

THE GLOBAL NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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Sunday, 11 December 2022

Five-Point Road Map of the State Administration Council

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

Restoration of peace and stability across the nation is crucial to enable citizens to enjoy fundamental rights for the improvement of their socioeconomic status: Senior General

MYANMAR and all ethnic nationals pay respects to each other and value human rights due to faiths and cultural traditions and own lifestyle, said Chairman of the State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the ceremony to mark the 74th Anniversary of International Human Rights Day at the Myanmar International Convention Centre-I in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday morning.

Speaking on the occasion, the Senior General recounted that Myanmar voted for a decision to approve the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights expresses "All

human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." As such, all human beings need to value the integrity and rights of others and to equalize the term of rights without discrimination in enjoying their rights.

Moreover, the declaration clearly mentioned that all human beings, in enjoying human rights, shall follow the restrictions under the law with the aim of flourishing morality, peace and tranquillity of the people and development of benefits which are fair requirements in the society. Hence, everybody needs to take their freedom and rights as well as regard for freedom and rights of others without ignorance of responsibilities and ethics.

SEE PAGE-3



State Administration Council Chairman Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing addresses the commemorating event of the 74th Anniversary of International Human Rights Day in Nay Pyi Taw on 10 December 2022.

Pyin Oo Lwin

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Public Notice

1. The State Administration Council awarded Agga Maha Thiri Thudhamma, Thadoe Thiri Thudhamma, Agga Maha Thray Sithu, Thadoe Maha Thray Sithu, Maha Thray Sithu, Thray Sithu, Sithu, Thura, Thiri Pyanchi, Zeya Kyaw Htin, Wunna Kyaw Htin, Alinka Kyaw Swa and Theikpa Kyaw Swa titles in 2022 with Order Nos 2/2022, 54/2022, 63/2022, 211/2022, 212/2022, 213/2022, 214/2022, 215/2022, 218/2022, 219/2022, 220/2022 and 221/2022.
2. The honorary titles recipients will be awarded honouring Diamond Jubilee Independence Day and are invited to attend in person or their family member to the honorary titles conferring ceremony, Diamond Jubilee Independence Day Celebration, Reception and Dinner events to be held at the Grand Military Review Parade on 4 January 2023.
3. It is here announced that the recipient of titles or one family member on behalf of awardees who will attend the ceremonies must contact officials of respective organizing committees no later than 20-12-2022.

**Sub-Committee on Invitation to Honorary Titles Con-
ferring Ceremony (Ministry of Home Affairs)**
Phone: 067-3412715, 067-3412716
**Diamond Jubilee Independence Day Seating Sub-Com-
mittee (Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture)**
Phone: 067-3408436, 09-455955110, 09-2035502
**Working Committee on Organizing Reception and
Dinner for Diamond Jubilee Independence Day
(Ministry of Foreign Affairs)**
Phone: 067-3412054, 067-3412655

18 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 10 December, total figure rises to 633,418

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to **633,418** after **18** new cases were reported on 10 December 2022 according to the Ministry of Health.

The total number of patients who have recovered from COVID-19 in the country reached **607,962** including **30** new recoveries.

The death toll from COVID-19 in the country remained unchanged at **19,488** on 10 December 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.

Daily laboratory examination showed decline of infection to less than 1 per cent for 25 successive days.

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

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.

Gwa Chaung Bridge to be opened in Dec last week



An aerial view of the Gwa Chaung Bridge.

THE construction of the Gwa Chaung Bridge, which connects the Ayeyawady Region with Rakhine State, was completed and will be opened in the last week of December 2022. It is important for the smooth and fast flow of goods and the development of the tourism sector.

The Gwa Chaung Bridge construction was started on 18 November 2019, and the upper structure of the bridge is PC Girder and RC Girder reinforced concrete floor. The lower structure is reinforced concrete floor and the foundation of the bridge is reinforced concrete.

Gwa Chaung Bridge was built to connect Gwa in Rakhine state and Makyayngu village. It is an important bridge along the coastal circuit road

of Singma-Ngwesaung-Chaungtha-Shwe Thaung Yan-Magyibin-Kyaukchun-Gwa from Ngayokekaung in Ayeyawady region to Gwa in Rakhine state.

With the construction of the Gwa Chaung Bridge, the socioeconomic lives of local people will be improved with a good transport link. Local products from Rakhine State can flow quickly and easily to Ayeyawady Region and Yangon Region.

Gwa Chaung Bridge is 1,398 feet and nine inches long with a 24 feet traffic lane and three feet and six inches sidewalk on each side. It is 20 feet above water level with an 85 feet wide waterway. It has a load capacity of 75 tonnes per vehicle. It was built at a cost of K8,980 million. — Nyein Thu (MNA)/KZL

Myanmar sees record earnings from rice and broken rice exports in Nov

IN November 2022, more than 260,000 tonnes of rice and broken rice were exported, earning a record US\$106 million, according to the Myanmar Rice Federation. Exports and revenue in November were the highest in 2022.

In November, rice and broken rice metric tons 26,4037.6 were exported by 41 companies, and rice 179,852.6 tonnes and broken rice 84,185 tonnes were exported. The amount of rice and bro-

ken rice exported by sea was 185,678.6 tonnes and the exports from land borders were 78,359 tonnes. Rice was purchased the most from Bangladesh (87,710 tonnes), followed by China

(49,685 tonnes). The Philippines exported 2,060 tonnes, Belgium (5,000 tonnes) and Poland (4,657.8 tonnes). It is stated that broken rice exports are to Belgium (56,345 tonnes), China (23,750 tonnes),

Poland (1,500 tonnes), Spain (500 tonnes) and Latin America (500 tonnes). Myanmar earned US\$510 million from the export of rice and broken rice from April to November in the 2022-23 financial year.—TPT

Management must be systematically implemented

THE government adopted future tasks, visions, national goals and political goals. The government is mainly responsible for achieving the goals with the participation of political parties and citizens. Such tasks should not burden the nation while management must be systematically implemented. We all are to move forward and all of the officials concerned are to successfully carry out departmental tasks.

(The excerpt from the speech made by Chairman of State Administration Council Prime Minister Senior General Min Aung Hlaing at the meeting 6/2022 of the Union government on 22 August 2022.)

Restoration of peace and stability across the nation is crucial to enable citizens to enjoy fundamental rights for the improvement of their socioeconomic status: Senior General

FROM PAGE-1

As part of regarding for norms of human rights mentioned in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, these norms were inserted into the constitutions of the majority of global countries. Hence, Myanmar has comprehensively drawn these norms in the Constitution (2008) of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. A law was enacted for the formation of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission in order to further protect the fundamental rights of citizens mentioned in the Constitution and prevent violation of human rights and public awareness..

Restoration of peace and stability across the nation is crucial to enable the citizens to enjoy fundamental rights for the improvement of their socioeconomic status. In striving for ensuring equal terms of ethnic national people and national unity, everybody knows that priority is being given to holding peace talks with ethnic armed organizations with the invitation in order to initiate national solidarity and peace.

Myanmar and all ethnic na-



State Administration Council Chair PM Senior General Min Aung Hlaing looks into the documentary photos at the event.

tionals pay respects to each other and value human rights due to faiths and cultural traditions and own lifestyle. In Myanmar society, the majority of the people accept and follow traditional laws comprising the advice and directives such as causes, behaviours,

talks and lifestyle to be followed for the benefit of human beings called code of ethics, social ethics including ethics of offspring, parents, pupils, teachers, husbands, wives, friends and chiefs as well as the attributes of patron in respective relation arenas, and no-

ble auspiciousness which brings advantages to the human beings for 38 items of auspiciousness, auspiciousness for a relationship, living, teaching, nursing, helping, obedience, genuine spirit, tolerance, thrift and mental strength. As the approval of the Uni-

versal Declaration of Human Rights will turn 75 in coming 2023, all need to do activities in honour of the declaration as an important heritage of all human beings during the whole nation from this year's International Human Rights Day to the next year's.

Chairman of Myanmar National Human Rights Commission U Hla Myint reported on the accomplishment of the commission and Vice Chair Dr Nanda Hmun read out the message of the UN Secretary-General.

The Senior General watched a video clip on human rights.

The commission chairman presented prizes to the winners in the poem, cartoon and article contests to mark the 74th Anniversary of International Human Rights Day. The application of the MNHRC was introduced to all. Artistes from the Fine Arts Department performed dances with the song under the title of Human Rights for All.

The Senior General and party viewed round the documentary photos on raising the human rights and awareness measures of the commission. — MNA



The public collective walk is in action in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Collective walk held for public sports month in Nay Pyi Taw

THE December second week of the collective walk was held as a gesture of marking the public sports month 2022 at Wunna Theikdi Stadium yesterday morning.

Officials from Union-level organizations, Union ministers, deputy ministers, departmental officials, staff and families participated in the walking event.

They walked from Wunna Theikdi Stadium according to designated routes

and took part in the group physical fitness exercises parts 1 and 2, and physical fitness dance exercises. Then, officials from the Department of Sports and Physical Education provided purified drinking water, Royal-D electrolyte drinks and nutritious snacks.

The community walk will be held every Saturday in December, and employees from various ministries and their families will participate in the sports activity. — MNA/KZL

SAC members enjoy SAC Chairman’s Trophy U-18 women’s football tournament



SAC members and dignitaries watch the qualifying match of the SAC Chairman’s Trophy U-18 women’s football tourney in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

IN collaboration with the Department of Sports and Physical Education of the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs and the Myanmar Football Federation, the SAC Chairman’s Trophy U-18 women’s football tournament qualifiers were held at 3 pm yesterday at training turf No 1 and turf No 3 in Nay Pyi Taw Wunna Theikdi Stadium with the aim to raise the standard of Myanmar football and to produce many talented new-generation football athletes (females) from the states and regions.

SAC members Jeng Phang Naw Taung, Dr Banyar Aung Moe and wife, Deputy Minister for Planning and Finance U Maung Maung Win, Deputy Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs U Myo Hlaing, Director-General of the Sports and Physical Education Department U Tun Myint Oo, the deputy directors-general, directors, officials from the Myanmar Football Federation and football fans attended and enjoyed the tourney.

In the knockout match of the U-18 Women’s football tourney held at the training turf No 1 of Wunna Theikdi Stadium, the Sagaing Region team beat the Mandalay Region team 2-1 while the Yangon Region team defeated the Mon State team 4-2 at the training turf No.3.

The competition will pause for one day on 11 December. In the U-18 Women’s Football Quarterfinals to be held starting from 3 pm on 12 December, the Ayeyawady Region team will take on the Sagaing Region team at training turf No 1 of the Wunna Theikdi Stadium, while the Shan State team will face the Magway Region team at training turf No 3. Anyone interested in sports can come and enjoy the matches for free, it is reported. — MNA/KZL

Union Auditor-General attends 3rd Anniversary of “Swemyo Pauk-Phaw Magazine”

THE third anniversary of publishing “Swemyo Pauk-Phaw Magazine” marking the 70th anniversary of Myanmar-China diplomatic ties was held in Yangon yesterday.

The event was attended by Union Auditor-General U Tin Oo, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein, Deputy Minister for Information U Ye Tint, Myanmar Press Council Chairman U Ohn Maung (Myinmu Maung Naing Moe), Minister Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy in Myanmar Dr Zheng Zhihong, officials of the Myanmar-China Friendship Association (Central), Myanmar China Cooperation Centre, personnel of the magazine and invitees.

First, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Soe Thein made an opening remark and the deputy minister, the Chinese Minister Counsellor, the chairman of the Myanmar-China Friendship Association (Central), the patron of the Myanmar China Cooperation Centre and the Swemyo Pauk-Phaw Association retired diplomat U Sein Win Aung delivered remarks.

Then, officials awarded writers including the patron and executive members of the magazine.

After the event, they took commemorative group photos.

— MNA/KTZH



The documentary group photo of the third anniversary of the “Swemyo Pauk Phaw-Magazine”.

PHOTO : ZAW MIN LATT

MoI Deputy Minister makes inspection tour in Yangon

DEPUTY Minister U Ye Tint of the Ministry of Information, accompanied by Advocate-General of Yangon Region U Htay Aung and Myanmar Music Association (Central) Chairman U Lwin Myint watched the 15th “Tu Shin Hnwal Pyaw Gita Pwal Taw” singing competition marking Diamond Jubilee Independence Day at MRTV Studio and encouraged contestants on 9 December.

Afterwards, Deputy Minister U Ye Tint inspected the Central Printing Factory of the Printing and Publishing Department on Theinbyu Road yesterday morning and gave necessary instructions on work processes. — MNA/MKKS

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Old summer onions supply short in Yangon market

THERE is no entry of old summer onions to the market since the first week of December 2022, according to the Bayintnaung market in Yangon.

According to traders, no old summer onions have entered the Pakoku onion market since 11 November 2022. There is only a supply of five bags of old summer onions to the Myingyan depot on 5 December and the highest price per viss (a viss equals 1.6 kilogrammes) is K4,300. A total of 111,520 tonnes of new rain onions entered the market on the same day and the highest rate was K3,300 per viss.

On 5 December, a total of 210,000 visses including around 20,000 visses of summer onions and rain onions entered the Yangon market. Big sizes of summer onions from the Seikphyu area and those of new rain onions from the Myittha area were valued at K5,000 and K4,500 per viss respectively. It is reported that there is no supply of old summer onions to the Yangon market from the time of 6 December.

The price of old summer onion (big size) from the Myingyan area was K5,100 per viss in

the Yangon market on 2 December. It was a new record price in the history of the domestic onion market, said Ko Thet, a dealer. As the new record price emerged, it was the first time that old summer onion has not entered the Yangon market at the end of the first week of December.

Onions from various regions weighing 540,000 visses entered the Bayintnaung market in Yangon on 16 March 2020 and a total of 1.65 million visses entered within five days of its opening. On 17 September 2022, there were only 42,000 visses of entry. The Bayintnaung market has a monthly entry of roughly three to four million visses of onions. The cultivation and yield of autumn onions were reduced by half to the previous years, some on-

ion traders from onion-origin regions commented.

Neighbouring countries experienced damage to onion cultivation in the rainy season of 2022. However, the main buyer, Bangladesh, which caused the price rise in domestic onions up to K3,500 per viss in 2019, had done no purchases in 2022.

The cultivation of new rain onions started when the price of summer onions rose earlier than usual. Although there were rumours about the damage of some rain onion plantations due to untimely rain, new rain onions entered markets including Yangon earlier than in regular years. The price of summer onions is still high despite a bulk supply of rain onions these days, according to the onion market. — TWA/CT



High-priced summer onions in the market.



2022 price of chickpeas highest in 10 years

The sample of chickpeas is seen at the wholesale centre.

ALTHOUGH the chickpea price in the Yangon market on 10 December was K3,900-4,100 per viss showing a decrease compared to the previous month, it is the highest in 10 years.

The chickpea price with high local consumption becomes higher than in a normal year and very few low-income families buy it.

The potato is priced at K2,000 per viss while it is K4,500 per viss of chickpea. So, the use of chickpeas for curry becomes lower.

The price of fried split peas (Pe Kyaw) for Mohinga and coconut noodles reaches K200 from K100 for higher prices of cooking oil and bean.

On 3 January 2022, the wholesale price of chickpeas was only K2,950-3,100 per viss and it reached its highest price at K4,400-4,700 per

viss on 14 September.

Although it declined to K3,900-4,100 per viss on 10 December, it reaches the highest price in 2022.

During 10 years, starting from 2013 in addition to 2022, chickpea prices hit record prices like other commodities such as onion, palm oil and chilli.

Its highest price was only K1,000 per viss in 2013 and 2014.

It reached K860 per viss by the end of October 2014.

In mid-October 2015, although the chickpea price reached K2,500 per viss, the black gram was over K2.4 million per viss, and it was only K975 per viss in early 2015.

In mid-2016, it was K2,500-2,600 per viss.

It was K3,800-3,900 per viss on 2 January 2017. In 2018 and 2019, it was only K2,200 per viss and it was the highest at

that time.

In 2020, its highest price was K2,125-2,200 per viss on 7 November while the lowest rate was K1,600-1,650 per viss in March.

In early 2021, it was K1,800-1,825 per viss and K2,500 by the end of the year.

While the chickpea price reaches the highest price at K4,700 per viss in 2022, the green pea price is also on the rise at K7000 per viss, and consumers have to buy them paying the high prices.

The Indian people mainly consume pigeon peas and most of the grassroots of Myanmar also consume green peas and chickpeas.

For 10 years, 2022 is a year as low-income people reduce their purchasing rate of cooking oil, onion, chilli and bean to their normal rate. — TWA/KTZH

187 Myanmar nationals from Thailand return through Kawthoung

IT is reported that 187 Myanmar nationals who were arrested in Thailand for various reasons and released were returned to Kawthoung on the afternoon of 9 December.

On that day, 51 women and 136 men, a total of 187 migrants, were transferred back to Kawthoung by immigration officers and officials from Ranong, Thailand.

Officials from the Myanmar side received them after conducting the necessary checks, and the Migrant Workers' Support Centre (MRC) helped pro-

vide personal items.

The Labour Attaché officer in charge of Ranong also urged them to come to Thailand through the official method if they come to Thailand next time because they are registering with the flower garden project in Myanmar.

Health workers and members of the Red Cross conducted health checks, took their body temperature, and diagnosed for the presence of COVID-19 infection with an RDT test kit.

Among those who have returned, Kawthoung locals will

be separated at three quarantine centres in Kawthoung, for three days, and they will be sent back to their homes only if they do not have the COVID-19 infection.

On 21 October, 178 Myanmar citizens who had been released from prison for various reasons were repatriated by waterway via Ranong, Thailand to Kawthoung. — TWA/KZL

Myanmar migrants who were released from Thailand are seen on the Kawthoung border.



LOCAL BUSINESS

Black gram price rebounds to K1,770,000 per tonne

THE black gram price reaches K1,770,000 per tonne again, according to the market. On 1 December, it was K1,695,000 per tonne and K1,770,000 per tonne on 10 December. Therefore, the price rose to K75,000 per tonne

within ten days.

The price fluctuation depends on the foreign currency exchange rate and Indian demand.

In August, the exchange rate was over K4,500 per dollar in the black market and the black gram

price hit a record high at K2.1 million per tonne.

Currently, the country exported about 1.1 million tonnes of beans and pulses in over eight months of this FY earning over \$ 800 million, according to the

Ministry of Commerce.

Between 1 April and 2 December of the 2022-2023FY, the country shipped a total of 1,098,377.603 tonnes of beans and pulses worth \$863.237 million – 942,926.773 tonnes worth \$756.457 million via sea route and 155,450.830 tonnes worth \$106.780 million through land borders.

In the 2020-2021FY, the country exported a total of 2,029,695.882 tonnes of beans and pulses worth \$1,750.707 million – 1,242,775.651 tonnes worth \$966.407 million via sea and 786,920.651 tonnes worth \$604.300 million across land borders.

The country mainly exports black gram, mung bean and pigeon peas. Among them, the black gram and pigeon pea are exported to India and the mung bean is to China and some European countries.

India has a growing demand for the black gram and pigeon

peas and the two countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 18 June 2021.

According to MoU, India will import 250,000 tonnes of black gram and 100,000 tonnes of pigeon peas from Myanmar for five consecutive years from the 2021-2022FY to the 2025-2026FY (April-March). This G-to-G pact will not affect the annual quota set by India and Myanmar bean exporters are also entitled to deliver pulses to India under that annual quota.

Myanmar produces about 400,000 tonnes of black gram and about 50,000 tonnes of pigeon peas yearly.

Myanmar is the top producer of the black gram that is primarily demanded by India, while pigeon peas, green grams and chickpeas are cultivated in Australia and African countries besides Myanmar, according to Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association. – NN/KTZH



Merchants are seen evaluating beans and pulses at the market.

Corn price tumbles to K1,130 per viss

THE price of corn has weakened to over K1,130 per viss, according to the corn market.

The price heads for a five-day fall from K1,180 per viss on 3 December.

The price retreat is attributed to the slide in the Kyat-US dollar exchange rate. The US dollar is exchanged at K2,850.

Myanmar shipped corn to Vietnam and the Philippines by sea, according to Myanmar Corn Industrial Association.

Additionally, China is purchasing Myanmar's corn through cross-border trade under opium substitution programmes. Legitimate corn trade between Myanmar and China began at the end of this year. A total of 112 companies have been given the go-ahead for corn exports and some companies commence exporting as well.

Thailand gives green light to corn imports under zero tariff

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

The directive released on 30 June said that transactions for the exports of agricultural products including corn, rice, bean and oil crops are to be made in dollars instead of Yuan-Kyat/Baht-Kyat.

Therefore, the export earnings of the corn have to be exchanged for the US dollar according to the reference rate of the Central Bank of Myanmar (K2,100), making the traders tough financially.

Nonetheless, there is a large gap between the regulated rate and the unauthorized rate of the US dollar (over K2,850). It weighed on the traders, they

stressed.

According to a meeting (66/2022) of the Foreign Exchange Supervisory Committee, export earnings of some items can be made in Chinese Yuan and Thai Baht in addition to the US dollar.

The CBM's notice dated 18 November takes effect on those export items; various pulses (green gram, black gram, chickpea, pigeon pea), edible oil crops (peanut, sesame seeds), corn, rubber, fishery products (fish, shrimp, crab, eel) and livestock products (live cattle, hides, frozen meat, dried meat).

The traders need to apply for a licence to make Yuan or Baht payments. As per the US dollar policy, 65 per cent of earnings must be exchanged for local currency at the CBM's reference foreign exchange rate, while exporters can use 35 per cent of export earnings or transfer or



At present, corn is cultivated in Shan, Kachin, Kayah and Kayin states and Mandalay, Sagaing and Magway regions.

sell them to authorized dealers (AD) or others with an over-the-counter rate within one month.

This directive came into effect starting on 21 November, the CBM stated.

That being so, we need to closely observe the market condition, exporters pointed out.

Myanmar exported 2.3 million tonnes of corn to foreign trade partners in the 2020-2021

financial year. The majority of them were sent to Thailand and the remaining went to China, India and Viet Nam.

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

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Watermelon, muskmelon traders report brisk sales

WATERMELON and muskmelon traders do a roaring trade and the prices have also risen, said fruit traders engaged in Muse border.

Last November, Myanmar's watermelon and muskmelon were underpriced owing to China's lockdown in big cities triggered by the COVID cases. The prices were offered low at 1.3 Yuan per kilogramme of watermelon and two Yuan per kilo of muskmelon. The trade was slow-moving.

From 7 November, the ease of lockdown in some big cities in China prompted traders to get into business again so Myanmar's watermelon market has become active again. The prices per kilo rose to 2.5-2.6 Yuan for

watermelon, four Yuan for Taiwan watermelon and seedless watermelon and 4.3 Yuan for muskmelon.

Approximately 70 truckloads of watermelon and muskmelon are daily exported to China.

Myanmar's watermelon and muskmelon are heavily reliant on the Chinese market. The traders grappled with China's strict virus policy.

Before 16 May 2022, China banned Myanmar trucks and drivers to enter its side owing to the COVID-19 protocols and only Chinese short-haul drivers were allowed to transport the goods. Thereafter, Myanmar trucks are given the go-ahead for border-crossing through the Kyinsankyawt-Wang Ding trade



Lorries laden with melons are pictured at the Kyinsankyawt border.



Chinese traders are seen on the Sino-Myanmar border.

channel out of Muse border points under the driver-substitution system starting from 16 May 2022.

Last year, the COVID-19 restrictions hindered Myanmar's watermelon and muskmelon exports to China. Chinese Customs Regulation increased delay. Long delays of trucks caused harm to watermelon quality and only one in five trucks heading to China remained undamaged with quality watermelons

The traders are observing delivery time, price and profita-

bility as they are perishable fruit, while they are trying to explore new markets besides China.

On 1 April, Nantaw and Sinphyu border posts were suspended in the wake of COVID-19 impacts. China has closed down the major border crossing Mang Wein from 30 March 2021 following the COVID-19 cases in Myanmar.

On 8 2021, the two-remaining cross-border posts Kyinsankyawt and Panseng were suspended. As a result of this, the border trade between Myanmar and China

was completely halted.

Among Sino-Myanmar border posts, the Kyinsankyawt border resumed operations on 26 November on a trial run.

At present, Myanmar daily delivers rice, broken rice, rubber, various beans and pulses, fishery products, chilli pepper and other food commodities to China through Kyinsankyawt by 70 trucks and building materials, electrical appliances, household goods and industrial raw materials are imported into the country by 40 trucks. - NN/EMM

Export earnings facilitate import licence application

THE Myawady Border Trade Zone under the Department of Trade notified that import licence application can be made as long as there are export earnings in the bank account of applicants, except for goods that are not allowed to be imported via the Myanmar-Thailand borders.

According to the Export/Import Bulletin 10/2022, export earnings and other incomes including salary and wage remittances of Myanmar nationals in other countries will be allowed to use in the importation of commodities.

Therefore, importers will have to use the proceeds to make payments for imports through their respective banks.

Among the land borders with neighbouring Thailand, the Myawady border trade zone, which imports most goods to the domestic market, made trading



The Myawady Trade Zone.

worth US\$1,494.796 million in over eight months from 1 April to 2 December of this financial year, stated the Ministry of Commerce.

Among these, imports from Thailand were worth \$978.878 million. The cross-border trade accumulated

\$1,654.481 million year on year with \$938.591 million worth of imports from Thailand.

Therefore, there was a decrease of \$199.972 million year on year while imports increased by \$40.287 million, according to the Ministry of Commerce. — NN/CT

The prices of fuel oil, gold and dollar on 10 December 2022

Fuel Oil Price (Yangon)

Octane 92	K1,805
Octane 95	K1,895
Diesel	K2,185
Premium Diesel	K2,260

All of the prices are based on per litre.

Gold Price

The reference price of high-purity gold set by YGEA	K2,117,000 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	K2,810 to K2,830

The above prices may change from time to time.

Protect the nature of mountains for environmental conservation

THE United Nations proclaimed 2022 the International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development. The UN General Assembly declared 2002 the UN International Year of Mountains, and on this occasion, it designated 11 December, from 2003 onwards, as International Mountain Day.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) coordinates the annual celebration of the day to foster greater awareness of mountain issues. The theme of this year's International Mountain Day (IMD) on 11 December will be 'Women move mountains'. In fact, the commemorative day initiates the creation of a chance for the promotion of gender quality and the improvement of social justice, livelihoods and resilience.

Internationally, women are crucial in mountains' environmental protection and social and economic development. They are often the primary managers of mountain resources, guardians of biodiversity, keepers of traditional knowledge, custodians of local culture, and experts in traditional medicine.

Moreover, these hills are designed to store water as great tanks. These are one of the various kinds of sources for the distribution of water to the environment. Conservation of the nature of hills can be defined as environmental conservation as well as protection of the human society. It is because the people from the society can extract various items of natural resources, water and food for their standing. Moreover, the mountains are also home to mountain people with the resilience to severe climatic conditions.

Actually, mountains are under threat from climate change and overexploitation. As the global climate continues to warm, mountain people — some of the world's poorest — face even greater struggles to survive. The rising temperatures also mean that mountain glaciers are melting at unprecedented rates, affecting freshwater supplies downstream for millions of people.

Every issue can be solved in various ways to have many answers. All global people need to seek the best way for conserving the mountains to uplift the living situation of mountain people without losing the natural resources and facing environmental degradation. If so, mountains will promote the living standard of those people and improve their environment for sustainable development.

China Focus: 3 years of fighting COVID-19 with vaccines, drugs

CHINA has withstood multiple COVID-19 waves in the past three years, aided by massive vaccination drives and self-developed medicines.

The country, with more than 1.4 billion people, has effectively coped with over 100 COVID-19 epidemic outbreaks within three years and managed to keep its incidence rate, severe illness rate and mortality rate at the world's lowest level.

The latest data has shown that the rate of COVID-19 full inoculation — including a booster injection — exceeded 90 per cent in the whole population, forming an effective immune bulwark against the challenge posed by the rapidly-mutating virus.

About 3.45 billion vaccine jabs had been administered by 7 December 2022, and more than 228 million people above 60 had been given full inoculation by 28 November, accounting

for over 86 percent of the total population in that age group, according to the National Health Commission.

After the first epidemic outbreak in 2019, China immediately shared the first completed genome sequence of the novel coronavirus and kicked off the research and development of vaccines. In April of 2020, a Chinese adenovirus vector vaccine started the second phase of clinical trials, the first COVID-19 vaccine in the world that had entered that stage. Two COVID-19 inactivated vaccine candidates for clinical trial were also being developed. Now, all three of them have been included on the World Health Organization list of vaccines for emergency use.

China's vaccines have played a crucial role in global responses to the epidemic, as the country continuously offered vaccine aid to less developed



Medical workers prepare traditional Chinese medicine at a hospital in Zigui County of Yichang, central China's Hubei Province, 27 March, 2020. PHOTO: WANG JIAMAN/XINHUA

countries. As of 23 August China had provided 189 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to 27 African countries. This vaccine support started after the Eighth Minis-

terial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in November 2021. Localized annual production capacities, in cooperation with African partners, reached nearly 400 million doses.

As the virus kept mutating in the past three years, so Chinese scientists continued stepping up their efforts to counter it.

By October this year, at least 46 COVID-19 vaccines were being tested in human trials in China, and more than 20 in overseas clinical trials, as the country pushed forward its vaccine research and development through multiple tech routes.

Among them, three inactivated monovalent vaccines designed to neutralize Omicron variants, are in testing for sequential immunization in the Chinese mainland, Hong Kong and the United Arab Emirates

-- and those tests are going well. Also, domestically-developed mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccine candidates and broad-spectrum ones are also in the pipeline in China. The country is developing vaccines targeting easier drug-delivery as well. A vaccine administered via oral inhalation has been approved for emergency use among populations who have been inoculated with two doses of inactivated vaccines for a period of six months or longer. Until now, 13 COVID-19 vaccines developed via different tech routes have gotten conditional market approval or been greenlighted for emergency use in China.

THERAPIES

Also, scientists and clinicians in China introduced a series of COVID-19 therapies that combined cutting-edge molecular research and tradition-

al Chinese medicine, in order to effectively improve clinical treatment quality.

Five months after the initial outbreak of the novel coronavirus, a research team from the Chinese Academy of Sciences announced that JS016, a COVID-19-neutralizing antibody, could be administered to healthy people in clinical trials. And in November of 2021, the antibody was granted emergency-use authorization in 15 countries, including the United States and several European countries. In December of 2021, a cocktail therapy of monoclonal antibodies BRII-196 and BRII-198 was approved for emergency use, and in July this year, China's drug regulator granted conditional authorization for its first homegrown oral COVID antiviral drug.

Source: Xinhua

Naing Ngan Mae Thargaung Myar (Beasts of No Nation)

By Uzodinma Iweala

THIS book was written by a Nigerian-American called Uzodinma Iwela and published in 2005. The original book titled, 'Beasts of No Nation' was one of the bestsellers in the genre of war drama. The book is about a child soldier with its Myanmar translation done by Saya U Win Nyein.

You will read a heartbreaking story of a child soldier in the name of Agu, who said, "Those who choose to become soldiers lack strength. Soldiers have no food to eat or even if they have food, they may not be able to find time to eat. Their life is different from that of a soldier in a movie."

His father was killed in his presence in his native village. He then fled, seeking a haven only to be forced to join an armed organization at an early age.

Thanks to being taught by his mother, Agu could read the bible since childhood. Born to a school teacher father, he dreamed of becoming an educated person, working in the education sector. Despite his brilliant academic career, Agu was forced to leave the school as he suffered from the evil consequences of the war, which caused him to be an orphan, rendered him to lose his friends and made him home-

less. He was deprived of a peaceful and prosperous community. Ultimately, he had become a child soldier, who dared to kill a stranger merely to please his leader. He had lived a life without love or mercy.

The author concluded his novel with a short Q&A session between a white American woman called Amy and Agu. When asked by the American woman to reveal his feeling, Agu replied, saying, "If I had been either a physician or engineer, I would have earned a lot, not needing to go into the battle. I'd rather die than have to listen to such noises." The white American lady was the one who was helping the child soldiers.

The location was not stated exactly; nonetheless, the plot was common around the world, and the child soldiers like Agu represent their counterparts across the world. The smooth and effective translation of the novel can make the readers feel as if Agu himself was doing the narration. Additionally, this book will render the readers heartbroken as they read about the miserable life of child soldiers around the world. This book was turned into a movie by Netflix in 2015.



Book Title
Chekhov Wuthtuto Baung Gyoke

Translator
Kyaw Aung

Publishing House
Maha

Publication Date
January 2022 (1st Edition)

Price
K5,000

Chekhov Wuthtuto Baung Gyoke (The Greatest Short Stories of Anton Chekhov)

ONCE there prevailed a way of writing that influenced the writers. In that period, the writers held that things that are not relevant to the events in the story shall not be written. They would always say, "Hey guys, mercilessly cut off the parts that are not related to the storyline. If it is written that there was a gun hanging on the wall in one episode, the gun must be used without fail in the same or other episodes. A character in the story must open fire with the use of that gun." Their idea is that what is not concerned with the plot should not be written. This idea was handed down by Anton Chekhov, who had won high respect from writers around the world. He was so successful that even his compatriot writers were jealous of his fame.

It can be concluded that he succeeded because his stories were based on real-life events. Additionally, most of his stories were concerned with the people of all strata—the rich and the poor; the powerful and the powerless. Not only social status but his stories were also related to both genders and all age groups. Such being the

case, his stories were colourful, highlighting the lives of all people. Chekhov died at 44. During his lifetime, he had written 201 short stories. He is said to have started to write at 16. This book under review includes 29 short stories by Chekhov. They were all translated by Kyaw Aung.

The readers will be able to learn lessons from his stories while enjoying them. Some stories depicted the rise and fall of the people while others provided an insight into the people's greed, ignorance, weal and woe. Again, the readers can read the stories depicting the miserable life of the factory workers who had difficulty making both ends meet. They can also draw lessons from how the ruthless rich and the corrupt public officials holding high and low ranks were causing trouble to the poor and the public, and how the merciless landlords and/or landladies were exploiting the helpless farmers. Furthermore, the readers can learn lessons from the poor drunken people whose life was ruined under the influence of liquor.

Of the 29 translated stories, four were new translations that are not published yet. The four stories are "Sarthin Prishi Beyyak", "Hmar Gyet Ka Phyin", "Da Gyun San" and "Wannai Kyai Kwe Dar Bai Thu Go Pyaw Ya Ma Lai".

The remaining 25 which were already translated by Kyaw Aung are "Mu Hsoe Gyaw", "Doe Pyaw Dai", "Thinzar Nyaungbwe", "Luthay Ah Laung", "Innuta", "Sardaik Bo Ye Pwe", "Chit Khwint Pan Hlwa", "Oo Yin Hmu Ei Pon Pyin", "Pan Thee Lay Dwe", "Shwe Pin Lai Hsee Thi Tho Hnike", "Yein Thama Lay", "Saya Wun", "Sar Yay Daw Gyi Ta Yauk Thay Hson Gyin", "Lu Nga Nwar Ma Lay", "Hto Ah Nam", "Swe Myo Zu Nyi La Gan", "Taw Myaing Zun Ga Lwan Aung Phan", "Hmawyon Hay Wundaw Myaing Zun", "Thadoe Thamee", "Kyaw Taw Tha", "Yazawut Kaung (Mu Gwe)", "Maha Ahmar", "Venka" and "Sarto Pay Sa".

This book has nearly 350 pages. There are also the biographies of both the original writer and the translator.

SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

Hydrogen pipeline between Spain and France to be ready 'by 2030'

AN ambitious underwater pipeline to bring hydrogen from the Iberian Peninsula to the rest of Europe will be completed by 2030 and cost some 2.5 billion euros, the leaders of France, Spain and Portugal said Friday.

The H2Med project comes as Europe is scrambling to reduce its dependence on Russian energy following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

It is also seen as helping Europe transition away from fossil fuels to cleaner energy.

The pipeline between Barcelona and Marseille — also known as the "BarMar" project — will carry two million tonnes of hydrogen per year, or 10 per cent of expected European consumption,



Journalists and MPs tour a green hydrogen plant in Germany. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/AFP**

once it goes online, said Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez.

"It is going to be the first major hydrogen corridor in the European Union," Sanchez said.

The project will cost around 2.5 billion euros (\$2.6 billion), he said at a joint press conference with French President Emmanuel Macron and Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa.

The three leaders formally signed off on the plans in the presence of EU Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen on the sidelines of a regional EU summit.

Following the talks, they released a roadmap and timeline for completing H2Med which they hope will be partially covered by European funds.— AFP

Japanese billionaire Maezawa announces crew of artists for lunar voyage



Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa announced Thursday eight crew members who will join him for a journey around the Moon planned for 2023 on a SpaceX rocket that is still under development. **PHOTO: DEARMOON.EARTH/AFP**

DJ Steve Aoki, Indian actor Dev Joshi, American YouTuber Tim Dodd, K-pop musician TOP, ... Those are only a few names of the artists that will be joining Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa for a journey around the Moon. Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa announced Thursday eight crew members who will join him for a journey around the Moon planned for 2023 on a SpaceX rocket that is still under development.

The mission, known as dear-Moon, was first announced in

2018. Maezawa initially said he would invite a crew of six-to-eight artists, but later changed the entry requirements to a competition which applicants could apply for online. The eight people chosen were DJ and producer Steve Aoki of the United States; Tim Dodd, an American YouTuber; Czech artist Yemi AD; Rhiannon Adam, an Irish photographer; British photographer Karim Iliya; American filmmaker Brendan Hall; and Indian actor Dev Joshi, and K-pop musician TOP of South Korea.— AFP

Experts urge caution over biotech that can wipe out insect pests

DOZENS of scientists, experts and campaigners called for a ban on the release of genetically-edited organisms into the wild, in a statement Friday warning of potentially severe risks to the world's pollinators. The appeal was launched at crunch biodiversity talks in Montreal, where delegates from almost all the world's countries were meeting to negotiate a strategy to halt human environmental destruction,

which threatens the natural life support systems of the planet. A host of new genome-editing tools that modify the genetic material of living beings have emerged in recent years, and are being researched and developed largely to target insects and plants in agriculture. Supporters argue that they could help human health, agriculture and even species conservation. But their use in the wild carries "understudied



Conservationists fear that edited genes might be passed on to non-target species like pollinators. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

risks which could accelerate the decline of pollinator populations and put entire food webs at risk,"

according to the letter drafted by the French non-governmental organization Pollinis.—AFP

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Keeping it fresh': Greek growers use nature to clean crops

BENEATH a cluster of plane trees, the crystal clear waters of a stream are mustered by Greek farmers to rinse their leek crop, a time-honoured tradition that saves money and reduces its carbon footprint.

"(The water) keeps the leeks live and fresh... and it saves us using tap water to rinse them at home," explains 48-year-old grower Costas Antoniou.

The source of the stream is just 500 metres from his village of Dorothea in the region of Pella, northern Greece.

"We learned this method from our grandparents and it is what the next generation will continue to do," he said.

Tied together in clumps with string and plastic tape, the freshly picked leeks will spend six to 12 hours in the slow-moving stream.

After that, their brushy roots — known locally as 'moustaches' — are mud-free and the crop is ready to market.—AFP

Sea cows, abalone, pillar coral now threatened with extinction

DUGONGS — large herbivorous marine mammals commonly known as "sea cows" — are now threatened with extinction, according to an official list updated Friday. These gentle cousins of the manatee graze on seagrass in shallow coastal waters, and are an important source of ecotourism in their tropical habitats.

Despite their moniker, they are more closely related to elephants than to cows.

Dugong populations in East Africa and New Caledonia have now entered the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List as "critically endangered" and "endangered", respectively. Globally, the species remains classified as "vulnerable". Their primary threats are unintentional capture in fishing gear in East Africa and poaching in New Caledonia, as well as boat injuries in both locations.—AFP

Japanese dengue vaccine becomes second approved by EU

JAPANESE pharmaceutical company Takeda said the European Union had given the green light to its dengue fever vaccine, making it the second jab preventing the disease to be approved by the bloc.

Mosquito-borne dengue can cause haemorrhagic fever and infects an estimated 100 to 400 million people yearly, although over 80 per cent of cases are mild or asymptomatic, the WHO says.

Takeda Pharmaceutical said its vaccine, marketed as Qdenga, was given regulatory approval by the European Commission on Thursday for people aged four and above, regardless of their virus exposure history.

Another dengue vaccine, Dengvaxia — the world’s first against the disease — is already available in the European Union, but only for those who have had a previously confirmed infection.

Dengvaxia became the subject of controversy in 2019 when the Philippines banned it over safety concerns, claims which its maker, French pharmaceutical giant Sanofi, denies. Qdenga was approved in Indonesia earlier this year for those aged six and up.

The number of reported dengue cases has increased more than eightfold in the last two decades, according to the World Health Organization, which says “about half of the world’s population (is) now at risk”. — AFP



Takeda Pharmaceutical said its vaccine, marketed as Qdenga, was given regulatory approval by the European Commission on Thursday for people aged four and above, regardless of their virus exposure history. **PHOTO: TAKEDA**

Japan high school serves up edible crickets in meals

A high school in western Japan recently served food containing powdered crickets, collaborating with a local startup company that touts consumption of the nutritious and efficiently produced insects.

Students from Komatsushimanishi High School in Tokushima Prefecture worked together with employees from cricket product manufacturer Gryllus Inc. to cook and serve the insects, which were dried, pulverized and mixed with other ingredients to be made into pumpkin croquettes.

“I don’t like looking at bugs, but surprisingly, it tasted good,” said 18-year-old student Keisuke Inoue after he tried the food. “I couldn’t tell it contained insects,” he said.

Students and staff with an aversion to insects were given the choice of whether to eat the meals or not.

The school has a food department for students who wish to become chefs and on regular days cook with their teachers and offer meals to those who want them. —Kyodo

Global economic chiefs laud China’s ‘decisive’ zero-Covid reversal



People visit Qianmen Street in Beijing, capital of China, 3 June, 2020. **PHOTO: XINHUA/LI XIN**

GLOBAL economic leaders on Friday hailed China’s move away from its hardline zero-Covid policy, with the IMF chief saying the “decisive actions” would help revive growth both in the country and globally.

The relaxation would help to shore up a world economy struggling with the impact of the pandemic and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the head of the World Trade Organization said after the conference in the eastern city of Huangshan, hosted by outgoing Chinese Premier Li Keqiang.

Beijing on Wednesday announced a loosening of its zero-tolerance approach to coronavirus outbreaks, ending large-scale lockdowns and allowing some positive cases to isolate at home following widespread protests against the restrictions.

The decision indicated that the world’s second-largest economy is finally shifting towards living with Covid after years of grinding curbs stifled growth.

“We welcome very much the decisive actions taken by the Chinese authorities... to recalibrate

the Covid policies so as to create a better impetus for the revival of growth in China,” Kristalina Georgieva said at a press briefing with the heads of other major economic institutions.

The effort to boost vaccination rates and anti-viral treatments “is very good for the Chinese people, but also important for Asia and the rest of the world”, Georgieva added.

“China’s performance matters (not just) to China — it matters to the world economy as well.”

‘Support global recovery’

The global economy has been rocked this year, with Russia’s brutal invasion of Ukraine adding to a stuttering post-pandemic recovery and a cost of living crisis in many countries.

The retreat from zero-Covid “will help remove one set of uncertainties” in a world reeling from the impacts of the pandemic, the war in Ukraine and climate change, said WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, at the same briefing. — AFP

South Africa to decriminalize sex work



Gender-based violence (GBV) is an injustice that affects women and girls worldwide, with South Africa recording some of the highest rates of sexual violence, globally. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ GENDERJUSTICE.ORG.ZA**

SOUTH Africa on Friday said it would decriminalize sex work, hoping to tackle high levels of crime against women in a country with one of the world’s highest HIV caseloads.

The sale and purchase of sexual services will no longer be treated as a crime under proposed legislation put forward by the justice ministry.

According to advocacy groups there are over 150,000 sex workers in the country.

“It is hoped that decriminalization will minimize human rights violations against sex workers,” Justice Minister Ronald Lamola told a press briefing.

“It would also mean better access to healthcare and ... afford better protection for sex workers, better working conditions and less discrimination and stigma.”

South Africa has one of the largest HIV caseloads in the world and has been hit by a growing wave of violence against women.

Police Minister Bheki Cele said there had been a double-digit increase in murders of women year-on-year between July and September with almost 1,000 women killed.

Rapes were also up 11 per cent, with 10,000 cases during the period, he said. —AFP

ECONOMY WORLD

Negotiations kick off for US-led Indo-Pacific Economic Framework



Workers manufacture air purifiers at a Daikin Industries factory in Kusatsu, Shiga Prefecture, in July 2021. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/ KYODO**

AUSTRALIA, Japan, the United States and other nations on Saturday kicked off their first in-person round of negotiations aimed at setting economic rules and standards in the Indo-Pacific amid China's growing clout in the region.

The six-day meeting in Australia follows a ministerial gathering involving 14 members of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, which represents 40 per cent of global gross domestic product, according to the US government.

The negotiations will cen-

tre on four pillars — fair trade, supply chain resilience, infrastructure and clean energy, and tax and anti-corruption. The US administration of President Joe Biden has excluded politically-sensitive tariff-cutting talks that are traditionally part of free trade agreements.

Under the trade pillar, the members would negotiate commitments in areas such as trade facilitation, which can be improved through simplified customs procedures, and agriculture, which may be facing unjustified export restrictions.

A senior Biden administration official said before the meeting that trade facilitation and agriculture are among areas that seem to have “real consensus.”

IPEF was launched during Biden's visit to Tokyo in May. The other partners are Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam.

In the first in-person ministerial meeting held in Los Angeles in September, the members agreed to start formal negotiations.—Kyodo

Kazakhstan moves to reel in crypto mining

KAZAKHSTAN, one of the world's leading locations for cryptocurrency mining, has moved to reel in the power-hungry industry that has often burdened the ageing energy grid of the Central Asian country.

The ex-Soviet country's lower house of parliament on Wednesday passed legislation which introduced a tax and a mandatory licence for companies mining cryptocurrencies among other measures, state news agency Kazinform reported.

In recent months, Kazakhstan, the region's largest economy, has looked to promote the expansion of cryptocurrency mining while cracking down on illegal mining farms.

“The goal of the bill is to eliminate illegal mining and create an adequate legal environment for legal entrepreneurs,” lawmaker Yekaterina Smyshlyayeva, who introduced

the bill, told AFP on Thursday.

She added that this activity is a “capital intensive business and the risks are very high”.

“Miners will only be able to buy electricity from the general electricity network in the event of a surplus,” she said Wednesday as quoted by Kazinform.

According to data from the University of Cambridge, Kazakhstan was the world's third-largest miner of cryptocurrency as of January 2022, behind the United States and China.

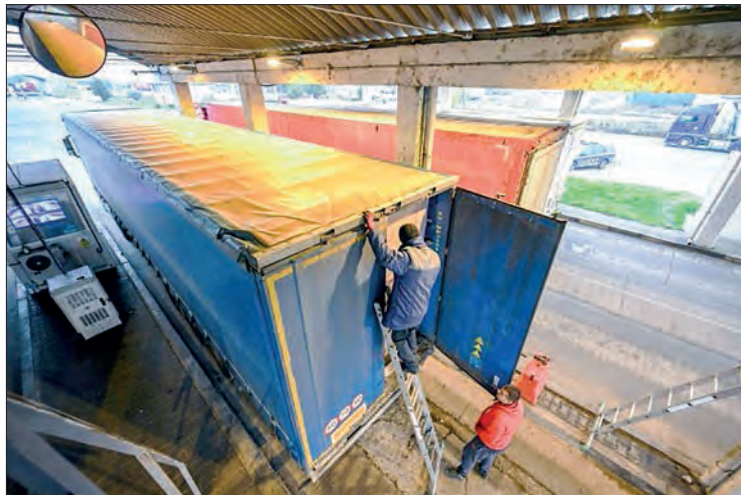
Mining for cryptocurrency, such as bitcoin, requires powerful computers to solve complex mathematical puzzles, resulting in the consumption of huge amounts of electricity.

Kazakhstan has many benefits for the industry, including some of the cheapest electricity in the world and a cold climate favourable for cooling computers.—AFP



Cryptocurrency mining operations require lots of electricity. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Frustration in Romania and Bulgaria after Schengen rejection



Admission to the Schengen zone would have done away with the time-consuming border checks. **PHOTO: AFP**

AFTER more than 10 years waiting to be admitted into the Schengen zone, Bulgaria and Romania were once more turned away after two EU countries vetoed their admission.

Now some observers warn

that both countries face a rising tide of euroscepticism as they remain outside the coveted zone through which passport checks are not normally required.

Romanian Prime Minister Nicolae Ciucu spoke of his

“profound disappointment” after Austria blocked their admission.

In Bulgaria, President Rumen Radev regretted what he described as the “internal borders” he said were being put up with the European Union bloc.

Long waits at borders

Their failure to win admission to the Schengen's vast zone of free movement means that the long lines at various border crossings will continue.

At Giurgiu, for example, on the Romanian-Bulgarian border, a queue of trucks several kilometres begins forming from dawn.

Jaded long-haul drivers speaking to AFP in early December in Giurgiu, on the Romanian side, told of long hours waiting for the customs checks before they could enter Bulgaria.—AFP

US currency to bear signatures of two women for first time

MOST people don't have to worry if their signature is sloppy — but if it's your name on the US dollar bill, it's best to practise, says US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen.

“It's customary that Treasury secretaries provide their signature to be featured on our nation's currency,” said Yellen, the first woman to hold the office, at a ceremony unveiling new notes bearing her name.

“You'd think this would be a

straightforward process, but the founding fathers did not account for what seems to be a common attribute for Treasury secretaries: terrible handwriting.”

Yellen had previously remarked in a TV interview that two of her predecessors, Tim Geithner and Jack Lew, had signatures “so illegible that people made fun of them.”

Geithner “famously had to change his signature in order

to make it legible,” she joked Thursday.

“I'll admit: I spent some quality time practising my signature,” she added.

In addition to the first female Treasury secretary's name appearing on them, the new notes unveiled Thursday will also be historic for including two women's signatures: that of Yellen and US Treasurer Lynn Marder.—AFP

China's theme parks see robust revenue growth in 2021

CHINA'S major theme parks reported steady growth in business revenue and the number of visitors in 2021, industry data showed.

The combined business revenue of the 70 theme parks surveyed surged 40.1 per cent year on year to about 13.26 billion yuan (about 1.91 billion US dollars), said a report jointly released by the Institute for Theme Park Studies in China and two universities.

Tourist trips to these parks topped 75.48 million last year, up 11.5 per cent year on year, according to the report. —Xinhua



Visitors have fun at Happy Valley, one of several popular theme parks in Beijing. PHOTO: CHINA DAILY

UK to unveil post-Brexit financial services reforms

THE UK government will on Friday unveil post-Brexit plans to overhaul and preserve its powerful financial services industry, as it also seeks to boost a flagging economy facing recession.

Finance minister Jeremy Hunt will outline reforms "to drive growth and secure the UK's position as a world-leading financial services hub", the Treasury said in a statement.

Under the plans, banks without major investment activities will be released from a ringfencing regime that currently seeks to separate retail and investment banking arms.

The country's financial regulators will be given a "new remit" to help deliver economic growth.

And a "widespread review" will see the Conservative UK government repeal "hundreds of pages of EU law", the Treasury added.

But there it risks a clash with the devolved Scottish government in Edinburgh, which has voiced "deep concerns" about the plans to ditch EU legislation.

It has urged London to think again, assessing it will have a "damaging impact... on people and businesses across the UK", in areas from food standards to environmental protection. — AFP

US consumer sentiment ticks up in December

US consumer sentiment climbed to a preliminary reading of 59.1 in December, a jump from the prior month's 56.8, according to the widely-watched University of Michigan monthly survey.

That's higher than

the number forecast by a Wall Street Journal survey of economists, which predicted the number would be 56.5. The higher-than-expected reading came after expectations of inflation dropped to 4.6 per cent from 4.9 per cent

last month.

That's the lowest since the last quarter of 2021. Some economists surmise that gasoline prices, which have decreased from record highs, are a cause for the uptick in consumer sen-

timent.

At the same time, consumers have expressed concern over the worst inflation in four decades, and the index is not much higher than record lows seen six months ago. —Xinhua

Oil prices settle lower to post around 11% weekly loss

OIL prices decreased on Friday as demand worries linger. The West Texas Intermediate (WTI) for January delivery lost 44 cents, or 0.6 per cent, to settle at 71.02 US dollars a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude for February delivery slipped five cents, or nearly 0.1 per cent, to close at 76.1 dollars a barrel on the London ICE Futures Exchange.

For the week, the WTI slumped 11.2 per cent, while Brent dropped 11.1 per cent, marking their



Traders weighed risks on the supply side. PHOTO: AFP

biggest weekly declines in months.

The market sell-off

came as traders tried to assess demand weakness especially after data

showed a large build in US petroleum product inventories. —Xinhua

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE

M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB247A)

Consignees of cargo carried on M.V MSC SUPARNA F VOY.NO. (SB247A) are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on 11-12-2022 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.

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Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

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ဆောင်းစာ မှာယူလိုပါက ဆက်သွယ်နိုင်ပါတယ်

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Kishida, Obama call for nuke-free world at Hiroshima int'l meeting



The Atomic Bomb Dome is pictured in Hiroshima, western Japan, on 19 March, 2021, after preservation work was almost completed. **PHOTO: KYODO**

PRIME Minister Fumio Kishida and former US President Barack Obama on Saturday called for a world without nuclear arms amid Russian threats to use them in the war in Ukraine and North Korea's rapid development of its weapons programmes.

They made the call in separate messages sent to the inaugural meeting of a nuclear disarmament forum in Hiroshima, which was devastated by a US atomic bomb dropped in the closing stages of World War II.

"We owe it to our children to pursue a world without nuclear weapons," Obama said in a video message to the two-day meeting through Sunday involving scholars and former government officials.

Looking back to when he

became the first sitting US president to visit the western Japan city in May 2016, Obama said his trip then "strengthened my own resolve to reduce the threat of nuclear weapons worldwide, and it is this same commitment that brings you all here today"

In his message, Kishida said he hopes discussions at the meeting will make "a significant step" towards the abolition of nuclear weapons and hammer out "specific ways" to realize that goal.

The world is facing the "biggest threat of nuclear weapon use since the Cold War," he said, referring to the Ukraine crisis and concerns that North Korea may carry out its seventh nuclear test and first since September 2017.—Kyodo

RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Nobel Peace Prize ceremony, a call to arms for Ukraine

A trio representing the three nations at the centre of the war in Ukraine will receive the Nobel Peace Prize on Saturday, showing no sign of giving up the fight against Vladimir Putin and his Minsk ally.

Jailed Belarusian human rights advocate Ales Bialiatski, Russian human rights organization Memorial, and Ukraine's Centre for Civil Liberties (CCL) will be presented with their awards at a formal ceremony in Oslo. While the Peace Prize

may be a small balm for the laureates' souls, it has in no way weakened their resolve.

"Putin will stop when he will be stopped", CCL head Oleksandra Matviichuk told reporters Friday at the Nobel Institute.

"Authoritarian leaders ... see any attempt to dialogue as a sign of weakness", she said, urging Western countries to continue to help Ukraine liberate its territories occupied by Russia, including Crimea.—AFP



(From left) Oleksandra Matviichuk, Yan Rachinsky and Natalia Pinchuk in Oslo on Friday. **PHOTO: SERGEI GAPON/AFP**

Chinese envoy warns of risks of diversion of Ukraine-destined weapons

A Chinese envoy on Friday warned of the risks of diversion of weapons destined for Ukraine.

UN Undersecretary-General for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu stated in a briefing to the Security Council in September that a large-scale influx of weapons to conflict-affected zones raises concerns about potential diversion. Nakamitsu re-emphasized this point in her briefing on Friday. In June this year, Interpol also indicated that weapons destined for Ukraine could end up on the black market and fall into the hands of criminals, said Geng Shuang, China's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations.

"These warnings have, unfortunately, materialized. There have been reports that some armed groups and terror-



Members of the Ukrainian Territorial Defence Forces attend tactical, combat and first aid training course during Russia's military invasion launched on Ukraine. **PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE/AFP/FILE**

ist organizations in the Middle East and Africa have obtained, through illegal channels, weapons and ammunition flowing from Ukraine," he told the Se-

curity Council.

The international community should pay attention to this issue and take preventive measures, he said.—Xinhua

TotalEnergies exits Russian gas firm's board, takes \$3.7 bln hit

FRENCH energy group TotalEnergies said Friday it was withdrawing from the board of Russian gas giant Novatek and taking a \$3.7 billion hit in the wake of sanctions against

Moscow. TotalEnergies said in a statement that the two directors have had to abstain from voting in board meetings, "in particular on financial matters", due to the European sanctions.

"They are therefore no longer in a position to fully carry out their duties on the board which might become an issue for the governance of this company," the French firm said.—AFP

Belgium makes EU parliament arrests in Qatar corruption probe



Eva Kaili is being investigated for corruption. PHOTO: AFP

BELGIAN police arrested a European Parliament vice-president and four others in connection with an investigation into corruption implicating World Cup hosts Qatar, the prosecutors office said Friday. Officers arrested Greek socialist MEP Eva Kaili hours after four other suspects had been detained for questioning. All four were either Italian citizens or originally came from Italy, a source close to the case told AFP. Kaili is the partner of one of the four, a parliamentary assistant with the European Parliament's Socialists and Democrats group, said the source.

Following reports of Kai-

li's arrest, the president of the Greek socialists (PASOK) Nikos Androulakis announced on Twitter that she had been expelled from the party. A statement issued earlier by Belgian prosecutors mentioned a Gulf country in connection with an investigation into corruption and money laundering, but did not name it. And while it said a former MEP was among those arrested, it did not identify him. But Belgian press reports said the country concerned was Qatar, and named the former MEP as Italy's Pier-Antonio Panzeri, who served as a socialist in the parliament between 2004 and 2019.— AFP

Three jailed for 30 years for drone attack on Venezuelan leader

THREE people accused in a failed drone attack targeting Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro in 2018 were sentenced to 30-year jail terms, relatives said on Friday.

Maria Delgado Tabosky, retired army major Juan Carlos Marrufo and retired colonel Juan Francisco Rodriguez were convicted on charges of "terrorism, treason and criminal conspiracy", according to a family member of one of the accused, who asked to remain anonymous. The criminal hearing began Thursday night and lasted into the early hours of Friday, the family member said.

Delgado Tabosky, 48, holds dual Venezuelan and Spanish citizenship and is sister of Osman Delgado Tabosky, who resides in the United States. He is accused by the Maduro government of financing the attack, in which two drones carrying explosives blew up near where Maduro was addressing an assembly of members of the National Guard on 4 August, 2018, in Caracas.



Screengrab taken from a handout video released by Venezuelan Television (VTV) showing Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro (C), his wife Cilia Flores (L) and military authorities reacting to a drone attack during a ceremony to celebrate the 81st anniversary of the National Guard in Caracas in August 2018. PHOTO: VENEZUELAN TELEVISION (VTV)/AFP

One drone exploded in the air over guardsmen standing in formation, injuring a few of them, and the second drone crashed into an apartment building two blocks away. Neither Maduro nor his wife, who was nearby, were hurt.

Marrufo, 52, who has both Venezuelan and Italian citizenship, is married to Maria Del-

gado Tabosky.

The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, a UN human rights body, has said that the arrests of Delgado Tabosky and Marrufo in 2019 were "arbitrary". The couple have been jailed for three years and eight months at the General Directorate of Military Counterintelligence.— AFP

Italy ordered to restore migrant charity rescue vessel

AN Italian court has ordered the state to restore a German charity vessel seized in 2017 over migrant rescues in the Mediterranean, a lawyer told AFP Friday. The Iuventa, owned by non-governmental organization Jugend Rettet, was impounded

and left to rot while prosecutors prepared a case currently in the pre-trial stage.

Twenty-one suspects, including crew members of Jugend Rettet, Doctors Without Borders (MSF) and Save the Children rescue ships, are accused of col-

luding with people traffickers. Trapani judge Samuele Corso is currently examining whether or not to proceed to trial after a five-year investigation slammed by critics as a politically motivated bid to stop sea rescues.—AFP



Italy has long been a point of destination for seaborne migration from Africa to Europe. PHOTO: AFP

WORLD: TOP HEADLINES

Peru's new president hints at early elections amid protests

PERU'S new President Dina Boluarte on Friday acknowledged the possibility of holding the next elections earlier than scheduled.

"If the situation warrants it," the government will be in talks with the political and democratic forces of Congress on bringing forward elections, Boluarte told local media. Boluarte took office on Wednesday when Congress impeached her predecessor Pedro Castillo just hours after his failed attempt to dissolve the legislature. Castillo, who was then detained by security forces, had said earlier that the impeachment motion approved by the opposition-led Congress "is part of the political game" against him.—Xinhua

Pakistani PM urges stern action against corruption

PAKISTANI Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif here on Friday stressed the need for strengthening institutions to eradicate the menace of corruption to achieve development and prosperity of the country, said a statement from the Prime Minister's Office. In his message on the International Anti-Corruption Day observed on Friday, the prime minister said, "corruption is a major obstacle in the way of development and prosperity of any country because it leads to economic and administrative destruction."—Xinhua



SPORT



Myanmar Women's team players are seen in an international match. PHOTO: MFF

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.

Myanmar team to compete in Paris Olympic Women's Football Qualifiers

THE Myanmar national women's football team will compete in the 2024 Paris Olympic Women's Football Asian Zone qualifiers, football authorities said.

The Asian Football Confederation will hold the Asian Zone qualifiers for the Paris Olympics in 2023 which will be divided into three stages.

The Asian Football Confederation has released the dates for the qualifying stages and will announce the format of the qualifiers and the participating

teams again.

The first qualifiers will be held from 3 to 11 April 2023, the second qualifiers from 23 to 31 October, and the final qualifiers from 27 November to 6 December. The final stage of the Paris Olympic women's football tournament will be held with a total of 12 teams, and only two teams from the Asian zone will qualify.

The Myanmar women's team has competed in the qualifiers since the 2004 Athens Olympics, and only a few teams repre-

senting Asia have been allowed to compete in the final stage, so they have never succeeded in qualifying.

Reportedly, in the most recent 2020 Tokyo Olympic qualifiers, team Myanmar was able to reach the final qualifiers.

The Myanmar national women's football team will compete in many international competitions: Paris Olympic Qualifiers, the 32nd SEA Games, and ASEAN Women's Championship next year. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Morocco down Portugal to become first ever African World Cup semi-finalists

MOROCCO became the first African nation to reach the World Cup semi-finals as Youssef En-Nesyri's first-half goal sealed a tense 1-0 victory over Portugal on Saturday at Al Thumama Stadium.

The Atlas Lions, also the first Arab team to make the last four, added Portugal to their list of European scalps with a resolute second-half performance.

Cristiano Ronaldo has

likely played his last World Cup match after making an ineffectual appearance as a second-half substitute, failing to score his first knockout-phase goal at the tournament.

Morocco took a 42nd-minute lead through En-Nesyri's header as they came on strongly late in the first period. Portugal piled on the pressure after the break but an injury-hit Morocco, without three of their four first-choice defenders once skipper Romain Saiss was forced off, hung on despite being reduced to 10 men in added time.

The partisan crowd undoubtedly helped the North Africans over the line, although Portugal struggled to create many clear-cut chances as they lost a World Cup quarter-final for the first time. Five-time Ballon d'Or winner Ronaldo was sent on early in the sec-

ond half by coach Fernando Santos but could not rescue the Euro 2016 winners.

Instead it was another famous day for Morocco, after previous upset wins over Belgium and Spain, on penalties, in Qatar.

Walid Regragui's men will face England or holders France in the semi-finals at Al Bayt Stadium on Wednesday.

Morocco will believe they can topple either of those sides, having still only conceded once at this World Cup.

Portugal enjoyed the majority of possession in the opening half-hour, but Joao Felix's fifth-minute diving header, saved by goalkeeper Yassine Bounou, was the closest either side came to an early goal.—AFP

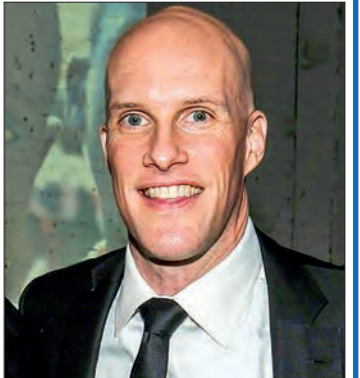


US sports reporter dies after collapsing at Qatar World Cup

A leading American sports reporter, who last month had a run-in with Qatar's World Cup organizers over a rainbow LGBTQ shirt, died while covering a tense quarter-final match Friday, his family said.

Grant Wahl, 48, helped build soccer's popularity in the United States through his vivid reporting for Sports Illustrated, CBS Sports and other media.

Wahl collapsed in the press tribune during Friday's Argentina-Netherlands game. The Wall Street Journal said he suffered a suspected heart attack. Wahl's wife Celine Gounder, a renowned epidemiologist, said on Twitter: "I'm in complete shock." A Qatar organizing committee spokesperson said "he received immediate emergency medical treatment on site, which continued as he was transferred by ambulance to Hamad General Hospital". "We offer our deepest condolences



Grant Wahl, pictured in 2017, helped build soccer's popularity in the United States through decades of vivid reporting at Sports Illustrated, then with CBS Sports. PHOTO: AFP/FILE

to Grant's family, friends and his many close colleagues in the media," the statement added.

Organizers did not mention an incident just before the 21 November match between the United States and Wales when Wahl was stopped as he entered the stadium for wearing a rainbow shirt in support of LGBTQ rights.—AFP



PHOTO:AFP