professional Make Up Kit) (Unicorn Love Sweets)	Made in P.R.C	Rhodamine B(+), Lead (+)	

The table shows four cosmetics which compose prohibited chemicals.

THE Department of Food and Drug Administration (FDA) under the Ministry of Health notified four kinds of cosmetics which include chemicals that cause danger to health.

FDA found them to contain prohibited chemicals Lead (+) in Novo/Noble eye shadow (Shining Dream) and Rhodamine B (+), Lead (+) in AnyLady – 3 Colours Blusher.

Similarly, Comfort Beauty (Matte Lipstick) contains the prohibited chemical Rhodamine B (+), and AnyLady (professional makeup kit) (Unicorn Love Sweets) was made up with prohibited chemicals Rhodamine B (+) and Lead (+), it is learnt.

In 2022, FDA issued a notice not to use four cosmetics that have been sold locally after the FDA found the products were not only composed of restricted chemicals but also were unregistered in FDA Myanmar.

Export and import companies must be taken action under the Public Health Law if they import and distribute cosmetics which are unregistered and notified as unsuitable for use, according to the Department of Food and Drug Administration (FDA). — TWA/MKKS

Six robbers of moving trucks arrested in Hlinethaya township

MYANMAR Police Force captured six robbers, who are stealing goods in moving trucks in Hlinethaya township of Yangon Region.

Ko Thein Aung Kyaw drove a 12-wheel Canter truck heading to the Bayintnaung Warehouse in Yangon from Tet Nay Lin Terminal in Pyapon Township of Ayeyawady Region to deliver dried fish and goods at 9 pm on 7 December.

At about 6:30 am on 8 December, he reported to the Police Force near Bayintnaung Bridge No 2 on Yangon-Pathein Road in Hlinethaya township that dried fish bags from his truck were stolen by three unknown persons by motorbike behind the truck while moving. Police carried out investigations to capture the offenders.

According to investigations, Police arrested Aung Ko (aka) Kalar, who lives in Hlinethaya, who was driving a three-wheel motorbike accompanied by Khaing Shwewah behind the truck. In addition, Aye Min, Min Min, and Nga Pyae jumped out from the truck while being arrested. Those offenders were prosecuted at Hlinethaya police station with PA 967/2022 under Section 379 of the Penal Code. —TWA/MKKS

Arrestees are pictured along with stealing goods.

Myanmar breakfast delicacy of boiled pea costs rising

THE price of peas is soaring to K200,000-300,000 per bag so the price of boiled peas, Myanmar's common breakfast food, is still rising (K600 per 10 ticals), Daw Mar Mar Win from Tamway Township, told the Global New Light of Myanmar (GNLM).

The prices moved in the range between K215,000-350,000 per bag depending on the different varieties and qualities on 7 December 2022, as per the price data of Mandalay Commodity Centre.

The prices jumped from K190,000-260,000 per bag on 30 March 2022. The pea prices were on a gradual rise and hit a new peak of K240,000-380,000 per bag on 29 September 2022.

The prices of peas stood at K4,750-5,170 per viss on 5 May 2022 and climbed to K6,665-7,500 per viss on 22 September. Meanwhile, the price of popular chickpeas also increased from K3,000-3,100 to K4,400-4,700 per viss. On 8 December, the prices slid to K6,500-6,670 per viss of peas and K3,900-4,100 per viss of chickpea.

This year, the pea price was surprisingly higher than the chickpea price. Before the 2020s, the chickpea was valued at K2,500-2,600 per viss while the pea fetched only K850-2,335 per viss in 2016. Thereafter, the prices went on a bumpy ride. In 2022, pea prices surpassed the price of chickpeas.

The accelerating prices of common breakfast food (boiled peas and steamed sticky rice) this year make the consumers bear the burden of inflation pressure.

Consumers cannot purchase chickpeas instead owing to the high price of peas yet peas can be used as an ingredient substitute for chickpeas in some recipes.

The price of boiled peas for an individual is at least K300 this year. The breakfast (Naan with peas) was priced at K500 in the previous years. This year, it increased to K800, Ko Kyaw Tun elaborated on the high price of food to the GNLM.

Pulses are called "poor man's meat" as they are rich in nutrients but it does not cost as much as meat.

Green peas are a good source of vitamins and other minerals. People have better eat peas every day on account of health benefits, according to the USDA's national research and WHFoods network.

Nonetheless, purine-rich food such as peas brings side effects to patients with kidney disease and gout. – TWA/EMM

The picture shows a vendor's basket of boiled peas.

MOGE daily distributes over 18 mln cubic feet of CNG for CNG vehicles in Yangon Region

The picture shows YBS buses being filled with fuel at the filling station.

MYANMAR Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) (CNG Department) raised gas supply to over 18 million cubic feet of CNG per day with a view to facilitating transport for the CNG vehicles running on Yangon streets.

Earlier, MOGE distributed only 17 million cubic feet of CNG. Now, the sales volume has grown to 18 million.

Nyaungdon-Maubin oil and gas field provides natural gas to the CNG filling stations in Yangon Region.

Out of 41 filling stations in the region, 40 are selling gas to the CNG-powered YBS buses, taxis and other vehicles.

"Prolonged power cuts reduced the pressure of CNG. Despite being a cheaper alternative to fuel oil, the queue is annoying. We have to stay in a long queue. Those oil-fuelled vehicle owners do not need to bother with it. Yet, they have to check the oil prices," said U Zaw Latt, a CNG taxi driver.

The filling stations distribute CNG from 5 am to 10 pm every day. The price hovers unchanged at K275.15 per kilogramme, according to the MOGE.

"The country reduced electricity load so the queue to fill gas has become worse. As a result of this, Yangon commuters are facing delays in public transport service due to a shortage of buses. It would be better if the departments concerned gave priority to the YBS buses to ensure smooth public transport," Ko Aung Lwin, a YBS passenger, shared his opinion.

The filling stations in Yangon Region distribute gas to over 30,000 CNG vehicles per day, as per the MOGE.—TWA/EMM

HEALTH/PANDEMIC WORLD

WHO urges malaria funding boost as deaths stay stubbornly high

THE World Health Organization called Thursday for more funds to help overcome towering challenges in the battle against malaria, which continues to kill hundreds of thousands of mainly African children each year.

In a fresh report, the UN health agency celebrated that malaria cases and deaths, which exploded in 2020 as the Covid-19 crisis hit protection and treatment efforts, remained stable at a stubbornly high level last year.

But it also highlighted significant remaining challenges, including limited donor funding, the potential effect of climate change, and mutations in the parasite that causes malaria making it more resistant to treatment.

A village malaria worker takes a blood test near the Thai border in 2012. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

It warned that the world was currently "off track" to reach its goal of reducing malaria cases and deaths by 90 per cent by 2030, insisting funding should be more than doubled. "We face many challenges, but there are many reasons for hope," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a statement.

"By strengthening the response, understanding and mitigating the risks, building resilience and accelerating research, there is every reason to dream of a malaria-free future."

High stakes in Africa

The stakes are particularly high in Africa, which counts 95 per cent of the world's malaria cases and 96 per cent of deaths.

The Covid-19 pandemic has compounded several challenges facing efforts to battle malaria.

Global malaria deaths fell dramatically between 2000 and 2019 — when they stood at 568,000 — but suddenly shot up 10 per cent during the first pandemic year in 2020 to 625,000, the report said. Last year, despite the continuing impact of the pandemic, malaria deaths dipped slightly to 619,000.

Vaccine promise

Looking forward, there are a number of promising developments, including a first malaria vaccine, RTS,S, which has already been given to more than a million children and will become widely available next year.

Abdisalan Noor of the WHO's Global Malaria Programme said it was still too early to say how many lives the vaccine would save.—AFP

France to make condoms free for young adults aged 18-25

French President Emmanuel Macron said Thursday that condoms would be made available for free in pharmacies for 18- to 25-year-olds in a bid to reduce unwanted pregnancies among young people. **PHOTO: AFP**

FRENCH President Emmanuel Macron said Thursday that condoms would be made available for free in pharmacies for 18- to 25-year-olds in a bid to reduce unwanted pregnancies among young people.

"It's a small revolution for contraception," Macron said during a health debate with young people in Fontaine-le-Comte, a suburb of Poitiers in western France.

The move comes after the government began offering this year free birth control for all women under 25, expanding a scheme targeting under-18s to ensure young women do not stop taking contraception because they cannot afford it.

Condoms are already reimbursed by the national healthcare system if prescribed by a doctor or midwife, a measure intended to fight the spread of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

On sexual education overall, "we are not very good on this subject. The reality is very, very different from the theory. It's an area where we need to much better educate our teachers", Macron said.

Macron wore a face mask at the conference, saying he was following "health ministry guidelines", as the government weighs its response to a rise in Covid cases ahead of the holidays, though so far no mask mandates have been reintroduced.

"Faced with the new spread of the epidemic… I think it's good to set an example because we don't necessarily want to return to overall mandates," he said.

Officials are urging people to wear masks in crowded venues and to get Covid vaccine booster shots as winter approaches.—AFP

Singapore reports 1,363 new COVID-19 cases

SINGAPORE reported 1,363 new cases of COVID-19 on Thursday, bringing the country's total tally to 2,177,701.

A total of 122 cases are currently warded in hospitals, with six of them held in intensive care units, according to statistics released by the country's Ministry of Health. No new death from COVID-19 was reported on Thursday, making the death toll stay unchanged at 1,707. —Xinhua

Challenging last mile for China's vaccine push after zero-Covid retreat

CHINA is finally beating a retreat from its strict zero-Covid policy, but low vaccination rates among its elderly have seeded fears that the coronavirus could kill as many as 2.1 million people.

Around a third of Chinese aged 80 and above have not yet received a full course of vaccines, compared with under 10 per cent of the population as a whole.

With China on Wednesday announcing the lifting of the most restrictive zero-Covid policies, experts have warned of the possibility of an uncontrolled outbreak for which China's patchy healthcare system is underprepared.

Among the most at risk are the elderly, such as 76-year-old Sun who told AFP she "wouldn't take any more jabs" after receiving a single shot in return for a gift of 100 yuan ($14) and a bag of rice.

"There haven't been cases nearby, and I rarely travel outside my local area. So it's not necessary," said the resident of eastern Zhejiang province.

Health risk analysis firm Airfinity has predicted as many as 2.1 million Covid fatalities at current immunity levels.

The company modelled its projections on an outbreak in Hong Kong this year — the fifth wave of the virus in the city — when vaccine hesitancy among older people was a major factor in the high death toll.—AFP

A medical worker prepares a dose of COVID-19 vaccine at a vaccination site in Beijing, capital of China, 9 Dec 2021. **PHOTO: XINHUA/ZHANG YUWEI**

ECONOMY
WORLD

Grape expectations: India's biggest winemaker seeks millions

INDIA'S largest winemaker Sula Vineyards is heading to the stock market, betting on the diversifying tastebuds of a booming urban middle class in a country that has long favoured strong liquor.

Wine makes up less than one per cent of India's massive alcohol market, with spirits the overwhelming drink of choice in the nation of 1.4 billion people.

On average, Indians each drink only a few spoonfuls of wine a year, but producers hope the country will replicate the wine boom in China when its economy took off in the 1980s.

Still, experts warn their rosé ambitions are tempered by uncertainties including the impact of climate change on viniculture, and an Australian trade deal lowering import tariffs.

"Wine's time has come," insists Sula's founder and CEO Rajeev Samant.

When the Stanford University graduate returned from California, he initially tried growing roses and mangoes on family-owned land near Nashik, an ancient holy city about 160 kilometres (100 miles) from financial hub Mumbai.

"Where Sula is today, it was just grassland. There were leopards and snakes. There was no electricity, there was no telephone line," as if it was a century earlier, Samant told AFP.

"I saw some beauty here, there was something about the place that really struck me."—AFP

While growing in popularity in India, the biggest obstacle to expansion was cost, according to Ajit Balgi, of wine and spirit consultancy The Happy High. **PHOTO: AFP**

Türkiye seeks proof of insurance from Russian oil tankers

TÜRKIYE said Wednesday it has started requesting proof of insurance from tankers loaded with Russian crude oil after Western powers imposed a price cap to punish the Kremlin for its war on Ukraine.

But a Turkish official denied that the measure was slowing the passage of oil ships to world markets through the Bosphorus and Dardanelle straits.

The European Union and the Group of Seven leading industrialised nations agreed last week to block Western insurers from covering ships that intend to sell Russian oil for more than $60 a barrel.

Australia has also joined the new sanctions aimed at depriving Russia of one of its main sources of revenue.

The TankerTracker.com industry monitor said early Wednesday that Russian seaborne crude oil exports had halved in the past 48 hours.

One source told AFP that Turkish officials began requesting proof of insurance from tankers passing from Russia at the start of the month.

"We want to be sure about the coverage because they have started to cancel it," an official source told AFP on condition of anonymity.— AFP

King Charles coins enter UK circulation

THE first coins bearing the likeness of Britain's King Charles III entered circulation Thursday, The Royal Mint announced.

The new 50 pence (60 US cent) piece features an effigy of Charles, who became king after the death of his mother Queen Elizabeth II in September.

The Royal Mint, official producer of UK banknotes and coins, is initially releasing 4.9 million of the coins via transactions made at the country's postal offices.

Millions more will eventually enter use, with Charles's head featuring on all denominations.

The effigy is the work of British sculptor Martin Jennings and was personally approved by the king.

King Charles III's head faces left in new UK coins, in line with a tradition that the new monarch looks the opposite way to their predecessor. **PHOTO: ROYAL MINT/AFP/FILE**

Charles's head faces left, in line with a tradition that the new monarch looks the opposite way to their predecessor.

The reverse side celebrates the life and legacy of Elizabeth, using the coin design for her coronation in 1953.

The coronation of Charles takes place on 6 May. —AFP

Seoul orders striking truckers in fuel, steel sectors back to work

SOUTH Korea on Thursday ordered striking truck drivers in the fuel and steel sectors back to work as a walkout that has caused havoc in Asia's fourth-largest economy prepares to enter its third week.

The strike, which started on 24 November over minimum pay, delayed the supply of goods worth an estimated 3.5 trillion won (€2.5 billion) in its first 12 days, according to Seoul's trade ministry.

The second major industrial action in less than six months, the walkout has triggered concerns about the impact on global supply chains, already strained by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"At today's cabinet meeting, the government decided to expand the scope of the order to restart work for transportation deniers to the steel and petrochemical industries," finance minister Choo Kyung-ho told reporters.

Thursday's order to around 10,000 drivers comes after Seoul last week ordered striking cement truck drivers back to work, which President Yoon Suk-yeol said was necessary as their action posed a danger to the economy.

Due to the strike, shipments of steel materials were down to about 48 per cent compared to normal levels, while petrochemical products were shipping at only 20 per cent of normal levels, Choo said.—AFP

A South Korean truck driver (left) leaving a container port is asked to join striking drivers. **PHOTO: ANTHONY WALLACE / AFP**

China makes first delivery of homegrown passenger jet

CHINA on Friday announced the first delivery of its new domestically produced passenger jet, with the aircraft expected to make its commercial debut early next year.

Beijing hopes the C919 commercial jetliner will challenge foreign models like the Boeing 737 MAX and the Airbus A320, though most of its parts are sourced from abroad. The first model of the narrow-body jet, which seats 164 passengers, was formally handed over to China Eastern Airlines during a ceremony at an airport in Shanghai, state media reported. The move marked "an important milestone" in the journey of China's aircraft industry, state broadcaster CCTV said. Footage broadcast Friday by CCTV showed the jet bearing the China Eastern insignia standing on a rainswept airfield and gave a glimpse inside the aircraft's cabin.

The state-owned Commercial Aircraft Corp of China (COMAC) passed the airline a "commemorative key to the world's first C919", CCTV reported.

COMAC said at an airshow last month that it had secured orders for 300 C919s, but did not clarify whether the orders were fully confirmed and gave no details about the value of the deals or delivery dates.—AFP

China announced the first delivery of its new domestically produced jetliner, the C919. **PHOTO: CNS/AFP**

Playing with paradise: Defunct Bali golf course another Trump fiasco

BEER bottles and broken plastic chairs litter the fairways of a derelict golf course on the Indonesian holiday island of Bali, where laid-off workers lament the unfulfilled promises of a Donald Trump "dream project".

Nearly a decade ago, the real estate mogul and future US president signed a deal to license his name to a six-star holiday destination intended to displace the Nirwana Golf Resort, one of the world's best. But today, the once-thriving golf course is filled with weeds — another failed project for Trump, whose six casino and hotel bankruptcies spanning two decades have run up billions of dollars in debt and impacted thousands of lives.

"There was no clarity about our future. We heard that we would be re-recruited but it has never happened," said Ditta Dwi, a 26-year-old former caddy who was forced to take a waitressing job while awaiting a reopening that never came.

The Trump Organization and Indonesian developer MNC Group shut the resort in 2017 and laid off hundreds of workers after partnering to rebrand the Nirwana, which boasts idyllic views of the Indian Ocean. The planned redevelopment — Trump's first venture into Southeast Asia's biggest economy — was dubbed a "dream project" by his son Donald Trump Jr on a 2019 visit to Jakarta.

But Trump's deal to license his name to the new resort and help operate it — first struck in 2015 — has turned out to be a pipe dream for Indonesian workers. Five years after sending staff home, the hotel sits demolished and its course defunct, its forlorn fairways the domain of a solitary security guard who wheels around on a cart, warding off tourists.— AFP

Plans to redevelop the once-thriving Nirwana Golf Course in Bali under the Trump banner have fallen by the wayside. **PHOTO: AFP**

SoftBank ex-worker gets suspended sentence over info leakage

A Japanese court Friday sentenced a former employee of SoftBank Corp. to two years in prison, suspended for four years, and a one million yen ($7,300) fine over leaking the company's 5G network technology information to Rakuten Mobile Inc.

The Tokyo District Court convicted Kuniaki Aiba, who had worked at SoftBank Group Corp.'s mobile phone service subsidiary but moved to Rakuten.

Aiba was arrested in January last year on suspicion of violating Japan's unfair competition prevention laws. He had allegedly transferred data related to SoftBank's 5G technology to his email account. He joined Rakuten Group Inc.'s wireless unit soon after leaving SoftBank in December 2019. Presiding Judge Masakazu Kamakura said of the ruling that Aiba leaked the information for his own benefit at Rakuten Mobile, describing his motives as "selfish and malicious."—Kyodo

Britain fines Santander over money laundering failures

BRITAIN on Friday hit the UK arm of Spanish banking giant Santander with a fine of almost £108 million ($132 million) after uncovering "serious and persistent gaps" in anti-money laundering controls.

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) said in a statement that it had concluded that Santander UK plc "failed to properly oversee and manage its anti-money laundering (AML) systems" between December 2012 and October 2017.

The failures affected more than 560,000 business customers.

Santander did not dispute the findings and therefore qualified for a 30-per-cent discount, otherwise the fine would have totalled nearly £154 million. "Santander's poor management of their AML systems and their inadequate attempts to address the problems created a prolonged and severe risk of money laundering and financial crime," added Mark Steward, FCA executive director of enforcement and market oversight.—AFP

Announcement

Tat Hong Intraco Heavy Equipment Company Limited hereby announces its intention to give notice of an extraordinary general meeting to approve the reduction of its capital in accordance with the notice and documents filed with the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration.

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Barcelona-Marseille pipeline: an ambitious but risky project

A planned underwater hydrogen pipeline connecting Barcelona and Marseille is a risky project, but one that is key for the European Union's energy independence.

Here's what we know about the joint initiative by Madrid, Lisbon and Paris, which will be discussed on Friday on the sidelines of a summit of southern European Union nations in Spain:

What is it?

Dubbed "H2Med" or "BarMar" (from Barcelona and Marseille), the pipeline will transport green hydrogen, between Spain, France and the rest of Europe.

Green hydrogen is made from water via electrolysis and with renewable energy.

Announced at an EU summit in October, the pipeline offers an alternative to the defunct 2003 MidCat pipeline project.

Intended to carry gas across the Pyrenees from Spain to France, it was eventually abandoned over profitability issues and objections from Paris and environmentalists.

What are its goals?

The pipeline aims to boost the decarbonization of European industry, giving it access to clean energy on a large scale, which Spain and Portugal hope to produce.

The two neighbours aim to become world leaders in green hydrogen thanks to their numerous wind and solar power farms.

France, Portugal and Spain initially said in October the pipeline aimed to reduce Europe's dependence on Russian energy by improving gas interconnections between the Iberian Peninsula and its neighbours.—AFP

New gas pipeline proposal between Barcelona and Marseille. **PHOTO: JOSEP LAGO / AFP**

Canada's Alberta province passes bill to ignore federal law

Alberta is pushing back at what it calls federal overreach, citing measures to cut CO2 pollution from oil sands mining facilities such as this one near Fort McKay. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

CANADA'S Alberta province passed a bill Thursday that allows its government to ignore federal laws it deems harmful — pointing to, for example, measures to curb its oil industry's emissions.

Canada is among the world's top oil producers and much of that output comes from the oil sands in northern Alberta.

The so-called Sovereignty Act is the latest volley in a long-festering feud between Alberta and the national government, which in 2018 imposed a carbon tax and other climate measures to curb CO2 pollution.

Several provinces, including Alberta, fought unsuccessfully all the way to the Supreme Court against the levy, which is set to rise from Can$50 (US$37) per tonne of CO2 emissions to Can$170 in 2030.—AFP

Convention on the Law of the Sea more relevant than ever: UN chief

AS the ocean is "in dire straits", the landmark United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea adopted 40 years ago is more relevant than ever, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Thursday.

Guterres made the remarks while addressing a UN General Assembly meeting commemorating the 40th anniversary of the adoption and opening for signature of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Adopted in 1982, the convention opened a new chapter of global maritime governance, and has greatly helped humanity better understand, protect and utilize the sea.

Four decades ago, the world took a vital step to bring governance and order to oceans and seas, Guterres said, adding that the convention's near-universal acceptance reflects its "fundamental importance" and its legal framework and related instruments to countries around the world.

"As we gather today, the convention is more relevant than ever. The ocean is in dire straits," the UN chief warned.—Xinhua

Japan should double foreign aid in 10 years, panel proposes

JAPAN should double the budget for its official development assistance over the next decade to help it protect its national interests and contribute more to building a world based on the rule of law, a panel of experts said Friday.

In a set of proposals presented to Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi, the government-commissioned panel said Japan should "set a clear deadline for achieving" the target, such as increasing the ODA budget to 0.7 per cent of gross national income from the current 0.34 per cent in the next 10 years.

The proposals were made as the country prepares to revise its foreign aid charter next year for the first time since 2015.—Kyodo

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Putin vows more strikes on Ukraine energy infrastructure

PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin vowed Thursday to keep battering Ukraine's energy grid despite an outcry against the systematic attacks that have plunged millions into the cold and dark as winter sets in.

He instead blamed Ukraine for initiating a trend of attacking civilian infrastructure, pointing to a blast on a key bridge between the Russian mainland and the annexed Crimean peninsula that he recently visited.

In October, the Kerch bridge linking the Crimea peninsula to the Russian mainland was partially destroyed in an attack attributed to Ukraine by Moscow. **PHOTO: AFP**

"There's a lot of noise about our strikes on the energy infrastructure of a neighbouring country. This will not interfere with our combat missions," Putin said at a military awards ceremony in the Kremlin.

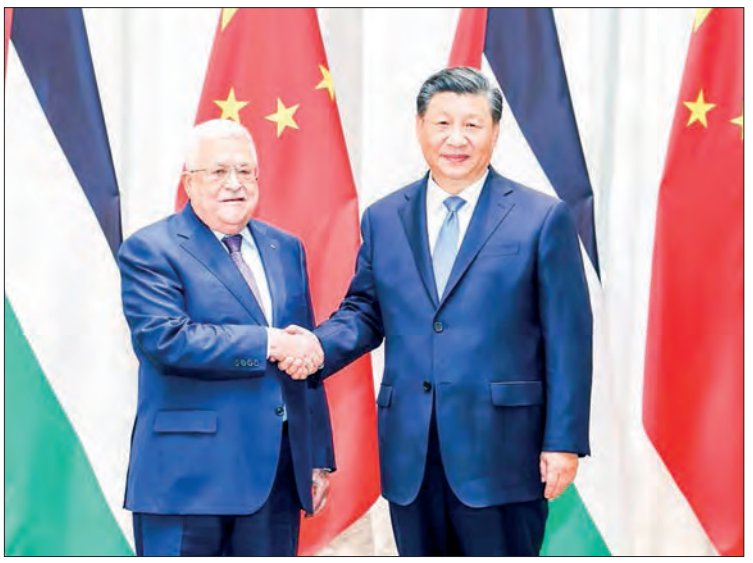
Weeks of Russian missile barrages across Ukraine have crippled key infrastructure at a critical time, as temperatures drop ahead of long winter months that already have brought suffering to Ukrainians lacking water, heating and gas.

He presented the strikes as a response to the explosion in October on the Kerch bridge and also accused Kyiv of blowing up power lines from the Kursk nuclear power plant and for not supplying water to Donetsk in eastern Ukraine.

Ukrainian energy operator Ukrenergo said Thursday that it was still reeling from the latest bout of strikes that came this week and was suffering a "significant deficit".—AFP

GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Xi meets Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 8 December 2022.
PHOTO: XINHUA/YAO DAWEI

CHINESE President Xi Jinping on Thursday met Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in Riyadh.

Xi pointed out that China-Palestine friendship is deeply cherished by their people, adding that over the past five decades and more, the two sides have always trusted and supported each other.

No matter how the international and regional situation changes, China always firmly supports the just cause of the Palestinian people to restore the legitimate rights and interests of their nation, and always stands with the Palestinian people, Xi said.

The international community should prioritize the Palestinian issue on the international agenda, keep to the direction of the two-state solution and the principle of "land for peace", and facilitate resumption of peace talks on the basis of relevant UN resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative, Xi said, adding that China will continue to work for an early, just and durable solution to the Palestinian issue.

Noting that next year marks the 35th anniversary of China-Palestine relations, Xi emphasized the need for the two sides to make good plans for celebrating the anniversary.

The two countries signed a tourism cooperation document, actively advanced negotiations for a China-Palestine free trade agreement and successfully held the second session of the Chinese-Palestinian Joint Committee for Economic, Trade and Technical Cooperation, Xi said, adding that China has provided a large amount of vaccines and other anti-COVID supplies to Palestinian refugees, and will continue to do what it can to help Palestine develop its economy and improve people's well-being.— Xinhua

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Japan, UK, Italy to develop next-generation fighter jet

JAPAN, Britain and Italy said Friday they will jointly develop a next-generation fighter jet in a project that holds scope for future cooperation with allies including the United States.

The new jet, to be ready by 2035, is expected to merge the nations' current research into cutting-edge air combat technology, from stealth capacity to high-tech sensors.

In a joint statement, the three countries said the "ambitious endeavour" would "accelerate our advanced military capability and technological advantage" at a time when "threats and aggression are increasing" worldwide.

Their announcement was accompanied by a set of images showing an artist's impression of the sleek new jets flying past Mount Fuji and over London and Rome.

They did not give a cost estimate, but the three countries are already pouring billions of dollars into fighter jet development, efforts that will come together under the joint project, called the Global Combat Air Programme.

"We share (an) ambition for this aircraft to be the centrepiece of a wider combat air system that will function across multiple domains," the statement said. –AFP

One killed in massive fire in Moscow shopping centre

ONE person died Friday in a massive blaze the size of a football pitch which broke out overnight in a sprawling shopping and entertainment centre in a northern Moscow suburb.

"In the Moscow region, firefighters are putting out a fire the size of 7,000 square metres (75,300 square feet)," Russia's Ministry of Emergency Situations said on Telegram.

Russian media later reported that one person had been killed in the fire at the Mega Khimki shopping centre, about seven kilometres (four miles) from Moscow's Sheremetyevo Airport.

More than 70 firefighters and 20 fire trucks were working at the site, emergency services said, adding that their work was hampered due to the design of the building.

"Due to the collapse of the roof, the fire spread instantly to a large area," the Moscow region's emergency services said on Telegram. –AFP

Israel's Netanyahu requests more time to form government

Benjamin Netanyahu received a 28-day mandate to form a government from President Isaac Herzog. **PHOTO: MENAHEM KAHANA/AFP**

ISRAEL'S prime-minister designate Benjamin Netanyahu asked Thursday for a two-week extension in forming a coalition government with his ultra-Orthodox and extreme-right allies, days before the initial time frame elapses.

The 1 November election put former premier Netanyahu in a position to form a stable, right-wing government, ending an unprecedented period of political deadlock that forced five elections in less than four years.

President Isaac Herzog on 13 November tapped Netanyahu to form a government with the backing of factions representing 64 out of 120 lawmakers in Israel's parliament.

Netanyahu's 28-day mandate expires at midnight (2200 GMT) Sunday, but late Thursday he asked Herzog for more time to finalize deals with two parties.

"We are in the midst of negotiations and have made much progress, but judging by the pace of things, I will need all the extension days provided by law in order to form a government," Netanyahu said in a letter released by his office.— AFP

US basketball star Griner freed in Russian prisoner swap

BASKETBALL star Brittney Griner is "safe" and headed home to the United States after being freed from a Russian prison ordeal in a swap for the notorious arms dealer Viktor Bout, the two countries announced on Thursday.

President Joe Biden delivered an early-morning address to the nation to announce the breakthrough, and said he had spoken to Griner just "moments ago."

Brittney Griner has been a superstar for the US women's basketball national team during the past two Olympics and Women's World Cups. **PHOTO: AFP**

"She is safe. She is on a plane. She is on her way home," Biden said, adding that she should be back in the United States within 24 hours. The Olympic legend and LGBT trailblazer, who was being held in a remote penal colony, was arrested at a Moscow airport in February and handed nine years in prison in August for possessing vape cartridges with a small quantity of cannabis oil.—AFP

GLOBAL AFFAIRS
Xi meets Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas
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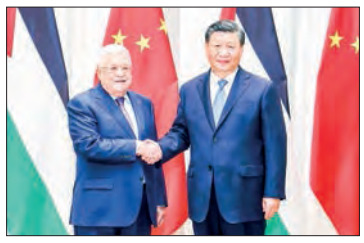

Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Nine Objectives

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.

Aung La N Sang signs contract with ONE Championship for next battle

Former ONE Championship two-division Champion Aung La N Sang. **PHOTO: ONE**

IT is reported that the ONE Championship organization, which is holding fights with Myanmar MMA fighter Aung La N Sang, has signed a contract for the upcoming event.

Aung La N Sang also announced through his social network: Facebook that he has signed a contract with ONE Championship for the upcoming fight.

Aung La N Sang has already signed a contract with ONE Championship, but the date of his fight against the opponent is unknown, but it is likely to be in early 2023 at the earliest.

He had a middleweight challenge fight with Japanese Okami on 19 November and won the first round, so he signed another contract for future fights.

As Aung La N Sang has announced that he will only stay in the middleweight division, and thus the next bout will also be fought in the middleweight division. The title fight or the challenge bout will be announced soon by ONE Championship.

Aung La N Sang is trying to regain the middleweight world championship that he lost. After losing the world champion belts, he won again two challenges out of three and lost one bout. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Media accreditation forms available for AFF Mitsubishi Electric Cup 2022

THE Myanmar Football Federation said that the media can apply for media accreditation cards for the ASEAN Football Federation AFF Mitsubishi Electric Cup 2022, which will be held from 20 December 2022 to 16 January 2023.

Two of the Myanmar national team's home matches will be hosted at Thuwunna football stadium in Yangon. Team Myanmar will face an opener against the Malaysia team on 21 December, and the Laos team on 30 December. Media who wish to attend the press conference must fill out the Media Accreditation Application Form from the links below and submit it to the Myanmar Football Federation Media Department by 10 December. The link to download the media access cards for the ASEAN Football Federation AFF Mitsubishi Electric Cup 2022 is https://www.mediafire.com/file/95od97wrxkofeux/Media_Accreditation_AMEC_2022.docx/file the Myanmar Football Federation has stated on its official website. — KZL

FIFA WORLD CUP Qatar2022

France coach Deschamps warns England of Mbappe threat in World Cup showdown

France coach Didier Deschamps speaks to reporters in Doha ahead of Saturday's World Cup quarter-final against England. **PHOTO: AFP**

FRANCE coach Didier Deschamps is confident Kylian Mbappe can still make the difference in Saturday's World Cup quarter-final showdown with England even if the opposition put their focus on stopping the superstar forward. Mbappe is the top scorer at the tournament with five goals in four games, including a brace in the 3-1 win over Poland in the last 16, and England will need to find a way of countering the Paris Saint-Germain striker. But the holders have formidable quality around Mbappe, with Olivier Giroud, Ousmane Dembele and Antoine Griezmann all impressing in Qatar too.—AFP

Southgate vows front foot approach against France

ENGLAND manager Gareth Southgate has urged the Three Lions to take the game to defending champions France in a blockbuster World Cup quarter-final clash on Saturday.

Southgate's men are the joint top scorers in the tournament with 12 goals in their four games in Qatar so far but will come up against the firepower of the tournament's top scorer in Kylian Mbappe. The threat of the Paris Saint-Germain forward has led to suggestions Southgate could change his formation with an extra defender added to deal with France's front four of Mbappe, Olivier Giroud, Antoine Griezmann and Ousmane Dembele. —AFP

Gareth Southgate has vowed England will attack France in Saturday's World Cup quarter-final. **PHOTO: AFP**

World Cup 2022 Results

Croatia 1 - 1 Brazil

Penalty Shoot-out

4 - 2